**UNIT 2 CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF TECHNICAL WRITING**

Characteristics Features of Technical Writing



### Structure

* 1. Objectives
  2. Introduction
  3. Classification of Technical Communications
  4. General Characteristics of Technical Writing
  5. Characteristics of Types, Relevant to Library and Information Field
     1. Professional Writings
     2. Proposals
     3. Plans
     4. Reports
     5. Instructional Materials
     6. Professional Services
     7. Correspondence
  6. Oral Communication
     1. Presentation Materials
  7. Summary
  8. Answers to Self Check Exercises
  9. Key Words
  10. References and Further Reading

# OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

* classify written communications using appropriate characteristics to divide them into many useful groups;
* get a good insight into various writing situations relevant to library and information professionals;
* grasp the essential characteristic features of technical writing to identify specific types;
* obtain a working knowledge of designing structural outlines for specific types of technical writing; and
* understand oral presentation supported by carefully designed written materials.

# INTRODUCTION

The first Unit of this Block presented a bird's-eye view of the different facets of technical communication. This Unit presents various forms of technical communications, using a few relevant characteristics to identify them. While there are general characteristic features common to all categories of technical writing, specific characteristic features reckon the different ones. This reckoning might help the preparation of structural outlines for each of them.

Library and information professionals have to be familiar with a number of writing situations, both in the management of information institutions and in offering professional services. These types of writing situations are illustrated with examples of outlines for each one of them, identifying their specific characteristic features. This type of designing outlines would give you a good practice to prepare such outlines to any specific writing material that is to be written.

Oral presentations have to be invariably supported by carefully designed written materials. This Unit tries to illustrate a few examples of presentation materials to support oral communication.

# CLASSIFICATION OF TECHNICAL

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# COMMUNICATIONS

Classifying written communication into various categories would be a useful exercise because it helps to analyse and identify the characteristic features of various types of written documents. There is, of course, no single characteristic or a single set of characteristics that can classify all written communication to serve every purpose.

Categorisation of technical communications is shown below:

1. Division by function

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a) | Proposing what one wants to do: | Proposal for new projects, new methods and materials, Research problems, etc. |
| b) | Recording setting down details of an action, decision plan or agreement | Minutes of meetings, business agreements, transactions; |
| c) | Reporting Routine periodic: | Organisation/institution reports (annual, half-yearly, etc.), progress reports; |
|  | Inquiry | Surveys, investigations, experiments, tests, research, etc.; |
|  | Informing | Information bulletins, literature reviews product descriptions process explanations; |
|  | Recommending | Commission Reports; |
|  | Suggesting action | Committee Reports; |
| d) | Persuading urging conclusions, convince purchase, etc.) | Construction bids, grant applications, an action, influence a advertisements, business promotions; and |
| e) | Training/instruction | Course materials, reference guides systems manuals, user manuals; |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ii) | Division by type of documents: | Research papers, professional writings, |
|  |  | instructional materials reference, materials, bibliographical tools, reports, periodicals, regulatory and legal documents, newsletters/house journals, and such other primary, secondary and tertiary materials; |
| ii) | Division by readership: | Professional peers and colleagues, |
|  |  | business persons, industrialists, academiacians / scholars, bureaucrats/ govt. executives, general public |

The above groups are not mutually exclusive. They indeed overlap very much. They are, however, grouped here only to help us to identify the distinct categories of each one of them. The purpose is to aid us in the formulation of structural designs for each of them that would go a long way to prepare written drafts.

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* 1. State a few reasons for classifying technical communications.

**Self Check Exercise**

### Note:

i)) Write your answer in the space given below.

1. Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

Characteristics Features of Technical Writing



# GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TECHNICAL WRITING

In this Unit, by characteristic features of technical writing, we mean the structural elements or components of different types that distinctly mark them. There are some general characteristic features that are common to all of them. There are also others that are unique to each category. We shall examine both these features.

In Unit 1, we distinguished creative writing from technical writing. We noted that technical writing invariably

1. deals with a subject or a topic;
2. addresses a specific target group;
3. presents the contents in a language that is oriented towards a target group;
4. presents the write-up in a form, supported by well designed illustrations and

photographs wherever necessary, to draw attention of the target group; and

1. gets printed attractively, if the document is brought out in a paper-print mode;

gets appropriate formats if brought out by any other mode.

These characteristic features can he attributed to any type of technical writing. The different categories of technical writing mentioned in section 2.2 of this Unit, however, have their distinct characteristic features which would identify them from others. Let us examine these distinct characteristic features of a few illustrative categories which are relevant to professionals in the Library and Information Science discipline.

# CHARACTERISTICS OF TYPES, RELEVANT TO LIBRARY AND INFORMATION FIELD

Effective written communication skills are one of the most essential requirements of a library and information professional, as these professionals are basically communicators. It is not an overstatement to say that without these skills, advancement to the top positions in this field would be rather increasingly difficult in the changing and expanding dimensions of Library and Information Science. These aspects have been sufficiently emphasised in Unit 1 of this Block.

Many of the writing situations discussed in Unit 1 of this Block also are relevant to the

Library and Information field. However, this Unit picks up a few typical ones to discuss 23

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their specific characteristic features.

Process **2.4.1 Professional Writings**



Professional writings take, usually, the form of research/technical papers/articles, investigative reports, survey of literature, review articles, and such others. Many of these get published in journals, conference proceedings and in other periodical publications. Some are brought out in the form of independent reports or monographs.

The primary purpose of these communications is to inform or record the findings of an investigation which can be accepted by the peers with changes and modifications, if necessary, and to be incorporated into the pool of knowledge in that discipline. Sometimes they may serve as useful training or instructional materials and/or may also help decision making processes. Hence care has to be taken in planning and preparing such documents. Good quality publications get the author not only professional recognition but also raises his standing as an accomplished communicator. Besides, a properly prepared paper, intended for publication in a reputed journal, gets acceptance promptly after going through the rigorous procedures of refreeing; and goes into print without much delay. Professional contributions of quality are keenly awaited, and read with interest, and the user community is benefited.

The hall marks of a good quality technical communication are:

* + - objectivity,
    - accuracy and authenticity of technical content,
    - clarity of presentation,
    - brevity,
    - consistency and precision, and
    - good physical production

These hall marks have to be reflected in all the elements of a technical communication.

The characterisitc features of a research or technical paper, viz. the tile, abstract, introduction, body of the text, presentation of results, discussion, conclusions, summary, etc. should vouchsafe for quality. Names and addresses of authors, literature citations, professional jargons, etc. should conform to professional standards to meet their different functions.

Literature surveys normally reflect the following specific characteristic features:

1. careful selection of primary, secondary and tertiary sources for consultation;
2. selection and evaluation of individual contributions;
3. expert analysis of contents, with proper judgement in interpretations to indicate trends;
4. summary and conclusions; and
5. bibliographical references.

Similarly other primary contributions in professional writing select appropriate features and elements that would portray the study dispassionately and objectively.

**Self Check Exercise**

1. State the general characteristic features of technical communications.
2. Identify some of the specific characteristic features of a review article.

### Note:

* 1. Write your answers in the space given below.
  2. Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

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* + 1. **Proposals**

Proposals differ from other technical writing in that they deal with the future i.e. action to be taken, rather than with events that have already occurred. Proposal is one of the most important type of technical writing that most professionals may have to prepare at different stages in their career. Regardless of the environment in which a person functions, proposals may have to be written to get projects and programmes, obtain contracts, change a career position, and improve professional prospects.

A proposal is a written statement of i) intention, ii) willingness and iii) qualifications and expertise to accomplish a particular task within a given time frame. The most important function of a proposal is to convince the peers to win approval and get financial and other support for tasks, that the proposer wants to take up.

A proposal may be internally generated and addressed to the top management to get approval and funding for a new product development or a service ( a current awareness service in a newly developing discipline, or preparation and production of a directory). It may be to a funding body to get approval and financial sanction for a research project on information market development for a document delivery system in an organisation. Proposals may also have to be prepared on the basis of a request from sister institutions or national funding bodies for any specific area of professional work. They generally identify problems, suggest a solution and indicate specifically what the proposer wishes to accomplish. Proposals generally have the following components:

Characteristics Features of Technical Writing



* **Letter of transmittal:** A formal proposal is always accompanied by a letter which usually identifies and highlights the problem, and offers to work on it on mutually agreed conditions.
* **Title page:** This gives a succinct statement of the problem, name of the organisation to whom the proposal is submitted with an identiyfing number, date of submission and the period during which the work would be completed, etc.
* **Executive summary:** This is a brief summary of the total proposal. Busy executives seldom find time to go through detailed text of a proposal but they are the ones that approve and sanction funding. Hence the executive summary needs to be carefully drafted to get a favourable response.
* **Table of contents:** Any proposal having more than five to six pages should have a table of contents.
* **Statement of request:** If the proposal is in response to a request, the statement of request is sometimes given, which may include the terms of reference.
* **Introduction:** It should include an elaborate statement of the problem and its background. The scope of the proposal has to be spelled out.
* **Methodology:** This explains how the work is to be accomplished and hence is

perhaps the most important section of the proposal.

* **Facilities:** The facilities required to execute the task have to be stated

unambiguously to avoid any problem at later stages. These may include equipment and machinery, literature support, transport and communication and such others.

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* **Personnel:** This includes professionals, secretarial staff, their quality and number, depending upon the nature of the project.
  + **Duration:** It should indicate milestones, phases and completion of the task.



* + **Cost:** This is crucial. It includes salaries, capital expenditure, if any, expendable

equipment, miscellaneous expenses and overheads.

* + **Summary:** Busy executives would also read the summary and conclusion to

assess the proposal and hence should be written with utmost attention.

Proposals can vary widely in form and contents. A number of factors, like solicited/ unsolicited, formal/informal, internal/external, influence the writing and presentation of proposals. The characteristic features given above should serve as a useful guide in general for writing the proposal.

**Self Check Exercise**

1. Outline the characteristic features of a proposal, offering yourself for a executive position in a information business concern.

### Note:

1. Write your answer in the space given below.
2. Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

## Plans

A plan is a well thought out and designed document of an activity or a set of activities, complete in all aspects. It provides a framework to set objectives and outline the way the targets are to be achieved, marshalling human, material and financial resources. Planning is an analytical process involving:

* determination of desired goals, objectives, and set targets of achievements

within a time span in a phased manner;

* assessment of future in relation to environmental changes, professional

trends, technological advances, and the influence and impact on all aspects of developments;

* selection of activities, programmes and projects to accomplish goals and

targets set, from among the alternatives available, and fixing priorities;

* estimation of resources required in terms of finance, equipment, manpower

and other physical resources;

* preparation of a written plan document; and
* provision of an action plan for execution.

In short, a good plan is a blueprint for action. It anticipates problems and suggests methods and strategies to overcome them. It is flexible enough to modify at different

26 stages of implementation and helps the achievement of goal and targets prudently and economically.

In organisations and institutions, planning is generally a corporate activity, involving senior officials and executives. But the drafting of the plan may be entrusted to persons who may have writing skills and abilities.

Plans may relate to the entire organisational development with a short or long range time frame, or specifically with reference to an activity. But the broad characteristic features could be more or less the same, although the contents and methodology could be different.

The characteristic features of a plan for library automation of a medium size library, specialising in a set of new disciplines, may be as follows:

Characteristics Features of Technical Writing



* A vision of the future of the library in terms of users, collection development, database creation and maintenance, new and innovative services, and human resources development - in general to derive all advantages of library automation;
* A design plan in which all aspects stated above are spelled out in detail, with reference to library's current status and inputs needed;
* An operational strategy to evolve a pragmatic method and to apply it in a phased manner, identifying milestones and specific targets to fit into achievable time frame;
* Identifying every component of the operational strategy, and estimate requirements in terms of quality and quantity; and
* A workable management strategy to deal with transitional problems.

The drafting of the plan document is a highly skilled activity which not only takes care of every idea in library automation but presents the marshalled data and information most effectively. These skills in writing have to be cultivated and the expertise has to be acquired with considerable practical involvement in writing over a period of time.

**Self Check Exercise**

1. Outline the characteristic feature of a plan for retrospective conversion of your library catalogue.

### Note:

1. Write your answer in the space given below.
2. Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

## Reports

Next to correspondence, reports are the most frequently written documents in an organisation. There are many types of reports to serve specific purposes. Most commonly, reports :

* inform readers about an organisation's activities, programmes, and plans so that readers are up to date on the current status (periodic routine reports);
* record results of an inquiry or investigation on specific aspects of a problem with recommendations for future reference for decision making or for any action (committee/ commission reports); and
* determine the feasibility of an undertaking to plan an activity. 27

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Reports may vary in length, depending on the topic or purpose; they may be informal memos, formal reports, sometimes running into multivolumes. The readership may also range from a single individual to multiple readers with different purposes. Whether or not a report is short or long, its use depends on how much information a reader needs for a particular purpose in a specific situation, on the subject or the format of the report.

Inter alia, the technical report requires:

* **Letter of transmittal:** For formal reports, a letter of transmittal is often required to detail the terms of reference and such other data.
* **Title page:** It gives the first contact with the report and its character of the report. Usually contain the name of person/corporate body to whom it is submitted; writer's name, date, etc.
* **Executive summary:** The entire report is presented in a highly condensed form, an essential requirement.
* **Table of contents:** Seeks out the structured pattern of the report, indicating the relationship between the main and subordinate units.
* **Introduction:** States the subject of the report, scope, purpose and plan of treatment.
* **Preliminary section:** Gives a fuller development of the results of study, conclusions and recommendations;
* **The body:** Contains the procedure, equipment used for the study, results, analysis of results, discusssion, conclusion, and recommendations which logically follow from the conclusions. The text may be supported by charts, tables, diagrams, drawings, and photographs;

### Summary:

* **Bibliographical references**
* **Appendix:** Incorporates information which could not be presented along with the body of the text, such as detailed statistics and other items.

**Self Check Exercise**

1. Give an outline of the components that should feature in an annual report of a library.

### Note:

1. Write your answer in the space given below.
2. Check your answer with the answer given at the end of this Unit.

## Instructional Materials

Quite often library and information professionals are involved as resource persons or faculty members of professional training courses, short or long term programmes. Formal oral presentations also are invariably required to be supported by written materials.

Libraries and Information Centres are expected to provide guides, and instructional manuals to their products and services for users to facilitate use of these products and services optimally.

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With the increasing application of Information Technology to the Library and Information field, users' guides have become absolutely necessary for the effective use of software packages. At present computer professionals are involved in the preparation of users' guides besides system operation guides. This activity is generally referred to as documentation in computer parlance. While the guides to system operation software could be expected to be done well by computer specialists, the user guides particularly for library and bibliographic software could preferably be written by professional experts. This calls for special writing skills which will have to be acquired by library and information professionals.

While the characteristic features would vary from subject to subject and course to course, the structural outline of a unit of a course, for example, on “Computerised Cataloguing and Searching Techniques” would include:

* + Objectives of unit which should be oriented towards students' learning objectives;
  + Introduction giving a plan of thematic presentation of the topic;
  + Ranganathan's five laws;
  + Changing role of the library;
  + Library catalogue in the changing context;
  + Computerised catalogues and cataloguing;
  + Networks, interlinking, dispersed access, online access;
  + Descriptive cataloguing: bibliographic formats;
  + Subject searching strategies and techniques;
  + Shared cataloguing;
  + Management issues;
  + Summary;
  + Keywords;
  + Self check exercises and answers;
  + Further readings; and
  + Appendix.

Characteristics Features of Technical Writing



**Self Check Exercise**

1. Prepare a structural outline of a course on collection development.

### Note:

* 1. Write your answer in the space given below.
  2. Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

## Professional Services

Writing skills are necessary in library and information services for :

* + Condensation preparation of abstracts, synopsis, digests, summaries, etc.;
  + Consolidation preparation of trend reports, state-of-art reports and the like;
  + Repackaging preparation of condensation and consolidation materials, orienting towards specified categories of users;
  + Preparation of promotional booklets, brochures, charts, writing scripts for video

presentation of library and information services and the like; 29

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* Writings required for consultation services;

Process  Writings required for involvement in activities organised by national and international professional associations.



Writing skills required for these professional activities may overlap with some of the skills already outlined or described in the previous sections of this Unit. The point to be noted is that writing skills have become indispensable for many activities in Libraries and Information Centres. The conscious realisation of this and acquiring the necessary skills would greatly enhance professional prestige and status.

**Self Check Exercise**

1. Prepare a synopsis of a library brochure for the use of research scholars.

### Note:

* 1. Write your answer in the space given below.
  2. Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

### Correspondence

Correspondence here refers not to the routine internal and external correspondence involving rules and procedures of administration, most of which are stereotyped and operated largely through already set forms and methods. There are, however, many situations wherein writing skills are required for preparing internal memos, circulars, agendas for important organisational meetings, for negotiating terms and conditions with external agencies for specific activities, programmes, etc. With the increasing emphasis on participative management culture, professionals at many levels have to get involved in such activities. Here again there is a need to get the skill in the preparation of these types of correspondence.

Correspondence generally includes letters and memos. Although these frequently are addressed to one person, they often have multiple readers because the senior to whom it is addressed passes the correspondence down the line of employees in the organisation either for information or joint action. Letters and memos are versatile written documents that serve many purposes.

Letters are written primarily to persons outside an organisation and cover a variety of situations such as a) requests; b) claims; c) complaints and adjustments; d) enquiries and response to enquiries; e) sales; f) credit; g) urging actions to solve a particular problem; h) goodwill messages; i) announcements; j) records of agreements; k) follow-up to telephone conversations; 1) transmittals of other technical documents; and m) invitations.

Memos are written primarily to persons inside an organisation. Many internal reports, such as deputation reports, progress reports and short proposals may be in memo form.

There are no specific formats or methods characterising the features in writing letters and memos. Each writing situation would have to be handled with a complete understanding of

30 the problem and the concerned subject and the objective to be realised. It is however, to be

realised that this kind of writing also requires writing skills that should be acquired with experience.

**Self Check Exercise**

1. Write a letter to a computer company seeking their assistance in automating your library, specifying your requirements.

### Note:

Characteristics Features of Technical Writing



1. Write your answer in the space given below.
2. Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

# ORAL COMMUNICATION

Everyone involved in a technical field will, on many occasions, be required to present information in discussions, meetings, arranged lectures, speeches and talks. Oral communication, if it were to be effective, will have to be prepared well in advance, with visual supports. Generally, oral communication serves the purpose to inform, persuade or instruct the listeners.

It is said that any audience absorb only *30%* of the information presented orally, the remaining 70% goes unregistered. It might be possible to reverse these percentages, if oral presentations are made with effective written presentation materials or visual aids.

## 2.5.1 Presentation Materials

Presentation materials mean all written texts which include, main points to be highlighted in an oral communication, statements that should catch the attention of the audience; tables, graphs and other visual supports to quantify information; and photographs to illustrate an event of importance, etc.

Technical papers are presented in seminars, conferences and such other congregations. If such papers are read, as on many occasions persons do, the impact of the papers on the audience is very little, despite some good and worthwhile ideas present in them. But on the other hand, if the main points are highlighted with textual matter and supported by visual representations, even a paper of lesser quality will have an effect on the audience. Similarly, if a case has to be built for a project in official meetings, oral presentations with selected text matter and audio-visual support materials will ensure approval of the project with the necessary financial support. Business persons invariably present their products with visual support and impress on the purchasers the value and utility of the product they sell. There is no gainsaying the fact that the information business also needs to exploit these methods in the present day contexts. But not much attention is paid to either the text matter selected or the visual support required. Both these techniques require a good deal of attention.

Many different types of presentation aids are available. Flipcharts give the flexibility to

emphasise a particular point in the presentation by instantaneously highlighting or adding 31

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to the point by hand. Because flipcharts are usually drawn by hand, written legibly in bold letters, and do not carry too much information in one, they are most appropriate for informal, smaller presentations.

*Transparencies* using overhead projectors are very popular in these days in oral presentations. Computer generated information on the acetate sheets greatly enhances the quality of the presentation.

*Slides* can provide text and graphics, and can be effectively handled, using remote control facilities available for slide projectors.

Multimedia will in the near future provide facilities, particularly, for demo packages, with accessibility to text, graphics and sound through digital representation technology.

In using all these gadgets, the primary factor that would determine the quality of presentation is writing skills necessary to prepare texts and visuals, combined with audio for which the script is also to be carefully prepared.

**Self Check Exercise**

1. Explain how oral presentation could ensure success.

### Note:

* 1. Write your answer in the space given below.
  2. Check your answer with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

# SUMMARY

This Unit brings the characteristic features of technical communications. These features are the elements or components that together represent structural organisation of the contents of technical communication. In order to identify different characteristic features of various groups of technical writing, a classificatory approach groups them into different categories, giving example of each group. The three major categories are groups that are obtained by using function, type and reader as characteristics for division.

Seven typical writing situations relevant to the Library and Information field are examined with reference to their characteristic features. These are professional writings, proposals, plans, reports, instruction materials, professional services, and correspondence. Illustrative examples exemplify the specific features in each of these categories.

Oral presentations also need textual and visual support for their impact and effectiveness on the audience. This is also explained with a few ideas on the

32 preparation of presentation materials.

# ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

1. Classifying written communication into various categories is a useful exercise because it helps to analyse and identify the characteristic features of various type of written documents that are produced. Classificatory groups are not mutually exclusive. They indeed overlap very much. They can be grouped only to help identify the distinct categories of each one of them. The purpose is to aid in the formulation of structural designs for each of the categories and assist in the preparation of written materials.
2. The general characteristic features of technical writing are that they:

Characteristics Features of Technical Writing



* 1. deal with a subject or a topic;
  2. address a specific target group;
  3. presents the contents in a language that oriented towards a target group;
  4. present the write-up in a form, supported by well designed illustrations and photographs wherever necessary, to draw attention of the target group; and
  5. gets printed attractively, if the document is brought out in a paper-print mode; gets appropriate format(s) if brought out by any other mode.

1. Characteristic features of a review article are as follows:

* Synopsis/Abstract;
* Objectives, stating the utility of the article to users;
* Introduction, giving the scope and coverage of the subject taken for the review, the period, etc.;
* Identification of sources and criteria for selection of sources;
* Criteria of selection of items for review;
* Literature survey as exemplified-by the items;
* Discussion indicating the trends;
* Summary and conclusions; and
* Bibliographic references;

1. Assuming the position to be a teaching one, the following should be incorporated in the proposal:

* Brief summary for quick reference;
* Personal data such as full name; full address to which all communications are to

be sent; telephone, telex if any; age and date of birth;

* Father's name and address and position;
* Educational qualification up to higher education, detailing every data such as educational hoard awarding school leaving certificate, college course, where studied, division/class, years of degree awarded, etc. distinctions achieved;
* Professional qualifications, if the position calls for;
* Experience: teaching (no. of years) subject taught, level;
* Research; title of Ph.D. if any Post doctoral research, if any;
* Outstanding Publications: papers, monographs, book reviews, etc.;
* Association with universities and academic bodies;
* Professional activities; membership in professional bodies, offices held, if any, etc.; and
* References.

1. The main characteristic features of a plan for retrospective conversion of a library catalogue are :

* Title and executive summary;
* Objectives;
* Introduction;
* Backlog of material to be brought into the computerised catalogue; the whole collection or selectively in terms of imprint, subject type of material, etc.;
* Catalogue policy for current materials and considerations for retrospective cataloguing;
* Downloading from already available machine readable catalogues;
* Subject indexing;
* Management aspects, to deal with all required resources; 33

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* Network considerations;
* Relation to other functions such as circulation, library and information services; and
* Action plan for phased execution.

1. The following elements may constitute an annual report of a library:

* Title indicating the period;
* Short summary;
* Introduction;
* Activities: collection development, technical processing, library database,

services national and international professional participation, indicating progress m highlighting achievements;

* Statistics in the form of tables and graphics;
* Report on personnel, positions, performance and activities;
* Publications;
* Administrative matters;
* Finance, budget and accounts; and
* Summary and future projections

1. The structural outline of a training course of collection development of a library would comprise the following:

* Title of the course, duration, faculty, etc.;
* Objectives - what the participants can expect from the course;
* Vision of the collection strength quality in next five years, in meeting the requirements of the parent organisation, fixing priorities for subject areas and type of documents;
* Current strength of the collection;
* Policy of building the collection over the next five years and strategy to be adopted;
* Resource mobilisation - funds, personnel, physical requirements;
* Operational management;
* Impact on other functions and services;
* Assessment and evaluation at periodic intervals;
* Summary and conclusion; and
* Appendix.

1. A library brochure is meant to draw the attention of its users, particularly the active

users like research scholars, to the facilities available in the library for study and research work others, this brochure would include :

* Title with photographs of the library building;
* Its location facilitating easy access;
* Background and its central role;
* A quick overview of facilities, by way of reading rooms, current periodicals display; reference collection, special reading rooms, reprographic services, etc.
* Collection strength;
* Provision of accessibility through computerised catalogues and bibliographic databases;
* Reference and information services;
* Circulation services indicating borrowing privileges to the research community;
* Professional personnel and their availability for any consultation;
* User education programmes for research scholars;
* Video programme, highlighting some of the library's more important user services;
* Rules and procedures; and
* Summary and conclusions.

1. The letter is to be typed on official letter-head of the library addressed to the

Managing Director of the Company, signed by the Director of the library. The following are the c Dear ,

We are in the process of formulating our plans for modernising our library. We are providing inf support to an active band of research scientists and technologists. A deeply committed manag

34 look after production and

distribution of our products and services. We have a collection of 50,000 documents in the physical and chemical sciences, economics, management science and related areas. This includes books, monographs, a representative collection of reference books comprising international and national standards, some select patents, manuals and guides. We subscribe to 100 current journals most of which are in English and obtained from US and UK. The backfile of journals for the last 10 years are in bound volumes. We have plans to get them on microforms for saving our costly floor space.

We are looking for expertise in library automation besides supplying us the appropriate hardware and software (SW). We would assess the features of the SW package you may recommend on the basis of a checklist of SW features we have already prepared.

Kindly let us know if you would undertake a feasibility study to deal with every aspect of our requirements. Please call on us for a discussion before we move further.

We look forward to meeting you. Thanking you, Yours truly,

1. Oral presentation could ensure success, only if presentation materials match well with the text of the oral presentation. These supporting materials are to be skillfully prepared. Selecting the physical aids like flipcharts, transparencies for overhead projectors, slides, the text should be featured with dexterity to draw the full attention of the audience. If there is a demo package, it has to be used in preference to other methods. Here the textual and visual matter will have to be thoughtfully prepared. If all these aspects are well-planned, there is every chance of having the right impact on the audience.

# KEY WORDS

Characteristics Features of Technical Writing



**Characteristics :** Quality or an attribute with reference to which

two things can be distinguished.

**Characteristic Features :** Set of elements or components that

give a structural outline of a technical communication.

**Correspondence :** Special type of writing connected with

specific functions of professional management

**Flip Charts :** Flip charts are widely used in industry. They are portable, require no special equipment, and do not require darkening the room. They allow spontaneity and you can easily use them for notes. They are not useful for large audience.

**Instructional Materials :** Writings that are meant to provide guidance in

learning and using a system.

**Oral Communication :** Audio presentation of information.

**Plans :** Document giving a complete blue print for executing an activity.

**Presentation Materials :** Textual and visual materials that supplement

and complement oral presentations.

Professional Services : Library and information services that need

writing skills. 35

Communication Process



**Professional Writings :** Writings that deal with professional services.

**Proposals :** Technical writings that deal with a formal offer of undertaking any activity.

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