**Overview of Technical Writing**

Technical writing refers to any writing that deals with a specialized area usually in science or industry. Because technical writing usually deals with an object, a process, or an abstract idea, the language is utilitarian, stressing accuracy rather than style. The tone is objective: the technical content, not the author's voice, is the focal point. The purpose is to accurately transmit technical information.

Good technical writing is:

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**Logical**

Papers usually have an Introduction, Data section, Analysis section, Results section and a Conclusion. Organization is important for clarity.

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**Accurate**

Since the goal is to transmit technical information, the facts, theories and observations should be correct. Base your conclusions only on facts not assumptions. Readers make scientific decisions based on data presented. The results of good scientific work can be obscured by reports that are full of inaccuracies.

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**Consistent**

Capitalization, units of measure, use of abbreviations, punctuation and rules of grammar should be correct and consistent. Inconsistencies in technical writing will confuse the reader and convince them that the scientific work being presented is as sloppy as your writing. The goal is to produce a document that is written by an educated, literate person.

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**Clear**

1. Keep the writing short and simple. Use small words not big ones. Keep sentences, paragraphs and sections short. Limit each paragraph or section to one central idea.
2. Active voice is preferable to passive voice and uses fewer words.
3. Avoid technical jargon. Some terminology is necessary and valid. But too much makes the writing incomprehensible.
4. Technical writers need to consider their audience. Since a single document maybe read by a wide variety of individuals, write so that the most non-technical reader can understand it.

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**Grammatically correct**

Misspelled words and sloppy grammar point to authors who are lazy and uncaring about their work.

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**Concise**

People are extremely busy. Concise writing is easier and less time consuming to read. Your words should be precise and well organized. Get to the point quickly, and stick to it. State the problem clearly, analyze the problem, and summarize the results.

Include only useful references. The length of the piece is no guide to its importance.

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**Persuasive**

The document should offer clear, objective presentation of the facts that support your ideas, opinions and recommendations.

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**Interesting**

If a document is going to be read, it has to keep the readers interest.