

SUMMARY

Types of User Documents

Description Document

The functional description document provides information on the system requirements and the services offered

INSTALLATION

The system installation document is meant for the system administrators.

Configuration

The system configuration document is meant for the system administrators or users

USER MANUAL

The user manual should introduce the audience to that particular system

Systems Reference

The system reference documentation should provide information on the system facilities, how to use those facilities, list of error messages and how to recover from errors

SUMMARY

Skills of a Technical Writer

Facility with technology

You must have the potential to grasp technology

ABILITY TO WRITE CLEARLY

The essential skill of any technical communicator is to disambiguate

PATIENCE IN PROBLEM-SOLVING/TROUBLESHOOTING

Much of IT work consists of problem solving

TALENT IN SHOWING IDEAS GRAPHICALLY

Show ideas graphically as much as possible.

ABILITY TO INTERACT WITH SMES

You must be able to identify and interview people who possess knowledge important to your document

SUMMARY

Technical Writers

Identify the Audience

Research and structure the content

ENSURE IT IS ACCURATE AND UNDERSTOOD

Communicate ideas

DESIGN INFORMATION

Participate in the product development process

MANAGE COMPLEX DOCUMENTATION PROJECTS.

Write clearly

USE CORRECT JARGON

SUMMARY

Researching Potential Readers

**Surveys and
questionnaires**

popular opinion and stereotypes

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Brainstorming documentation efforts

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

Their level of experience
with similar products

**HOW THEY INTEND TO USE
THE SOFTWARE**

The jargon they use in their work

SUMMARY

The B's of Interacting with SMEs

Bullying

Bullying developers is unlikely to be effective

BEGGING

Begging might work, but it's undignified.

Bothering

Bothering developers is probably the most common and most annoying technique.

BRIBING

Bribing developers can be the first step on the road to a longlasting friendship

Backscratching

"you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours"

SUMMARY

Conducting SME Interviews

Resources

Manner

INFORMATION CHUNKS

Validation

PREPARATION

Beginning

CONDUCTING

Finishing

TRACKING THE TASK