



**Matrusri Engineering College**  
(An Autonomous Institution)



(Approved by AICTE & Affiliated to Osmania University & NBA Accredited)

**Common to All Branches**

**Subject :**Effective Technical Communication in English **Name of the Faculty:** Mrs.Dr.B.Chandana

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## UNIT 5

### Manual Writing

What is the definition of a user manual?

A user manual is a technical communication document intended to give assistance to people on how to use a product. A good user manual assists users on how to use a product safely, healthily and effectively.

**Other names, or other forms of a user manual, might be:**

- User guide
- Technical documentation
- Instruction manual
- Operational manual
- Training manual
- Quick Start Guide
- Installation manual
- Maintenance manual
- Software manual

Besides the primary goal of a user manual (to assist a user), secondary goals could be creating a better user experience and meeting legal requirements.

A user manual consists of textual visual information (illustrations, screenshots, tables etc.) to assist the user in completing specific tasks.

The user plays the central role when drawing up a user manual. A well-drafted user manual only provides that information that is relevant for the intended user of the product.

The user manual should contain both procedural information (step-by-step instructions) and conceptual information (information the user needs in order to understand procedural information).

A good user manual is concise and uses jargon-free language. A good user manual should answer HOW and WHAT questions. They should contain information about what happens if a task is not done correctly.

In some cases, a product is intended to be used by different types of users. Typical user types are the end-user, installer, maintenance engineer and operator. Each user type needs a different approach in terms of language to be used, the tone of voice and provided conceptual information.

### **What information should be in a user manual?**

Different kind of products need a user manual. A product can be a system, tool, device, an instrument, a piece of software or an app. Depending on the type of product, a user manual might include things as:

- Product name
- Model or type number
- Intended use
- Features/accessories
- Description of the main product elements
- Description of the user interface
- Safety warnings
- Installation instructions
- Description of how to use/operate the product
- Troubleshooting section and instructions on how to solve problems
- Maintenance information
- Repair information
- Information on disposal of the product and packaging
- Technical specifications
- Table of content
- Index
- Glossary
- Warranty information

- Contact details

A user guide, also commonly called a technical communication document or manual, is intended to give assistance to people using a particular system.

It is usually written by a technical writer, although user guides are written by programmers, product or project managers, or other technical staff, particularly in smaller companies.

User guides are most commonly associated with electronic goods, computer hardware and software, although they can be written for any product.

Most user guides contain both a written guide and associated images. In the case of computer applications, it is usual to include screenshots of the human-machine interface(s), and hardware manuals often include clear, simplified diagrams.

The language used is matched to the intended audience, with jargon kept to a minimum or explained thoroughly.

## **Professional Manual Writing**

Using a template can expedite your work but with so many options out there for you to choose from, how would you know which one is appropriate or not? There are different manuals out there that are required to be written such as user manual, training manual, software/hardware manual, procedure manual, and operations manual just to name a few. Although there are differences in writing these manuals, they also have similarities. This is why having a template is a good idea because it can help speed things up in your side. And when it comes to templates, you can get one from us.

### **Tips for Manual Writing Template**

- **Identify the Target Audience.** Before manuals are written, the audience needs to be identified first including their age, skill level, and specialization so that the writer will know the level of writing they will apply in the manual.

- **Always Create an Outline.** An outline is everything when it comes to writing manuals because this will help you organize information into chapters and their flow as well. Without one, the content of your manual will be done haphazardly which can confuse your readers.
- **Choose the Right Format.** You need to format your manual accordingly because this helps your readers get the information that they are looking for in a flash.
- **Add Details.** If the manual that you need to write requires steps to be followed, you need to write them down in detail. However, write in brief but concise as this will help your readers absorb the information quickly.
- **Review and Edit.** Let someone review your manual for feedback. Listen to what they have to say and make the necessary changes until your manual gets their approval.

#### Technical Manual Template Sample

Here's a sample template that you can use when creating a manual. This one is for a user manual:

#### Table of Contents

1. Introduction
  1. Scope/Purpose
  2. Procedure Overview
2. Process 1 (Workflow)
  1. Sub-processes 1
    1. Detailed Instructions
    2. Samples
  2. Sub-processes 2
    1. Detailed Instructions
    2. Samples
3. Process 2 (Workflow)
  1. Sub-processes 1
    1. Detailed Instructions
    2. Samples
  2. Sub-processes 2
    1. Detailed Instructions
    2. Samples
4. Appendices

## 5. Indexes

### **How to Write a Great User Manual in 12 Steps**

A great user manual educates people about product features, while teaching them how to use these features effectively. As an author, your ultimate goal is comprehension—you want readers to easily be able to read, reference, and absorb information.

But how can you make sure readers are soaking everything up? During our adventures creating Dozuki's standard **work instruction software**, we've come across a few tips and tricks...

#### **Define Your Audience**

Know your reader—what is their experience level? where are they reading the manual?—and optimize your instructions to match their expertise. It can be helpful to create a written profile of your user, especially when you're part of a team collaborating on documentation.

#### **Describe the Problem**

Explain the problem your manual aims to solve, present the solution, and then outline the instructions in order to attain the solution. It may sound obvious, but these are the three basic building blocks to any good user manual.

#### **Break it Down**

If the problem addressed in the manual is particularly complex, break it down into smaller parts. List each section with specific instructions. By breaking information down this way, you make the problems more approachable and easy to follow.

#### **Be Descriptive**

Vague words like "thing," "part," and "stuff" lead to ambiguous repair manuals. If you don't know what something is called, do your best to identify it by looking online or asking someone. Assembly may require several intricate parts—calling a part "this thing" doesn't help anyone!

#### **Stick to the Topic at Hand**

As much as people love anecdotes of your great-grandma putting ice cream in her purse (true story!), there's an appropriate setting for such stories. The middle of a user manual is not it.

### **Take Awesome Photos**

Photos are the number one thing that draw people to your repair manual. Taking quality photos doesn't demand expensive equipment—you can use your smartphone or a simple point and shoot camera. For easy tips on how to take good instructional photos, check out our free photography workshop.

### **Don't Use Passive Voice**

Be direct in your instructions to the user—do not fall into the "It is" trap. Instead, use verbs to convey exactly what you're trying to say.

### **Avoid Using the First Person**

There's no "I" in team, and there shouldn't be any in your writing. You have a more authoritative tone of voice by not using statements such as "I did this" in your manuals.

### **Use a Template**

Standardizing your manual helps improve user comprehension and clarity. Things like consistent bullet-point styles, image sizes, and text orientation can help make browsing and following along easier for your readers. Looking for a program that makes standardizing manuals easy? Check out how Dozuki does it.

### **Minimize Background Info**

A little background info is great: why you're doing this, who stands to benefit from the guide, what people need to do to prepare, etc. However, leave it at that. Most people shudder at the thought of reading a novel before diving into a guide. After all, when's the last time you read the full user manual that came with your TV?

### **Use Pictures to Orient Your Reader**

When taking photos, the orientation of the object should remain consistent as much as possible throughout the manual. The reader will be able to identify his or her relative location with greater ease. If you rotate the object, include a statement such as "Flip the device" or "Rotate the device 90 degrees clockwise" to help the reader do the same and follow along.

### **Be Simple, Not Loquacious**

People will not use your manual if they cannot understand what you're talking about, it isn't Shakespeare.

## Using a user manual template

The main tool that I developed in order to help Philip draw up his user manual is a User Manual Template. The template contains all the information and more from the list above. It complies with the requirements for his product.

The User Manual Template can be used for creating your manual for your system, tool, device, instrument, or for creating an installation manual, software manual, operational manual, maintenance manual or training manual.

Based on the first template for Philip, we have developed templates for the following product groups:

- Medical Devices
- Toys
- Machinery
- Electronics

## What formats does a user manual have?

User manuals can be provided in either a paper format or as an electronic document (PDF or placed online or on-device in HTML). The user manual template is an MS Word document that can be printed or placed online.

User manuals can be created using a variety of tools. Each tool has its own advantages and disadvantages. I will mention the most common tools below:

### Help with Writing an Operations Manual

Any business, regardless of its industry, should have an operations manual that all employees should be following in order for the company to function properly. However, writing an operations manual isn't easy because there are a lot of factors that you need to pay attention to. A well-written operations manual should cover all aspects of the business as well as various situations that may arise in the

workplace and how to deal with them. If you need help with building a comprehensive manual, you should consider hiring a professional writing company. Fortunately, you don't have to look far for one because this is what our business is all about.

#### Tips in Writing an Operations Manual

- **Create an Outline.** Before you write an operations manual, you need to put together all the SOPs or standard operating procedures that you use in your business. The outline will help put everything in order so that you won't miss anything during the writing phase.
- **Write the Intro.** Give your readers a brief outline on what the manual is all about, what they can get out of it, and how to read the manual.
- **Write the First Task.** Follow your outline by writing the first task and the steps needed to accomplish it. Each step should be written accurately and concisely so that your readers will understand them easily. Do the same for each task included in your outline.
- **Have Someone Review Your Work.** Let someone else read the for feedback. Include those who will be using the manual to get their point of view.
- **Edit.** Use the feedback you have gathered when you start revising and editing the operations manual. This is very important to edit your manual to the best version because without any comment from the other side it can be hard for understanding.
- **Bind the Contents for Distribution.** Once all revisions have been made, make several copies of the manual, bind the SOPs, and distribute to anyone who needs it.

#### Best User Manual Writing Help

Not everyone reads a user manual from start to finish. For one thing, it isn't a novel that you have to really spend time reading. What most people do is to scan the table of contents or index to look for what they need. The question, however, is how you're going to write your own user manual in a way that will satisfy the needs of your readers or customers. The good news is that when it comes to user



manual writing, you can expect nothing but the best output from us because this is where our expertise lies.

### Tips for User Manual Writing

Why do so many people struggle with a user manual? User manual writing can be a tricky task due to the troubles people have with writing clear and concise steps. Usually, people look at the manual and get put off due to the complicated steps and lengthy, confusing information. This can put pressure on the writer to create a manual that will actually help the reader rather than put them off. The manual writing must understand how to create a manual that has well-written, simple clear instructions which can be easily navigated.

If you're unsure on how to create a user manual, these tips will help you get started so you can create a professionally written piece:

#### **Write using an Active Voice**

By writing in an active voice you can be sure the reader will follow the written text more attentively, this will also make it easier for the reader to understand the steps and instructions they need to follow to complete the process. An example of writing in an active voice is:

*“For the final step to the process, you will need a nail and screwdriver”.*

This example uses the active voice and makes it easy and clear for the reader to understand what they need, and what is required for the final step of the process. This avoids any confusion and helps the manual reader follow through until the end.

#### **Consider the manual reader**

Always think of the user before and during the manual writing process. This can be done by looking at the product manual from the users perspective. They may have very little or no experience in the product, and it may even be the first time they have completed a project as such. You should write in a way that covers all of the questions, concerns and needs the manual reader may have during the completion of the instructions. You can have someone who has no previous knowledge on the

products to follow the instructions and see if there are any more details, instructions or information you need to add into the manual.

### **Write clearly and concise**

Every one of your instructions In the manual must be written as clearly as possible, in a simple, uncomplicated way. This will ensure the reader can properly follow the instructions and use the product correctly.

### **Directly address the reader**

By directly addressing the reader you can create a dialogue, which is engaging, alongside the active voice use, which will encourage the reader to pay attention to the instructions. Speaking directly to the reader you can also make the manual more personal, the customer will be more likely to have a better product experience.

### **Establish standards**

It is essential that you have an established set of standard and format for the manual you are creating. This makes it simpler and easier for you to write as you have a clear and easy to follow the outline

## **Instruction Manual Templates**

A small booklet, brochure or book informing a user or product owner about its productive use or installation is named as instruction manual.

The document containing step by step instructions or guidance on how something should be operated carefully are accompanying with almost all electronic appliances, devices, products and software etc.

Manufacturers, producers and sellers help their customers and end users in understanding the basic steps for efficient use of a product, service or system via instruction manuals. Mostly manuals are created in word file format by using **blank instruction manual templates**.

Nowadays, instruction manual is considered as a vital part of newly purchased product, device, machine, system or software because it includes instructions for the user about its operations, installation and uses.

### **When designing instruction manual...**

Simple and easy to understand language is used to write instruction manuals so anyone even a beginner can easily utilize the product or device for better personal interests.

As a beginner, if your duty is to write professional looking instruction manuals for products of your business or company, use of word instruction manual template is advised for you. It will provide you enough assistance to make user friendly instruction manuals in short span of time.

Plenty of video tutorials is also accessible over the web that a beginner can watch to get help regarding making of instruction manuals for different products, devices or systems. Watch this video below and enhance your knowledge about instruction manual making.

### **Printable Instruction Manual Templates**

Knowing basic instructions make you able to perform different tasks using several devices or systems with no trouble so always try to view and read the instruction manual when it comes to operate or use a new product, device or system.

There are **printable instruction manual templates** under the content that you can see as reference. Use of these instruction manual samples will also help you in making instruction manuals for your own products

### **Word Instruction Manual Templates**

Instruction manual works as helping hand for beginners when they are operating new electronic equipment, devices or products. They can get comprehensive guidance and instructions about features and uses of the product.

Most of manuals are also loaded with troubleshooting information that can come in handy when a product or system is not working properly.

**MS word instruction manual templates** are added here for reference that our users and visitors can use to write perfect and professional looking instruction manuals.

## Instruction Manuals

This Basic Instruction Manual only explains the camera's basic operations and functions. For more detailed instructions, advanced shooting and playback procedures, printing photos, Custom Functions, and more, see the Camera Instruction Manual CD-ROM.

The EOS REBEL T3/EOS 1100D's instruction manuals consist of the following:

- **Camera Instruction Manual**



**Camera Basic Instruction Manual**  
(this booklet)



**Camera Instruction Manual**  
(CD-ROM)

### CD-ROM Contents

#### **Camera Instruction Manual** (PDF file)

Explains all the camera's functions and operation procedures. Includes also all the contents in this Basic Instruction Manual.

#### **Quick Reference Guide** (PDF file)

Simple guide centering on shooting procedures. Its A4 size enables easy printing to carry it around.

See page 74 on how to view the Camera Instruction Manual (PDF) in the CD-ROM.

- **Software and Software Instruction Manual**



**EOS DIGITAL Solution Disk**  
(Software CD-ROM)



**Software Instruction Manual**  
(CD-ROM)

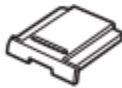
See pages 76 to 78 for an overview of the software programs, installation procedure for a personal computer, and how to view the Software Instruction Manual CD-ROM.

## Checking the Package Contents

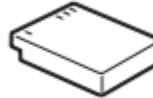
Before using your digital camera, confirm that the package contains the items listed below.



**GR**



**Hot shoe cover**  
(attached to camera)



**Rechargeable battery**  
(DB-65)



**USB power adapter**  
(AC-U1)



**Power plug**

- **USB cable**
- **Hand strap**
- **CD**
- **Instruction manual (this manual)**

## Please complete the user registration

Thank you for purchasing a PENTAX RICOH IMAGING product. In order to provide you with the best customer support and service experience for the product you have purchased, we ask you to complete the user registration.

Visit the following Web site to complete the user registration.

**<https://login.pentax.jp/customer/menu.aspx>**

Registered users will be notified by e-mail about important customer support information, such as firmware version updates, etc.

A well written instruction manual will not only help your customers in using your products or services but also help you in improving customer satisfaction level.

When customers will get required outcomes by using your products, they will definitely come again to you for more purchases so try to write easily understandable and user-friendly instruction manuals.

You can also get help from following videos to write just perfect instruction manuals shortly

## **OPERATIONS MANUAL TEMPLATE**

This operations manual provides important organizational information as well as operations procedures for **ORGANIZATION**.

### **A. Critical Organization Information**

This section documents the most critical organization information.

#### **Bank Information**

ORGANIZATION's Lawyer:

ORGANIZATION's Mailing Address:

#### **Nonprofit Incorporation Information**

ORGANIZATION is incorporated in the state of

IRS tax ID

Accountant

Payroll Information

ORGANIZATION's Worker Compensation insurance is administered by:

ORGANIZATION holds the following insurance policies:

All policies are filed in ORGANIZATION's paper files.

#### **Vendor Information**

Online Services Accounts

USERNAMES and PASSWORDS SEE PAPER FILES

Service Name:

Purpose:

Fee for use:

Other Vendors

For a list of general vendors ORGANIZATION has used please see Docs\

Vendor information can also be found in Quickbooks.

### **Human Resources Information**

Personnel Policy

Personnel manual was approved by board XX/XX/XX and is filed in Docs\

Human Resource Contact Information

- Setting up Medical Insurance
- Setting up Dental Insurance
- Workers Compensation Numbers
- Other Important HR Administration Informa

### **Recurring Operational Tasks Weekly 1**

- update website
- check registrations on any current events
- enter/update database records
- Back up ORGANIZATION folder to external hard drive.
- Every Friday: Pay bills and invoices come that in from vendors, consultants, etc and record in Quick books. Make deposits and record into Quickbooks. Invoice customers/fee-paying clients.

### **Monthly**

- Payroll: Set to automatically direct- deposit for current employee. Memorized transaction for payroll, taxes, and fees should be recorded into Quickbooks.
- Credit Card Reconciliation: Reconcile monthly statements with receipts; pay bill. Record expenses by class/project and customer into Quickbooks.
- Reconcile bank statements against Quickbooks
- Adjust General Ledger/Quickbooks to allocate staff time and shared costs against projects/classes.

### **Quarterly**

- Submit board updates and include quarterly financial statements

### **Annually**

- Prepare Quickbook files and paper files for annual review and 990 filings; send digital QB file to

CPA/accountant, paper files are audited in site visit.

- Renew registered agent/pay corporation fees
- File all relevant materials with State, pay filing fees
- Renew all insurance: Worker's Compensation, Board Liability (Director's and Officer's insurance);

Liability and Property insurance.

- File forms with Attorney General's office, if appropriate

### **Events**

Events Procedures