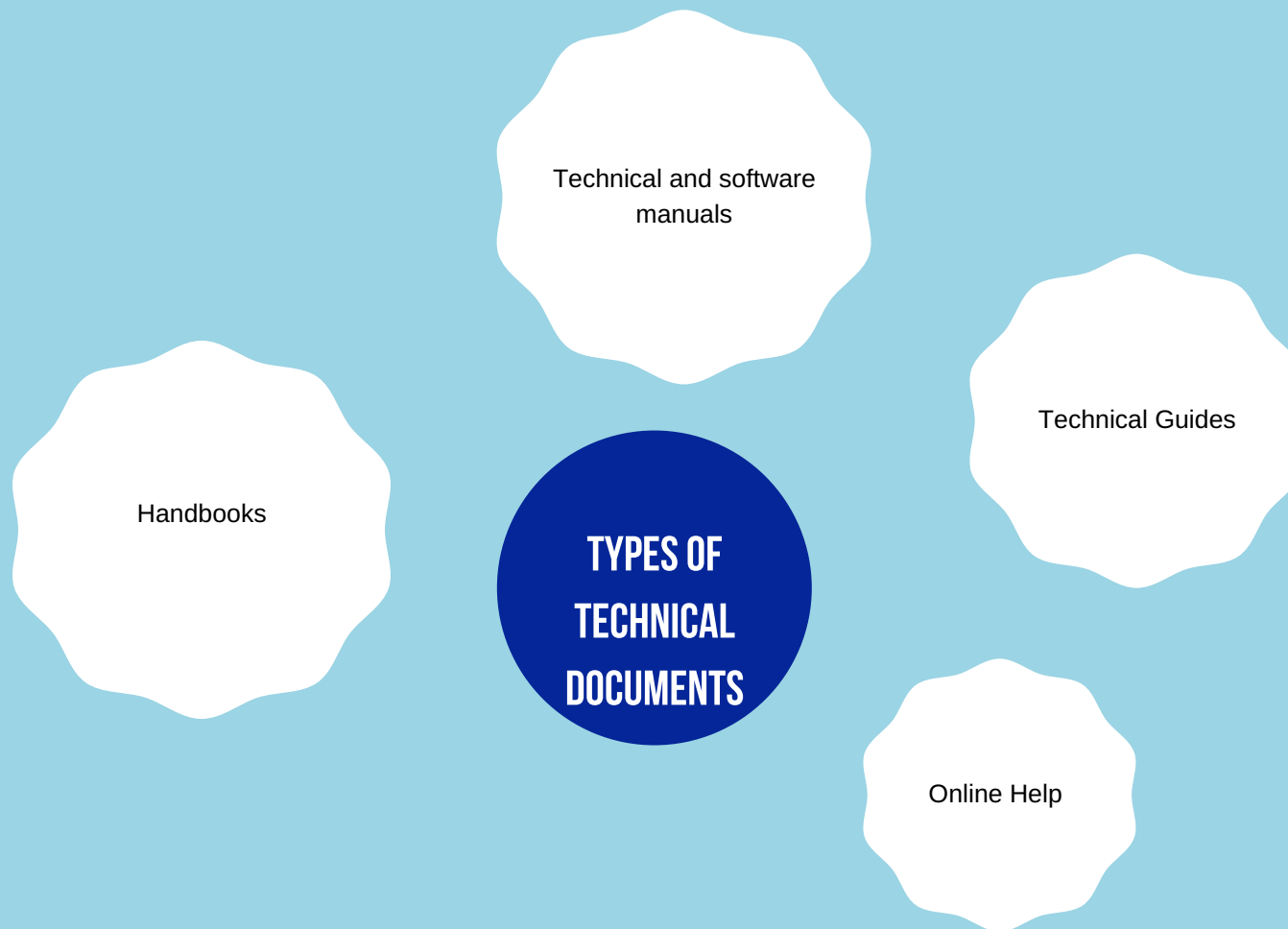


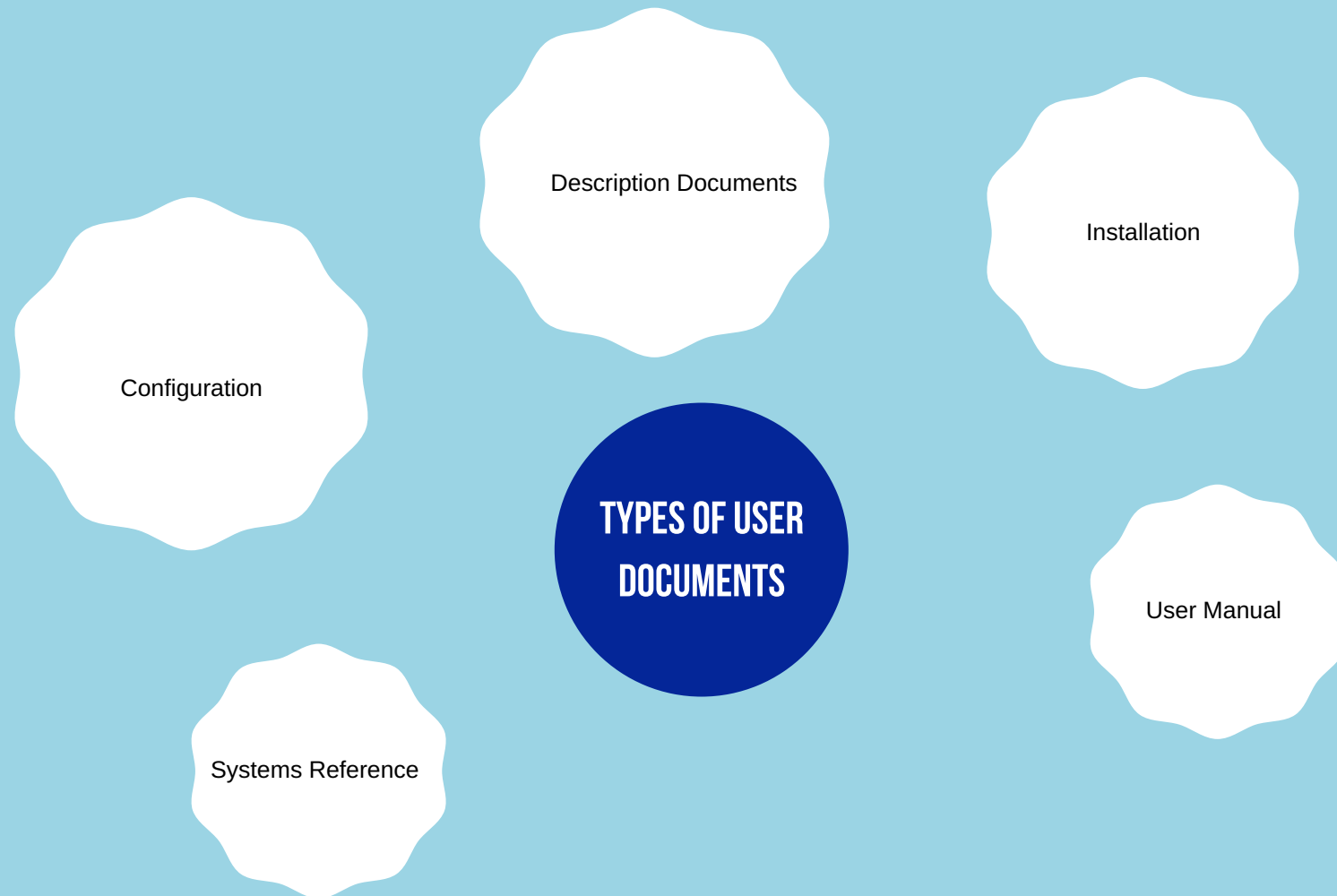
# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL WRITING



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL WRITING



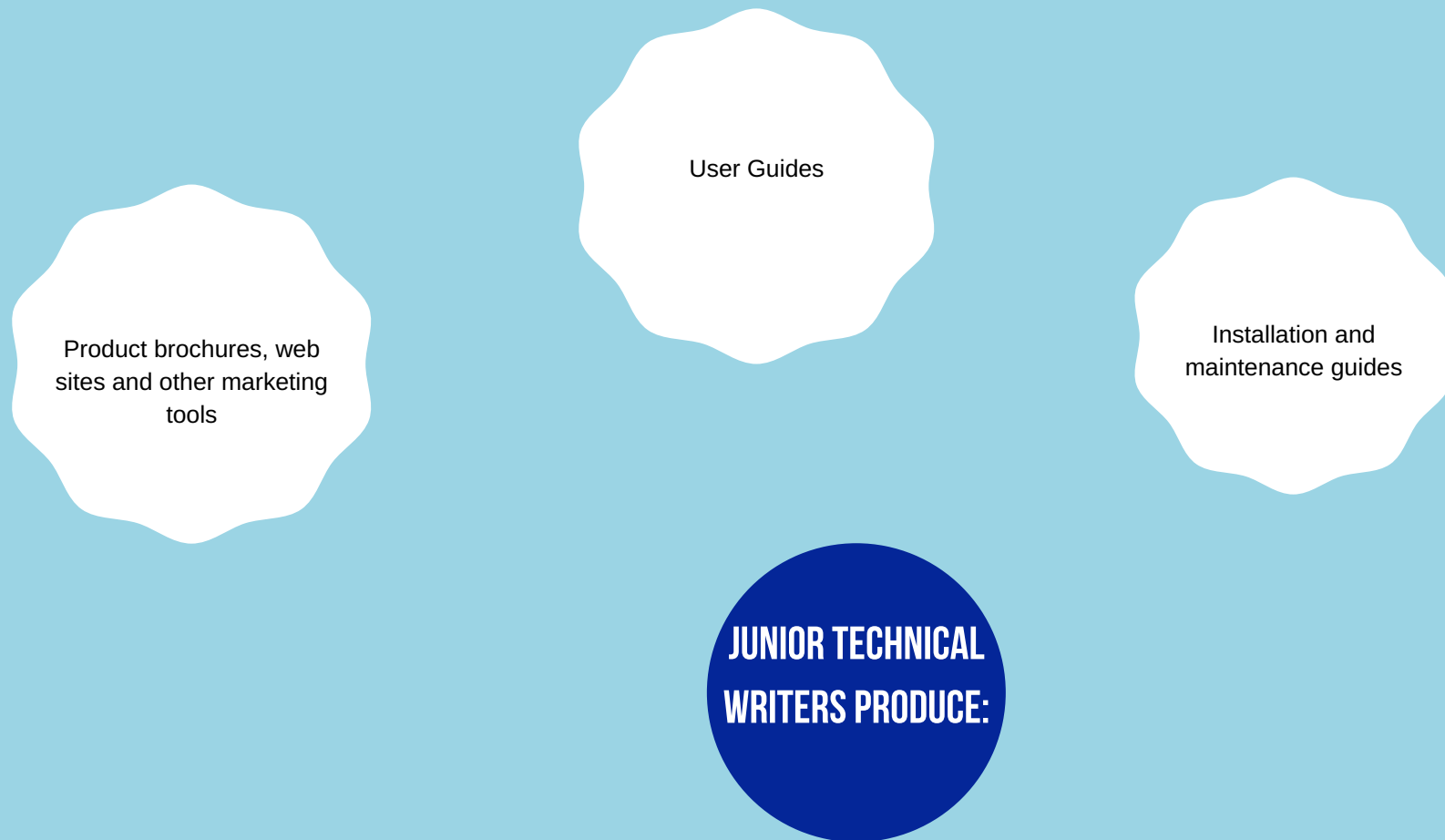
# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL WRITING



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL WRITING



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL WRITING

Requirement Specifications

Design documents

Control documents

**ADVANCED  
TECHNICAL  
WRITERS PRODUCE:**

Test Cases

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

Documentation is a form of support and product marketing for the audience it targets.

**WRITING FOR THE  
AUDIENCE**

Good technical writers have the ability to transfer the knowledge of subject-matter experts to the end user through their documentation.

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## AUDIENCE ANALYSIS



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

Level of experience with similar products

How they intend to use the software

Jargon they use in their work

**END USER  
ANALYSIS**



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## AUDIENCE ANALYSIS



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

Personas are not real people,

Personas are not "made up"

defined with significant rigor and precision

Interfaces that satisfy personas' needs and goals are built

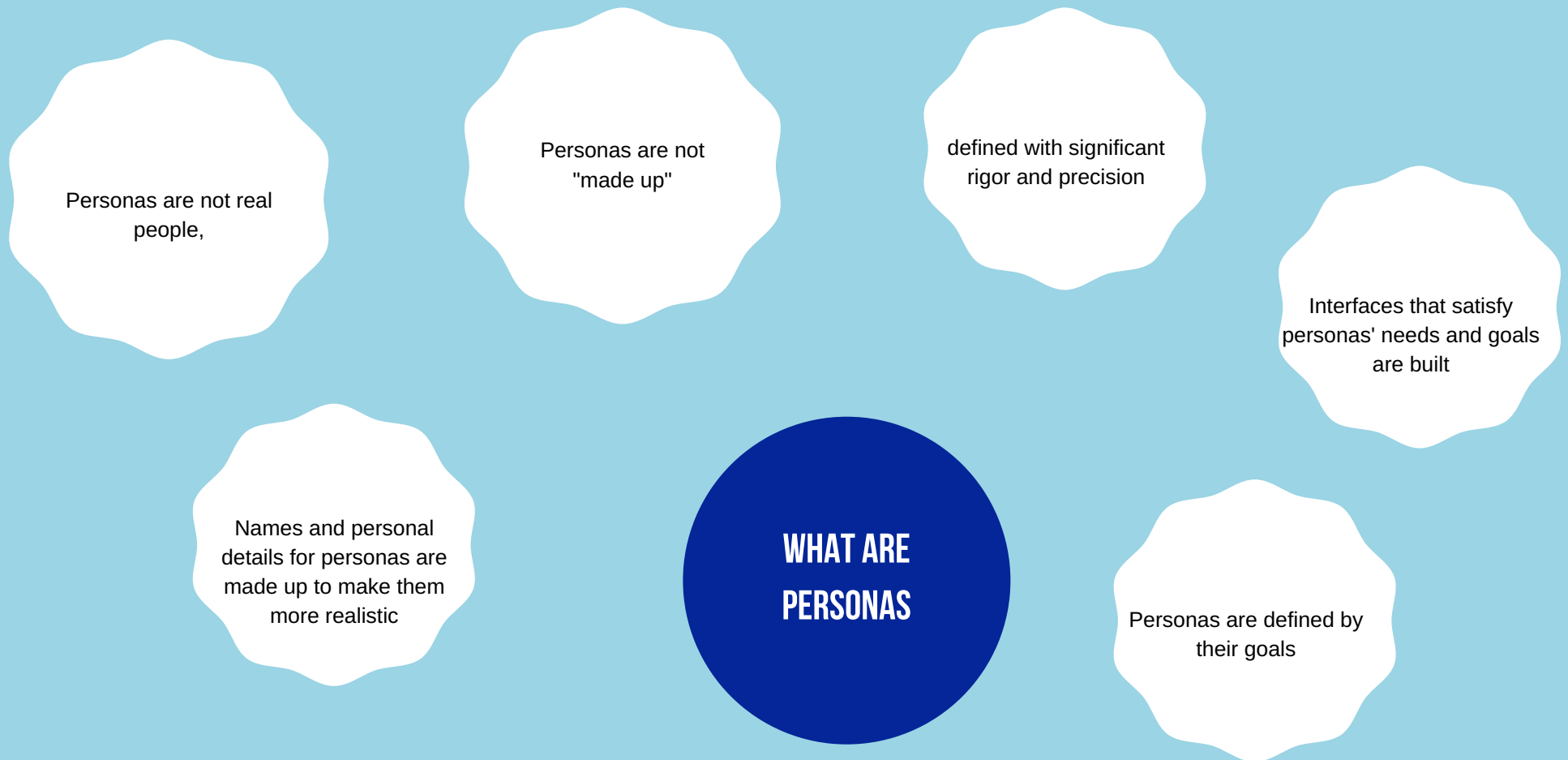
Names and personal details for personas are made up to make them more realistic

**WHAT ARE PERSONAS**

Personas are defined by their goals

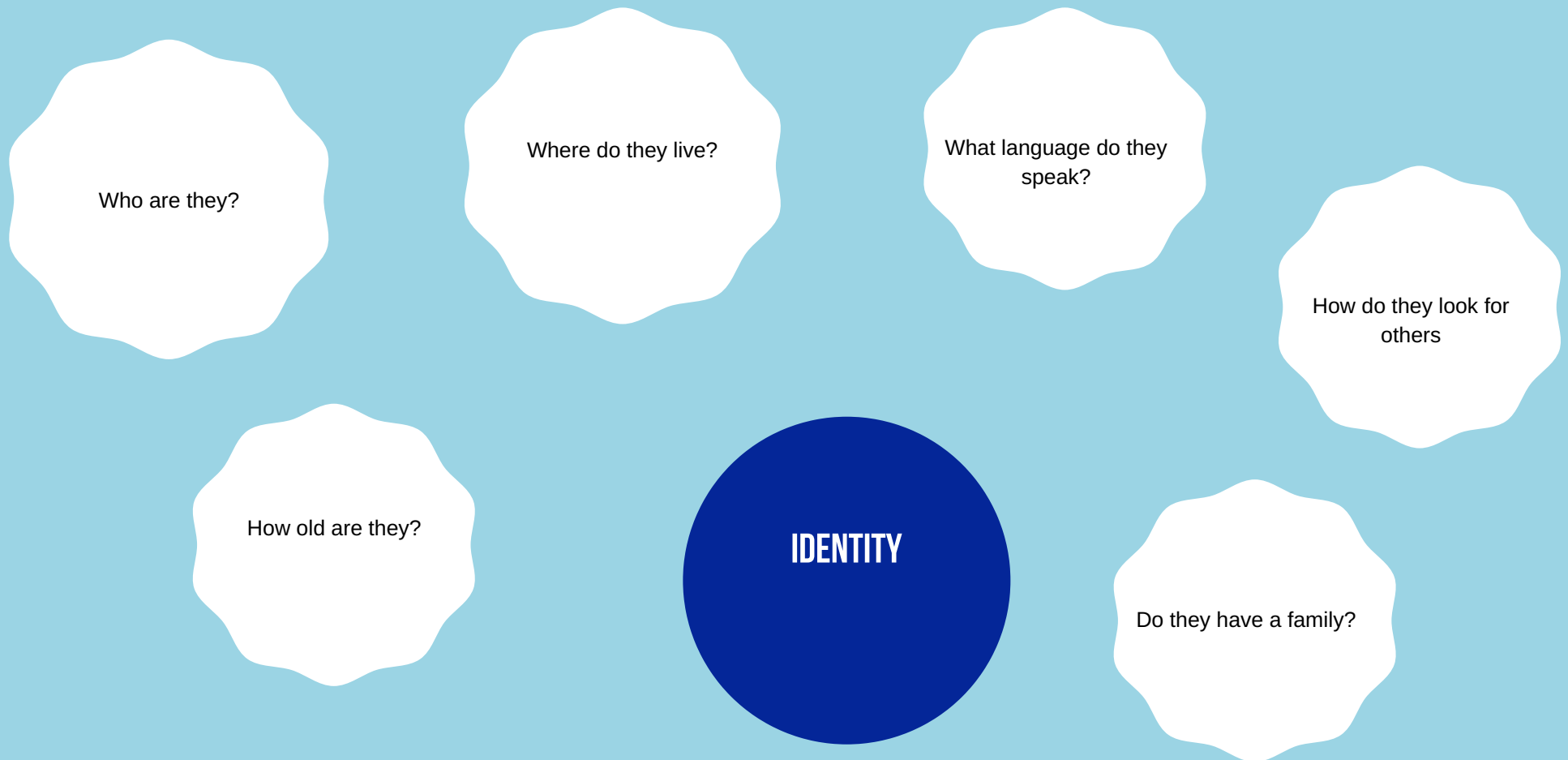
# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## AUDIENCE ANALYSIS



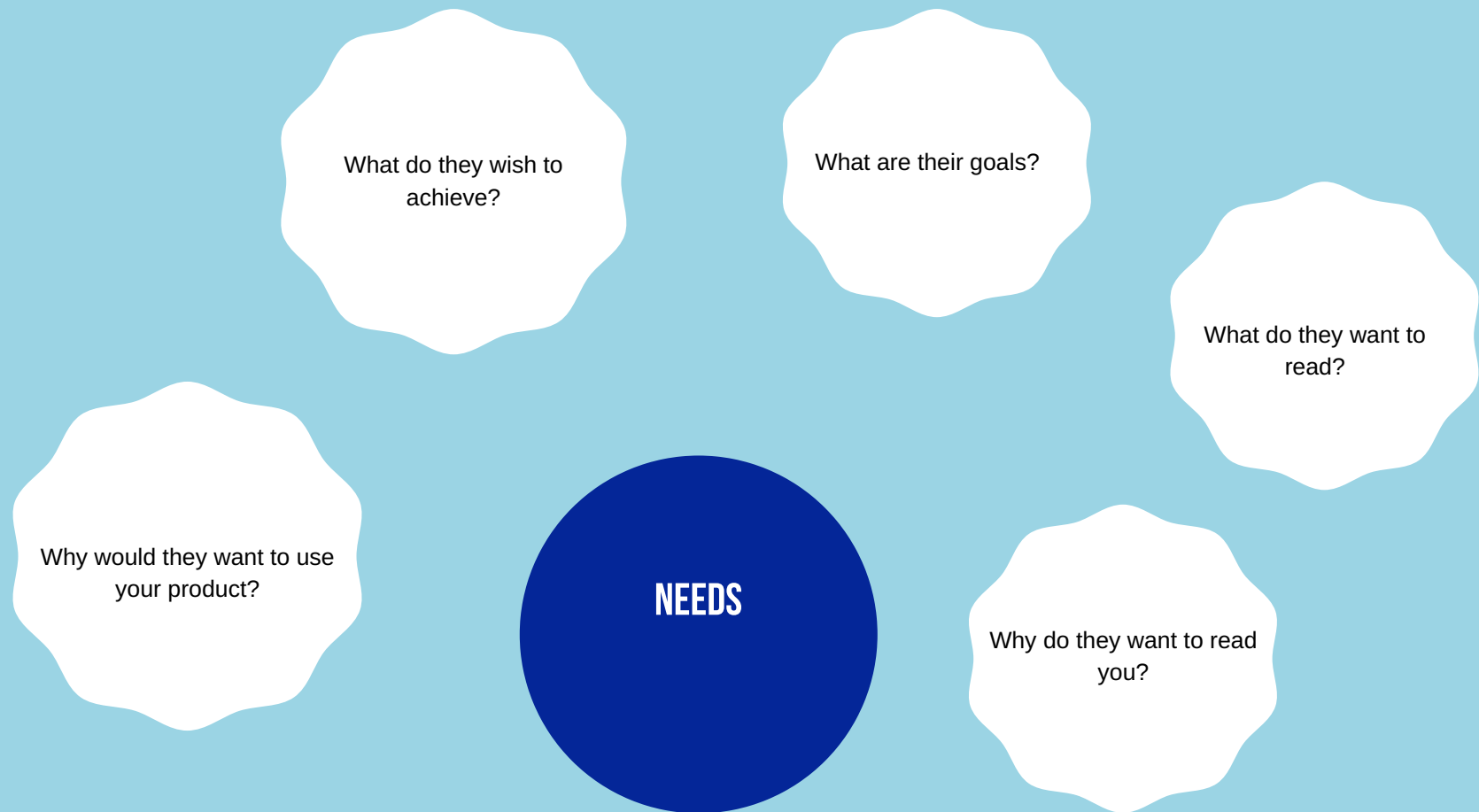
# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## AUDIENCE ANALYSIS



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## AUDIENCE ANALYSIS



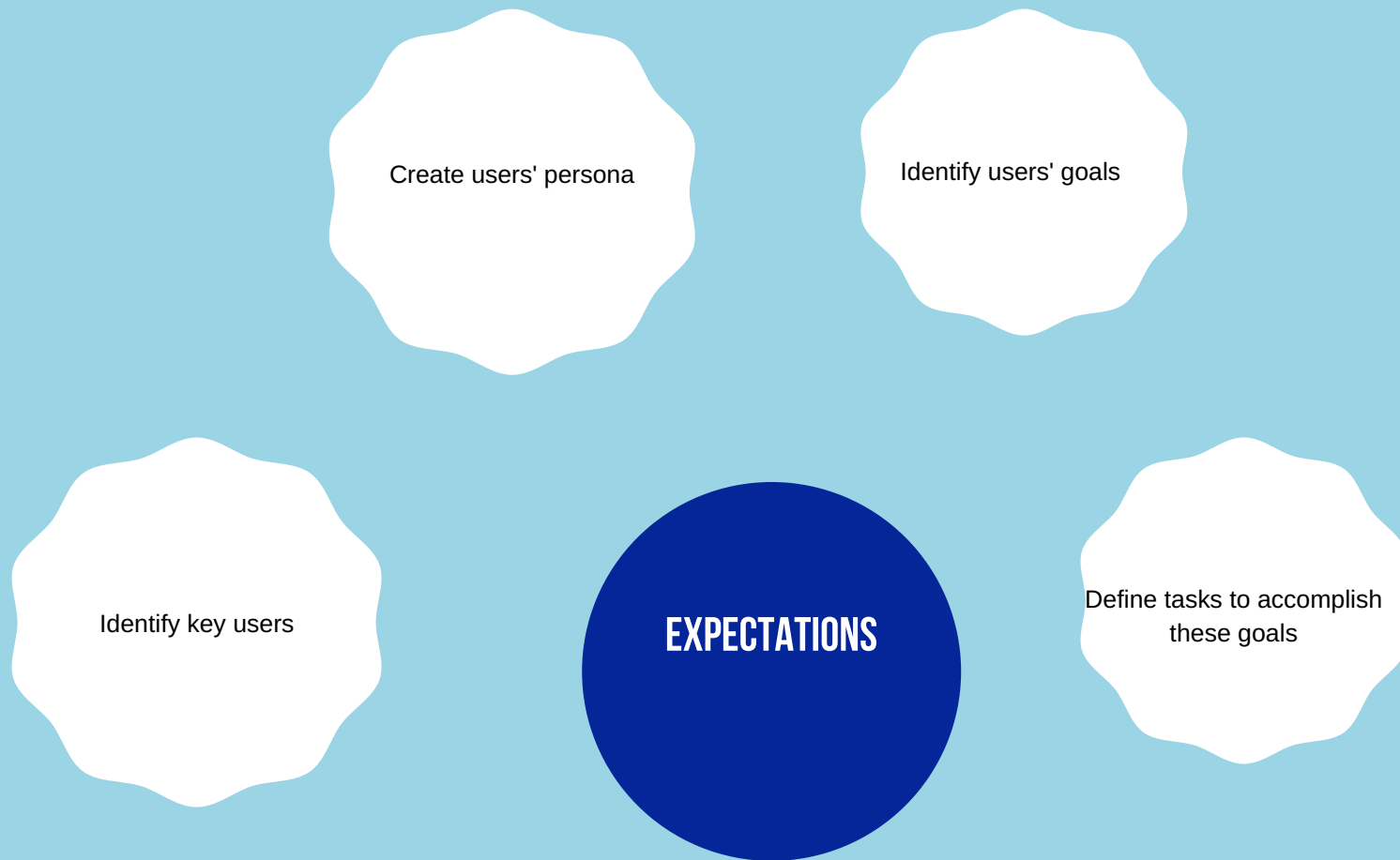
# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## AUDIENCE ANALYSIS



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## AUDIENCE ANALYSIS



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING

While it is true that the purpose of an interview is to gather information about the product you are writing about.

One of the most important reasons for being properly prepared for an interview is to maintain your credibility with the SME

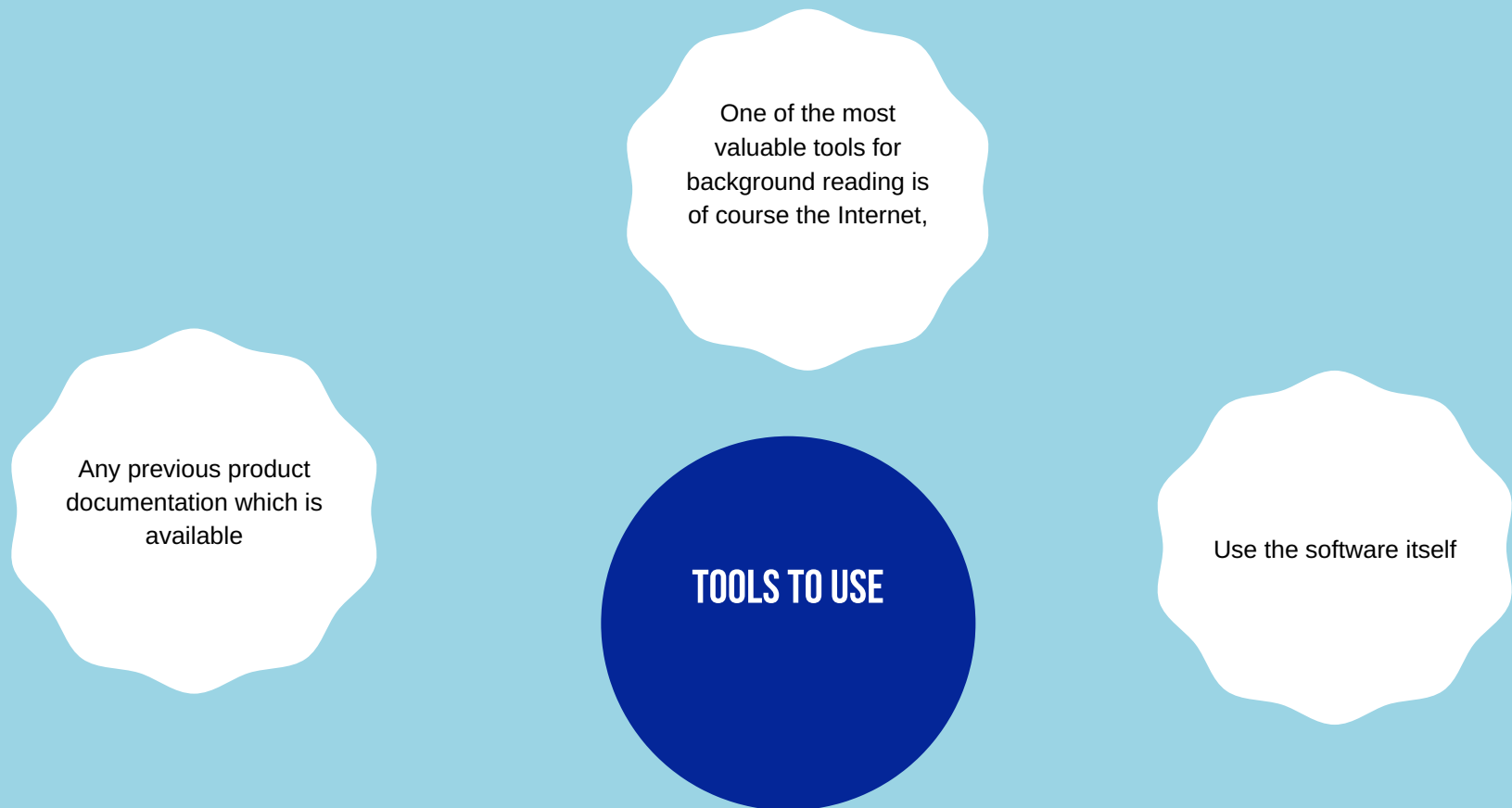
**WHY RESEARCH  
FOR AN INTERVIEW**

It is important when dealing with an SME not to attempt to bluff them and appear more knowledgeable than you really are



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING



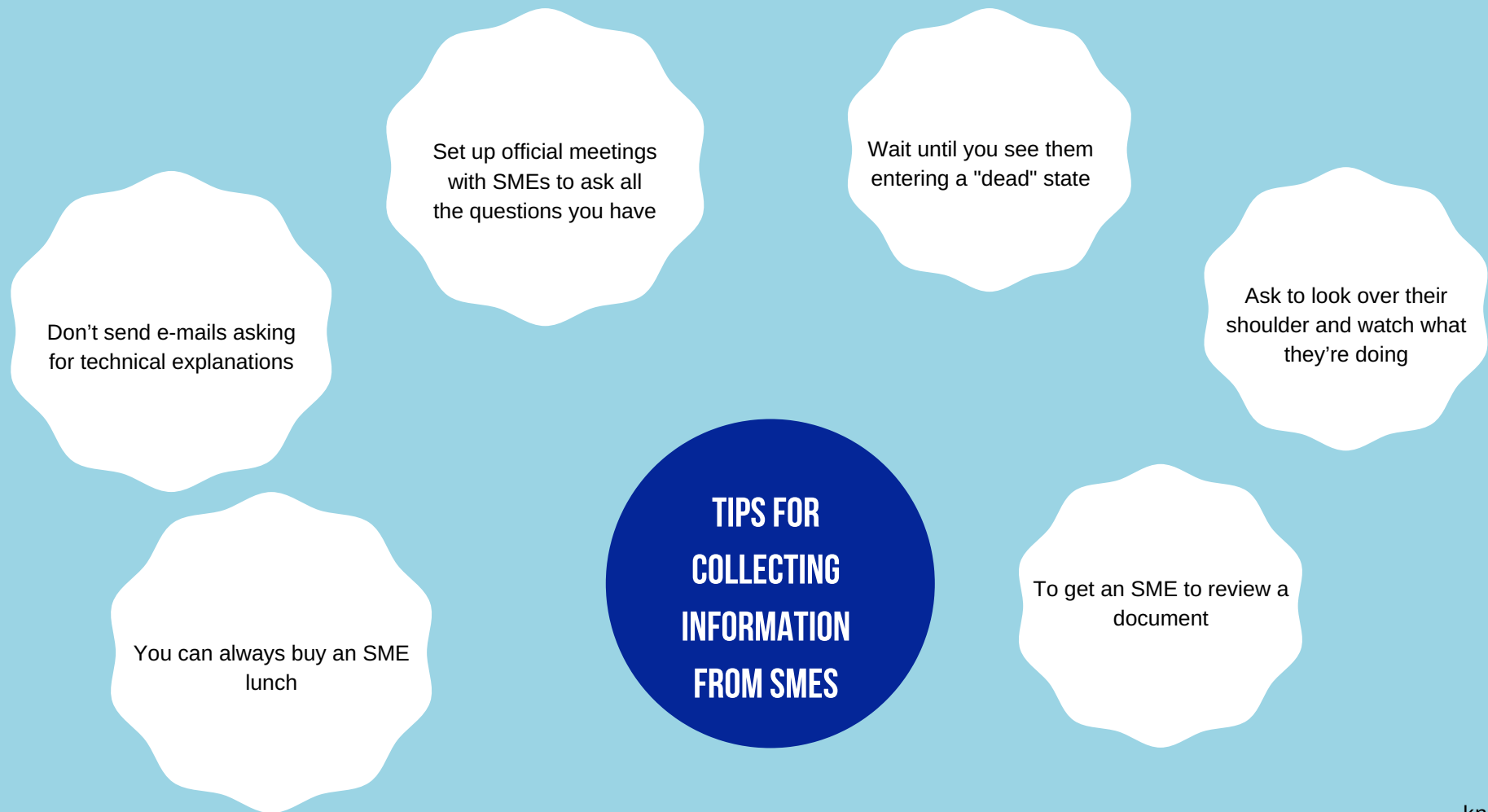
# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING



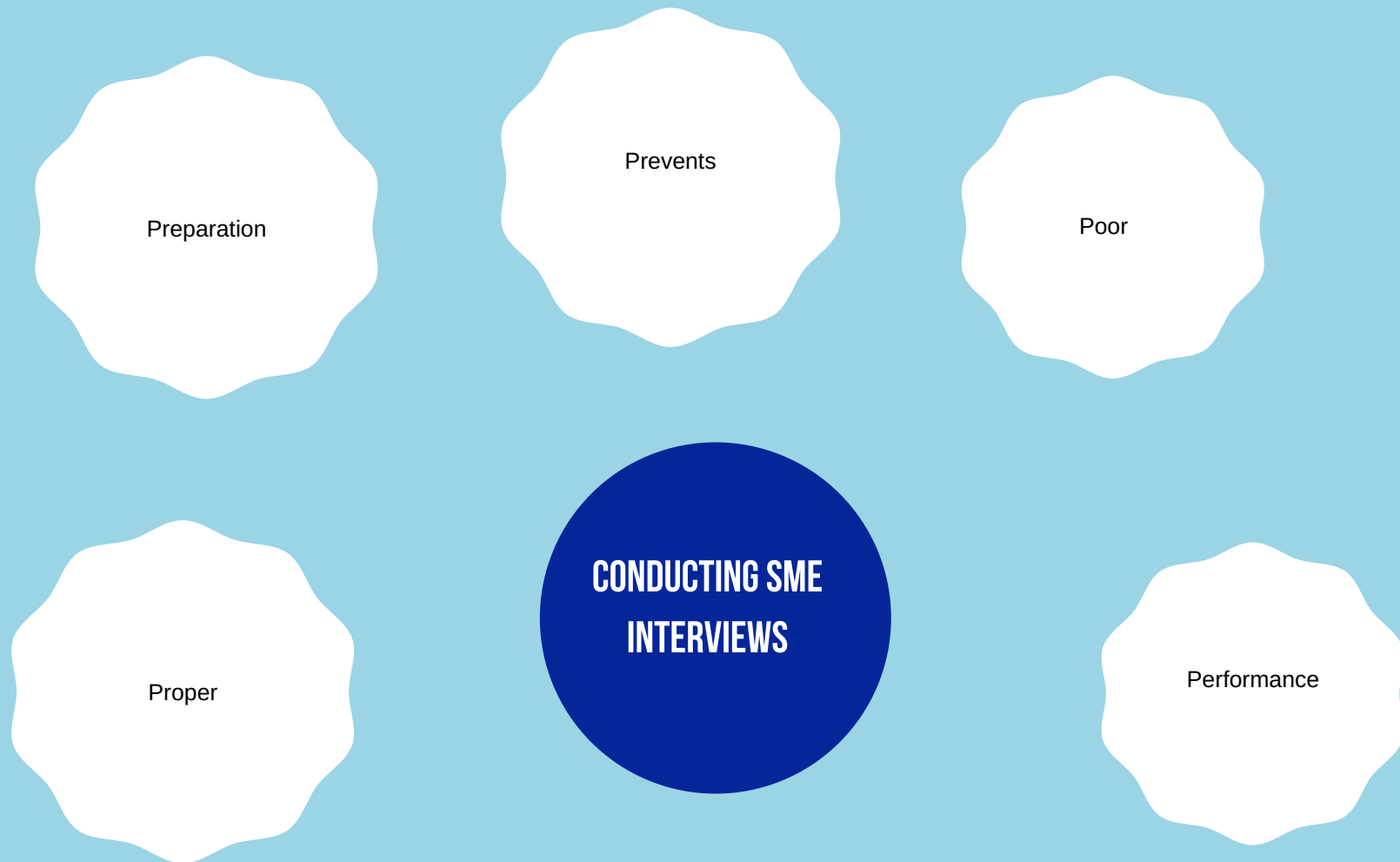
# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING

Type straight to your laptop

Use a notepad and pen

Bring a recording device to keep a record of the information that the SME presents

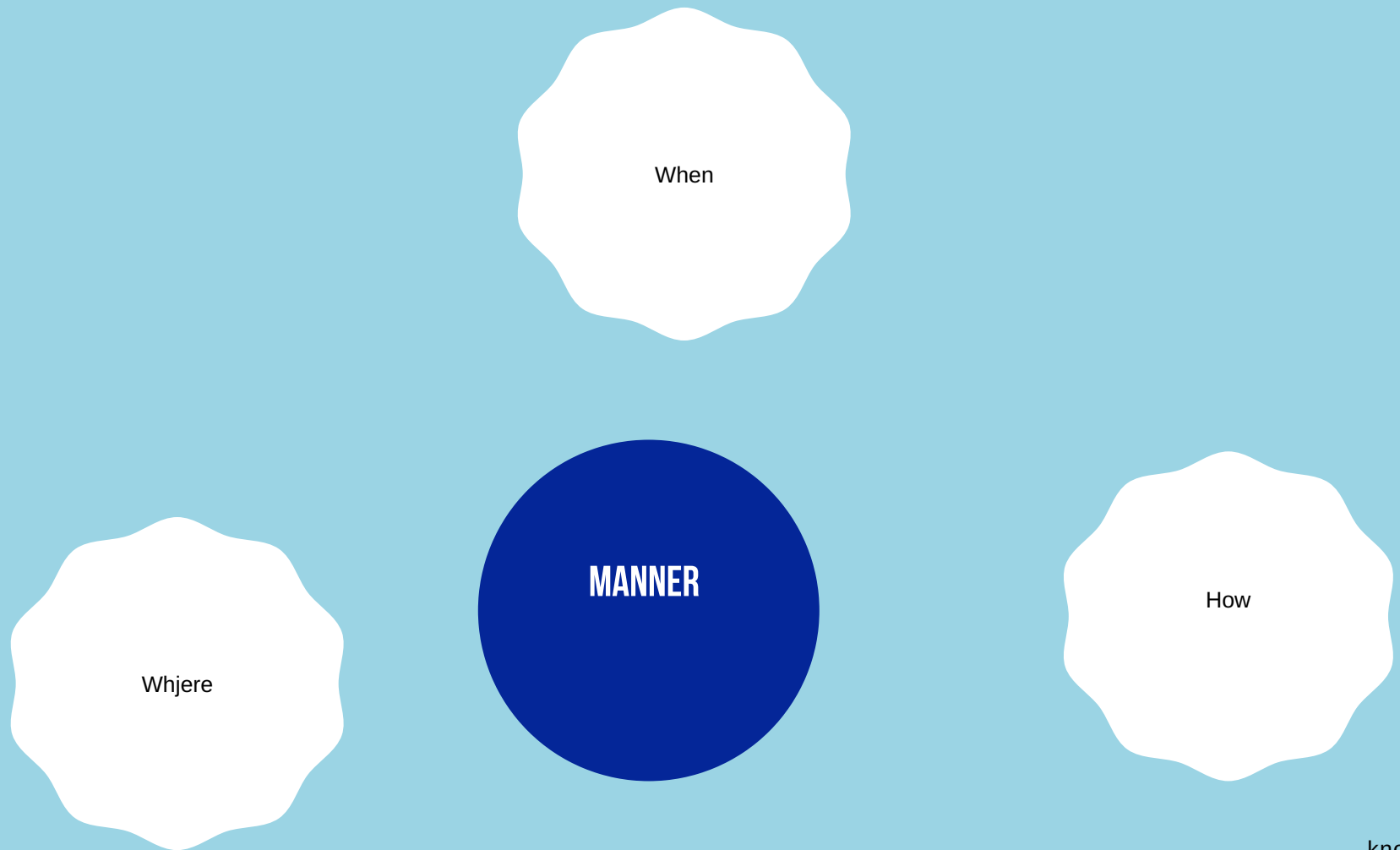
Record the information you receive from the SME

### RESOURCES

If the SME uses a whiteboard for diagrams, then have a camera with you to take pictures of the diagrams

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING

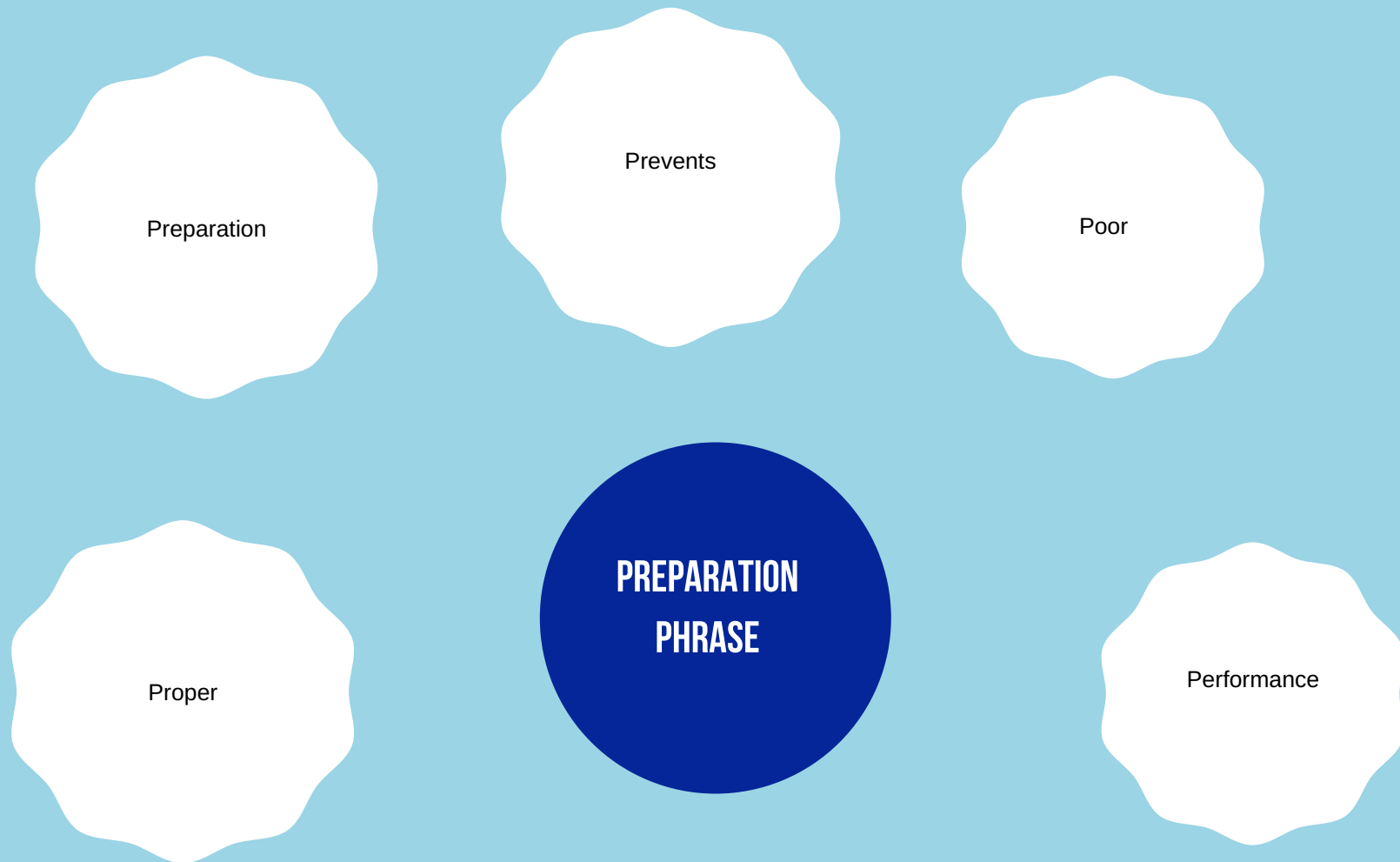
They will assume that you have some background knowledge on the product about which you are writing

Your questions should reflect this reality and look only for chunks that are useful, rather than writing monologues

**INFORMATION  
CHUNKS**

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING





# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING

Begin with the questions you already have

Ask follow-up questions in order to clarify the SME's replies

Taking notes is important

**CONDUCTING**

Bring the SME back to the points you want covered

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING

Ask if there is anything you  
have overlooked.

Thank the SME again  
for his or her time.

**FINISHING**

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING

Ask if there is anything you  
have overlooked.

Thank the SME again  
for his or her time.

**FINISHING**

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING

Keeping a track of your work is essential for the life cycle of a project

Make a list of topics and concepts that correspond to the requirement specification of the system

**TRACKING A TASK**

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## RESEARCHING AND INTERVIEWING

Providing accurate information is one of the most important tasks in technical writing.

The first line of validation is, naturally, self-validation

Validation is a process that ensures that the information you have written is accurate and, most importantly, that it works.

**VALIDATION**

Having the SME validate your work is also a useful approach

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STRUCTURE

The idea that human brains can handle and store effectively around seven chunks of information at a time.

Most things can be described in terms of structure and function

An information "chunk" is a digestible unit of information.

**INFORMATION  
CHUNKS**

Structure is Platonic in the sense that it approximates an ideal form. Function is Aristotelian in that it describes the uses we have for things

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STRUCTURE

Structures  
have Descriptions

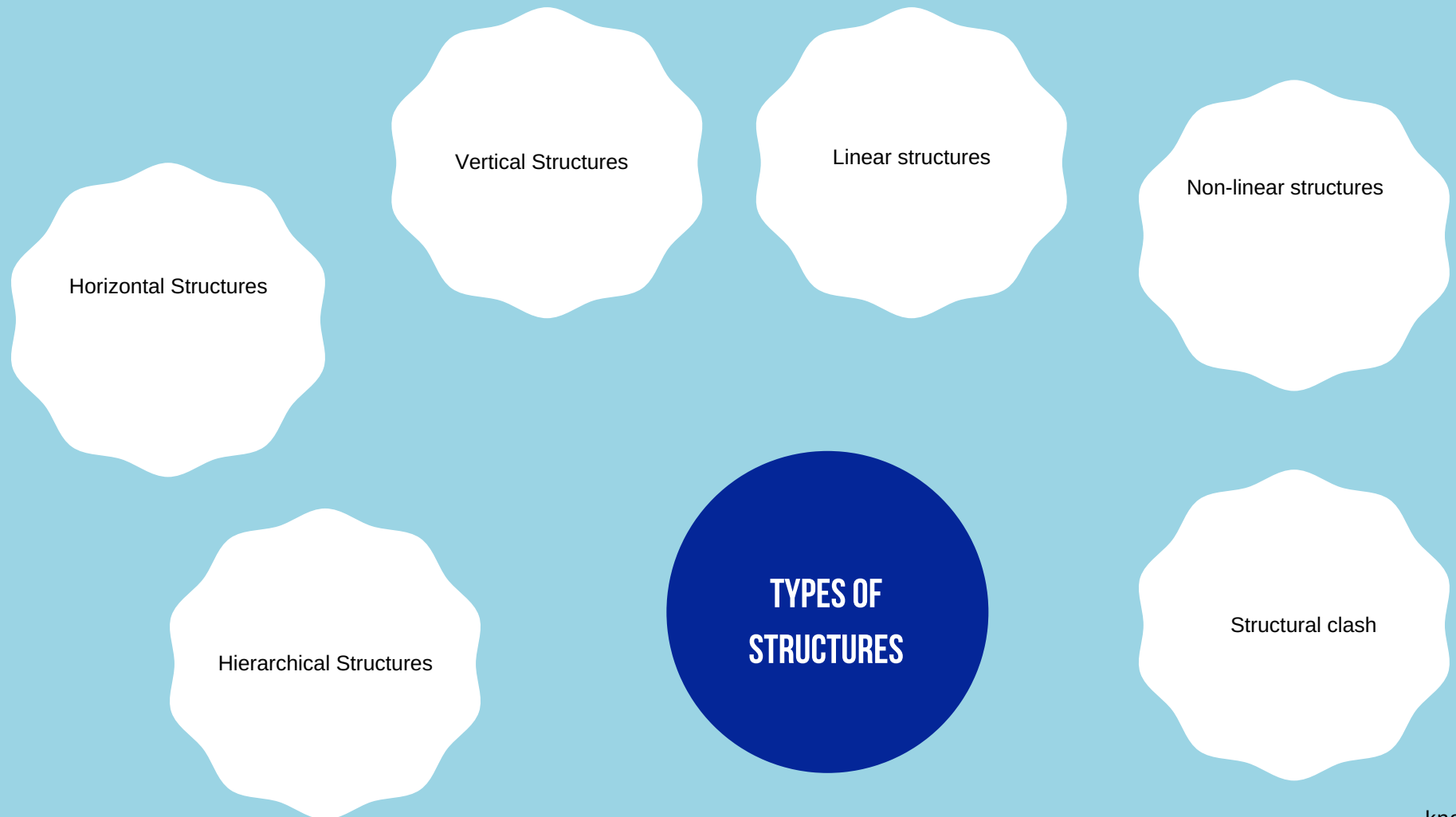
Functions  
have Instructions.

**DESCRIPTIONS  
VERSUS  
INSTRUCTIONS**



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STRUCTURE



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

Write clearly, using words the audience understands.

Compose simple, active voice sentences.

Understand the audience and speak directly to the reader.

Use active voice, appropriate grammatical person, present tense, and the imperative mood.

Inform (educate) the user.

**GOALS**

Avoid unnecessary repetition, redundant jargon, and passive voice.

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

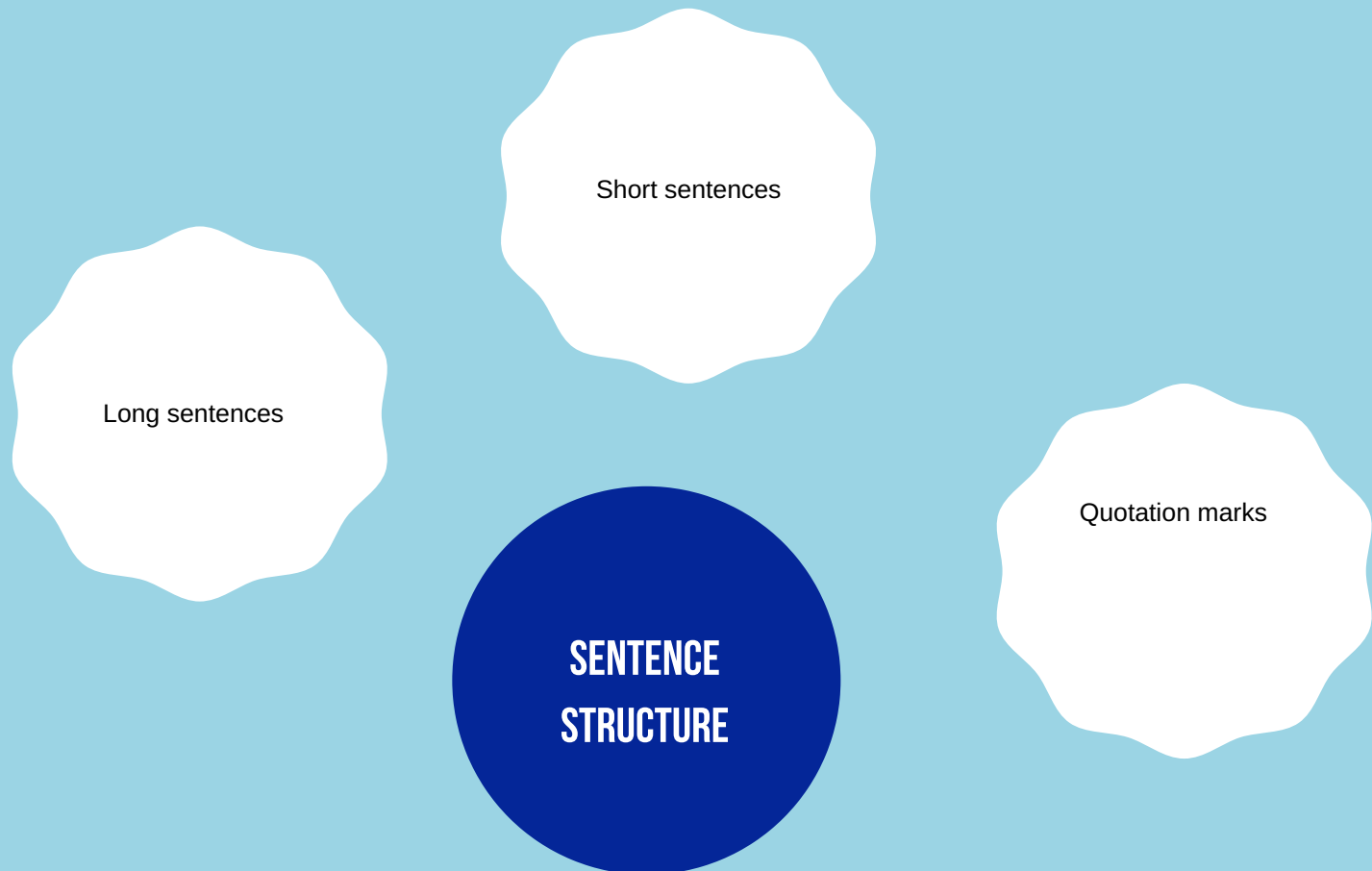
Understand your  
environment

Use your audience's  
vocabulary

**IMPORTANT  
INFORMATION  
FIRST**

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

Avoid verbosity

Avoid pomposity

Avoid padding

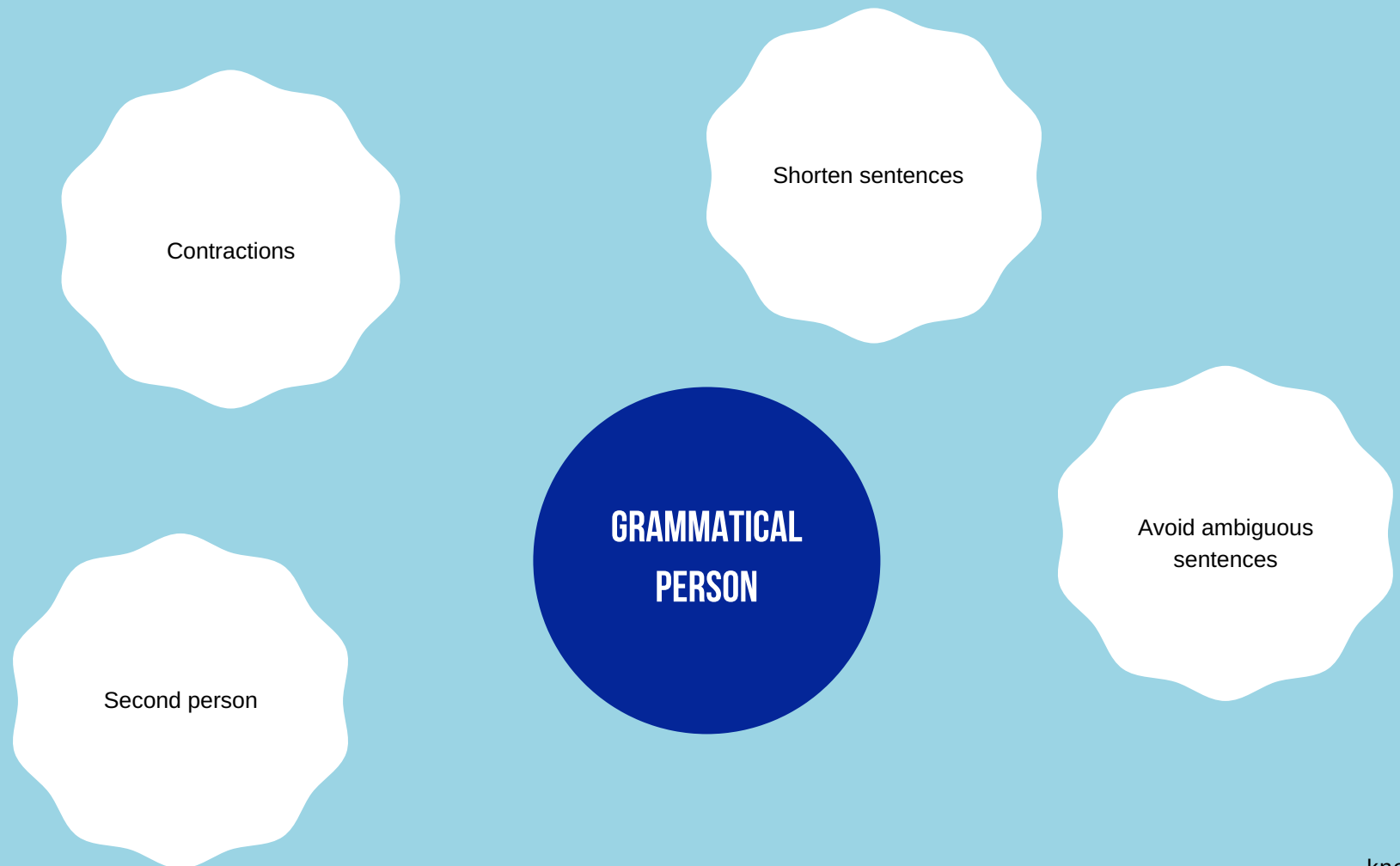
Write clearly

Avoid the obvious

**RULES OF CONCISE  
COMMUNICATION**

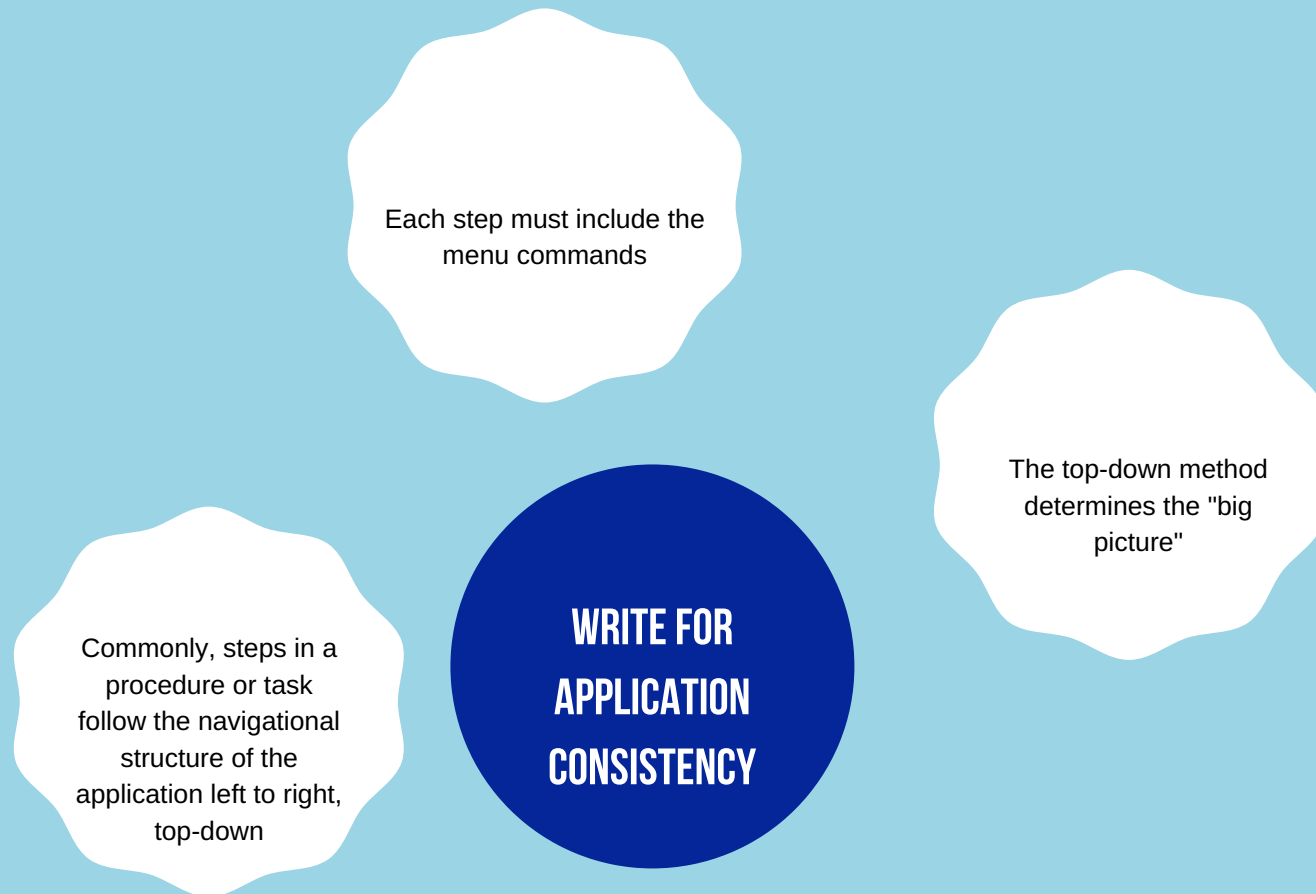
# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

Use of an action verb  
in a sentence

**ACTION VERBS,  
MENUS AND  
COMMANDS**

Use of menu actions and  
commands in a sentence



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

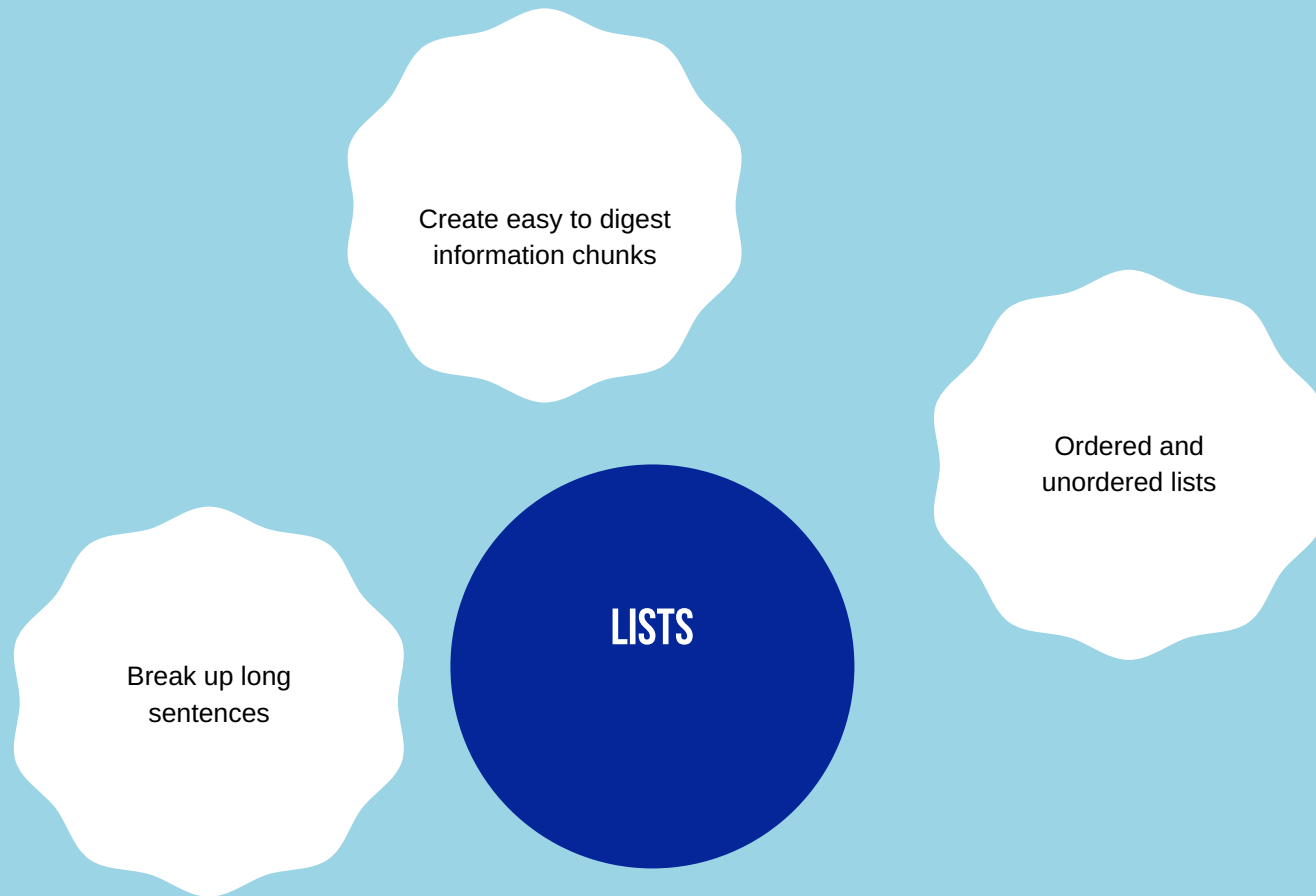
English provides no dedicated pronoun for the gender-neutral third-person singular

**SPECIFY GENDER**

Writers often use the gender-ambiguous plural pronouns: "they," "them," and "their," to describe individuals of unknown gender

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE



# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

. If the list is made up of phrases, capitalize the first word of each list item

Do not end each list item with a comma or full-stop (period).

**PUNCTUATION**

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

Subject matter is important.

Apply warnings to any documentation that includes a task or procedure that causes damage to life or property

**SUBJECT**

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

Part of our task as information specialists is to write in a tone suitable for the audience

When deciding on style and tone, audience, subject, and purpose are the main considerations.

**FORMALITY**

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

Audience awareness  
dictates style.

As we are writing for  
professionals we must write  
professionally, in a  
reasonably formal style.

**AUDIENCE**

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

Our purpose is to  
inform, not to entertain.

Writing must be  
informational.

**PURPOSE**

# TECHNICAL WRITING COURSE

## TECHNICAL WRITING STYLE

Eliminate useless  
jargon

Be positive

Avoid long noun  
constructions

Don't use cliches

Be specific

Use active voice

**CLARITY - SEVEN  
GUIDELINES FOR  
CLEAR WRITING.**

Don't use euphemisms