Technical Writing

Technical Writing

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PART I
COURSE INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

1. Welcome!

Welcome to English 235, Technical Writing. My name is Jeff Meyers, and I'll be your instructor this semester as we look at modern written communication.

If this is your first experience with on-line education, I am sure you will find it an interesting, challenging and rewarding experience. If you have taken on-line courses before, I am glad you decided to participate in this program as well.

I have taught Technical Writing both in the classroom and on-line for quite a few years now. I understand your feelings if you are nervous or a little confused at this point. But I believe you will become more and more comfortable with the concept, as I have, the more you work with on-line lessons.

It's important to note that you can access technical support to help with any problems you may encounter. Clinton Community College has put a lot of time and effort into it on-line program and offers its assistance openly and easily. The key to developing confidence in a WEB environment is to stay with it and to seek help when needed.

You will find syllabus-like information in a number of documents listed below. I suggest that you read all the documents in this section in order and ask any questions you may have along the way by clicking "Talk with the Instructor" tab at the top of your Table of Contents. You may want to print some of the documents if you take comfort from hard copy.

We will not be using a textbook this semester. I have provided the names of some technical writing text books that you can order and purchase at your favorite bookstore if you would like additional information. Otherwise, I will be providing a lot of additional information for you.

I have posted complementary information for each chapter in the different modules and have included some questions to help get the discussions rolling. Once we get going, I would like to be a participant in the discussions along with each and every one of you. *We will all get bored very quickly if I end up doing all the talking.*

In addition to the text, we will be looking at several examples of the different kinds of documents you will be assigned to write this semester. I think it is very important that you all understand your role in the "writer-reader" relationship and perform your role in a professional manner. Identifying possible writing designs and techniques is one way to make sure your papers are creative, convincing and professional. So I would like all of you to be confident in sharing your ideas regularly.

I hope you're getting the idea that your active participation in these discussions will become the heart of this course. After all, we are dealing with professional communication. Don't think of this solely as a college-level writing course. Think of it as your career, and the documents you're writing as exemplifying that career.

Thanks for reading this. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. But for now, I suggest you read through the rest of the Course Information Documents before moving onto the course modules.

Good luck, and remember that help is always available for you. *– Jeff Meyers*

2. Plagiarism Review

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own. It's clear that having someone write a paper for you and turning it in as your own is plagiarism. It also goes without saying that it's wrong to buy a research paper to turn in with your name on it. But there are other less obvious ways to plagiarize, and you need to be aware of them.

Using someone's exact words without using quotation marks and without giving that person credit is plagiarism.

Using someone's words, but changing a few of them by using synonyms without giving the person credit is plagiarism.

Using someone's original idea, even if you don't use the exact words, without giving credit is also plagiarism.

When you turn in a writing assignment, it is assumed that everything in it is your own work and your own ideas, unless you give credit to the originator of the words and ideas. This includes the ideas you post in online class discussions.

Why? Plagiarism is against the law (stealing) and it's also unethical (lying). Recently in the news you might have read about journalists, politicians, and even college presidents who have gone down because they passed off someone else's ideas as their own. Their jobs, reputations, and their ability to find work in their professions are now ruined. In college the penalties are not quite as harsh (failure for the assignment, failure for the course, dismissal from the college), but it's still not worth it.

On a brighter note, you should know that it is completely acceptable to read what other people have said about your essay topic. And it's perfectly acceptable to **use**what other people have said, as long as you **give them credit** for it.

Here are some sources to help you avoid plagiarism by acknowledging and citing your sources correctly:

The Academic Assistance Center at CCC

The Learning Resource Center at CCC

The handbook you used in Freshman Composition

Guide to Grammar and Writing: http://www.csubak.edu/ssric/Modules/Other/plagiarism.htm

Purdue's Online Writing Lab: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/

The LRC's online library resources: http://clinton.edu/Academics/Library/INDEX.HTM

Your instructor.

3. Overview

This course will focus on many different kinds of written communication required to get and hold a job, to participate in business, to report in technical and investigative fields and to serve in community and professional organizations.

You will receive instruction and practice in writing summaries, correspondence, instructions, publicity releases, reports, brochures and proposals. You will also learn to choose a format and style appropriate for *your* audience and purpose.

As you plan, draft and polish your writings, you will work with me and your classmates to identify the most effective content, style, tone and design for each assignment you are working on. We will constantly analyze your writing from both the writer's and the reader's perspective, and we will emphasize a simplistic approach to writing rather than a complicated style. Technical writing does not have to be – nor should it be – technically confusing.

You will not be writing essays in this class. Each document will be completely different from the next, both in terms of content, design and purpose. Some papers will be more effective if they are short; others need to be developed more thoroughly for better understanding. The bottom line is that your reader should be able to understand what your message is while reading your information. Don't try to impress your audience with your knowledge and ability: express ideas that your audience will be able to react upon.

This course will emphasize the "writer-reader" relationship. You are actively participating by providing your reader with information he/she will be able to understand. Your reader is actively participating by responding to what you have to say, following the instructions you are providing, or understanding the message you are offering.

During the next eight weeks, you will become a professional writer. Pay attention to documents around you. Understand what makes written communication effective and what detracts from active participation. Scrutinize what you see at school, at work, on the television and in the papers and magazines. Everything will be a potential source for your understanding of technical-writing concepts. Don't simply read for content: look at how the document is designed, what makes the document stand out, and what stands out within the document.

4. Course Objectives

Goals – This course should:

- provide you with the confidence to use written communication in your work and personal experience beyond college,
- acquaint you with the concept of a writer-reader relationship and identify the need for active participation from both writer and reader,
- teach you the skills needed to successfully communicate in a modern world through written materials.

Objectives – If you effectively complete readings, practice exercises, workshops and assignments, you will:

- learn to identify and select many **types of writing** frequently required in a variety of careers,
- practice **audience analysis** and develop effective communication strategies for a variety of audiences,
- determine your purposes/objectives and develop skill in **composing and revising on the computer** documents with formats and language appropriate for those purposes,
- demonstrate in your writing the **effective communication principles** encouraged by professional writers,
- achieve a greater awareness of the importance of selecting and integrating **graphics** with written communication,

- improve your ability to differentiate among and to use **facts, inferences and judgments**.

5. Course Learning Activities

For this course, you will become involved in three types of Learning Activities:

1. **Class writing and discussion activities.**
   We will spend much time together working on the different kinds of documents required in the class. We will talk about different options writers have for improving work and then put those options to practice with shared writing exercises.

1. **Study exercises.**
   I will provide for you a series of short-answer exercises reviewing some of the readings and discussions. These exercises will emphasize some of the important concepts of writing in professional fields.

1. **Written documents.**
   The backbone of the course will be a series of nine documents you will be required to write from a professional perspective, meaning they should be free of errors, neat and informative.

6. My Expectations

I will be expecting very active participation from you. Since I can't see you, I will need tangible proof that you exist and that you are working in a highly motivated way.

One obvious focus of participation will be in the class discussions. This should be taken very seriously. Since each module is scheduled for about two weeks, this is the time period during which the discussion must take place. Try to put some serious thought in what makes documents successful, both from the writer's perspective and yours. I expect you to participate in the course at least three times each week. I will be looking for your work and ideas that often. Together, we can get a lot accomplished over the next eight weeks.

I hope that a lot of the discussions are generated by you and your classmates. Sure, I'll have some comments and suggestions once in a while, but I value what all you have to say. You are the experts in your specific organizations. You know best what works for you.

Obviously, this is an English course, so I will be expecting you to follow proper English rules in your writing. However, it is much more important than in other English courses where the teacher might mark your paper with red ink for every spelling error you have. We want to look at every assignment you do in here as a professional representation of yourself. So your papers have to be perfect, no spelling errors, no typos, no grammatical miscues. If there's a mistake, go back and fix it before you hand it in.

In English 235 class, I take on the role of "boss," and the students are my "employees." We try to emulate a professional setting, so our documents and discussions can be as professional as possible. We don't have to worry so much about absenteeism and tardiness here, but I do expect you to work with your fellow "employees" to come up with top-quality work on a regular basis. I also expect work to be done on time. Late papers will be penalized, and it is very difficult to catch up once you fall behind.

Don't be too worried if this sounds too much like that job you couldn't stand and finally left. It's a lot of fun, and there's not really the pressure of losing a pay check if you don't do well. Almost every assignment you do can be revised for improved grades. By the end of the semester, I would hope that you can recognize a professional document and use techniques to make your documents interesting, informative and professional.

I'm sure this is going to be a great experience for all of us, and I hope you will appreciate the benefits in using clear, concise written communication.

PART II

COMMUNICATING AND SUBMITTING WORK

7. Course Communication

Checking Course Announcements

It is your responsibility to read the course announcements on a regular basis. This is as simple as logging into the course and checking the Announcements forum at the top of your Moodle course. It's very important that you read these on a regular basis or you might miss something crucial in your course work.

Sending Course Messages

Choose *Course Messages* from the left-hand menu. Click on the *Create Message*button. Choose your recipient from the TO list, and move them by clicking the right-facing arrow. A subject line is required. Compose your message and click *Submit* button

Course messages are private and should be used for confidential communication. For all other course communication use the *Talk with the Professor* forum or other public forum areas of the course.

Checking Course Messages

Course Messages appear on your homepage, or you can click on *Course Messages*on the left-hand menu. Click the Inbox to read messages.

Quickmail

Quickmail is another way to communicate. It uses your CCC email to contact others in the course. You can send mail to individuals or groups within your class. Click on “Compose New Email” and choose the recipients. After writing your message, scroll to the bottom of the form, and click “Send Email.”

8. Participating in a Discussion

Your participation in course discussions will weigh heavily in the grading of your classwork. This class puts a high value on discussion posts and responses as part of the communication within the course. Class discussions happen within the learning modules and pertain to specific assignments within those modules.

When you see the discussion icon, you can participate within assigned Start and End dates.

A discussion thread is the start of a conversation and will sometimes be started by the instructor and sometimes by the student. Each response to the original question is indented once – a response to a response is indented a second time – etc. This system of indents helps us determine which responses go together.

Responding to the main item

To compose your response to a main discussion item you are reading, click on the Reply button at the bottom right. Be sure you're reading the post you want to reply to, so it posts in the right place in the thread.

A good subject title tells the main point of your response. "Response to Discussion 1" is not a very useful title, especially if everyone in your course uses the same subject. Use a subject line that describes your main point. You'll be able to tell where you are in the discussion by reading others' subject lines. If subject lines are all the same, finding specific posts will be difficult.

Submitting your response

When you have completed your response, click *Post to Forum* button at the bottom.

Netiquette

As discussion is of a public nature, please observe proper netiquette – courteous and appropriate forms of communication and interaction over the Internet (in online discussions). This means no personal attacks, obscene language, or intolerant expression. All viewpoints should be respected.

Clear Communication

It's very important to use standard English grammar, spelling and punctuation in your discussion posts. This will make it possible for all of us to understand each other.

9. Assignments and Quizzes

Submitting Written Assignments

There are two ways to submit a written assignment: by typing or pasting your work directly into a textbox or by attaching it.

Open the assignment page and click the *Add Submission* button. Now you can type or paste directly into the textbox that appears. If you wish to add comments to the instructor a comment box is available. Click *Save Changes* button when you are finished. You'll then see two buttons – *Edit Assignment* or *Submit Assignment.* When you click *Submit Assignment*, you'll be asked if you're sure. If so, click *Continue.* You'll then be able to see that your assignment has been submitted.

To attach your assignment, click the document icon, browse your documents for the file, and click *Open.* Give your document a name. Click *Save Changes* button when you are finished. You'll then see two buttons – *Edit Assignment* or *Submit Assignment.* When you click *Submit Assignment*, you'll be asked if you're sure. If so, click *Continue.* You'll then be able to see that your assignment has been submitted.

How to Take a Quiz

1. Navigate to the quiz you want to take and click the title of the quiz.
2. Quiz instructions and time limits appear on the next screen.
3. When you are ready click the *Attempt Quiz Now* button.
4. You'll be asked to confirm that you're ready to begin.
   Click *Start Attempt.* The quiz will appear on the screen.

5. When you've answered all the questions, Click *Next.*
6. You'll see whether or not you've answered each question. If so, click *Submit All and Finish.*
7. If you want to return to any question, do so, and then click *Submit All and Finish.*
8. A results/confirmation page appears on the screen upon submission.

PART III

MODULE 1: ICEBREAKER ACTIVITIES

10. What's Due When

Module Overview: This module will introduce you to both on-line instruction and technical writing. I want you to feel comfortable with learning through this new medium, and I want you to recognize the connection between on-line communication and technical writing.

Module Learning Objectives: To identify how modules are designed and use those modules in a clear, competent manner.

To identify the concepts of Technical Writing.

11. Taking an On Line Course

In order to feel comfortable taking an on-line course, you really need to feel comfortable working in this medium. If you haven't done so already, please spend some time reading and understanding the Course Information Documents and Strategies for Success. The information will be useful in helping you work with the course easily and with confidence.

For instance, when writing assignments for me, you can't just send them over the Internet. They have to be designed and formatted correctly, and a lot of that work will be lost if you cut and paste from your word processor onto the assignment pages you will find in the course. You will need to send your assignments as attachments.

Also, remember that help is just a phone call away with the CCC Help Desk or click the Talk with the Instructor link.

12. Using Design to Improve Understanding

Throughout this course, I will be emphasizing the big three icons on your word processor's toolbar: **B**, I, and <u>U</u>, as well as such concepts as using headings, spacing and bullets. For instance, take a minute to look at how the two following document examples are designed differently:

Example 1

Today's popular movies come in three main categories: horror, comedy and drama. Although it is easy to differentiate between each type, there are some subtle similarities that connect each type. Whether or not a movie is successful in its own genre often depends on how successful it uses the other genres. A good director knows this and looks for it each time he or she calls for action.

Horror movies utilize suspense, action and shock value to attract an audience. Suspense is important in keeping the viewer invovled from beginning to end. It is there to make sure the viewer does not get up and leave a movie for popcorn at any time from beginning to end. Not knowing what is going to happen next makes the movie all that more interesting. Action makes it more realistic. Poor movies such as the *Friday the 13th* movies did not use adequate action to create a normal impression in the sequence of events. It didn't seem plausible. A good horror movie, above anything else, has to be believeable. The shock value in horror is obvious. The audience screams. If you are not scared while watching the movie, you are not going to appreciate it as a horror movie. Directors have to know how to make someone jump. Having a black cat suddenly appear is a common example of shock value. Good directors find a lot better examples than that.

Comedy requires all three components as well. Suspense is in the form of not knowing the punchline before a joke is given. A good comedy will give the audience new things to laugh at. Someone like Eddie Murphy is an expert at it. He knows how to make people laugh simply by altering is approach to comedy. Believe it or not, action again is significant to the success of the movie. If you don't have good relationships between characters, you won't believe the story. Comedy relies heavily on reality. We don't laugh at things we don't recognize. They scare us more than anything else. Shock value, in comedy, comes from the amount of laughter the movie creates. Laughter is to comedy what screams are to horror. If you don't have a good joke, you don't have good comedy.

Drama is a mixture of horror and comedy. It includes laughter and screams, combines them in a way that makes people cry, cry for happiness and cry for sadness. It is the most difficult genre to get right. That is why many people are bored easier by drama. It is more difficult to sit through than the other two, even if done perfectly. That is why the three components are so important in drama. Without suspense, who cares? Without action, who can follow the plot? Without shock value, how can there be a climax?

Example 2

POPULAR MOVIES TODAY

How Directors Make their Films Work for the Audience

Today's popular movies come in three main categories: *horror, comedy and drama*. Although it is easy to differentiate between each type, there are some **subtle similarities** that connect each type. Whether or not a movie is successful in its own genre often depends on how successful it uses the other genres. A **good director** knows this and looks for it each time he or she calls for action.

HORROR MOVIES

Horror movies utilize **suspense, action and shock value** to attract an audience. **Suspense** is important in keeping the viewer invovled from beginning to end. It is there to make sure the viewer does not get up and leave a movie for popcorn at any time from beginning to end. Not knowing what is going to happen next makes the movie all that more interesting. **Action** makes it more realistic. Poor movies such as the *Friday the 13th* movies did not use adequate action to create a normal impression in the sequence of events. It didn't seem plausible. A good horror movie, above anything else, has to be believable. The **shock value** in horror is obvious. The audience screams. If you are not scared while watching the movie, you are not going to appreciate it as a horror movie. Directors have to know how to make someone jump. Having a black cat suddenly appear is a common example of shock value. Good directors find a lot better examples than that.

COMEDIES

Comedy requires all three components as well. **Suspense** is in the form of not knowing the punchline before a joke is given. A good comedy will give the audience new things to laugh at. Someone like Eddie Murphy is an expert at it. He knows how to make people laugh simply by altering is approach to comedy. Believe it or not, **action** again is significant to the success of the movie. If you don't have good relationships between characters, you won't believe the story. Comedy relies heavily on reality. We don't laugh at things we don't recognize. They scare us more than anything else. **Shock value,** in comedy, comes from the amount of laughter the movie creates. Laughter is to comedy what screams are to horror. If you don't have a good joke, you don't have good comedy.

DRAMA

Drama is a mixture of **horror and comedy**. It includes **laughter and screams**, combines them in a way that makes people cry, cry for happiness and cry for sadness. It is the most difficult genre to get right. That is why many people are bored easier by drama. It is more difficult to sit through than the other two, even if done perfectly. That is why the three components are so important in drama. Without **suspense**, who cares? Without **action**, who can follow the plot? Without **shock value,** how can there be a climax?

Do you see how simply using headings improves the document tremendously? Now think of other ways you could improve the design for this document (think of how you could use better spacing, for instance). Take a look at real documents you come across on a daily basis: how are they designed? How do they use boldface, italics, etc.? How do they use spacing? How do they use language to help you (the audience) understand what it is they are talking about? For the next 16 weeks, constantly be on the lookout for professional documents. That's an on-going assignment.

Your first activity is going to be a simple practice in using design to improve understanding in a document. In the upcoming "Written

Assignment," you will find a note written by a woman to her milk delivery person. I hope the errors in organization are obvious. What I would like you to do is improve the language of the note, but also to work on improving Mrs. Sanderson's design.

Good luck

13. Written Assignment, Deliveryman Note

You are Mrs. Sanderson. You've just written a note to the Deliveryman and have taken a second look at it. Suddenly you realize that the milkman is not going to understand a single word you've said. Rewrite the note using language and design to help the milkman do his job:

Deliveryman,

John has got some more asthma, and we are going to take him away for a while so we do not want any more milk. Jim, my husband, will be home some of the time though and I guess you had better leave me some milk at that. Instead of leaving me three quarts of milk on Monday, do not leave this amount. And the three quarts of milk the other two days that week, don't leave them either. But Wednesday you could leave Jim a quart, and oh, besides the eggs Monday, half a dozen would do, leave him a quart on Friday. That would be fine along with the cream cheese, Quaker City Brand like always, small. We should be back on Saturday night, so if you come Sunday leave me three quarts of milk and then I will write you a more detailed note letting you know what else we need, or else I might see you. I hope this note is all right. I didn't have time to go into all of the details that I would have liked to!

Remember, you will want to send this document over to me as an attachment. Please refer to the Student Orientation for instructions, or contact the help desk for information.

14. Discussion Grading Rubric

Each discussion post is graded according to the following rubric.

Points Interpretation Grading criteria

4 Excellent (A) The comment is accurate, original, relevant, teaches us something new, and is well written. Four point comments add substantial teaching presence to the course, and stimulate additional thought about the issue under discussion.
3 Above Average (B) The comment lacks at least one of the above qualities, but is above average in quality. A three point comment makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the issue being discussed.
2 Average (C) The comment lacks two or three of the required qualities. Comments which are based upon personal opinion or personal experience often fall within this category.
1 Minimal (D) The comment presents little or no new information. However, one point comments may provide important social presence and contribute to a collegial atmosphere .
0 Unacceptable (F) The comment adds no value to the discussion.

Each forum is worth up to 12 points, and each entry is worth up to four points.Thus, you should have at least three entries per forum, more if you want to ensure that you reach 12 points.You should participate in dicussions on a regular basis (three days or more per discussion). Points will not be given to students who enter the discussions for the first time on the last two or three days.

15. Discussion examples

Examples for discussion comments:

The following are examples of comments and their point values for the discussion areas. Please review. It’s imperative that you participate in the discussions regularly and productively.
These examples are responding to the following prompt:
“What are your writing weaknesses?”

Four-point initial response:

“I believe my weaknesses with writing focus mostly on grammatical issues. I do have a strong understanding of development and organization, but grammar has always been my Achilles heel. For instance, I have always had a problem with the use of semi-colons. I am always misusing them, placing them where they shouldn’t belong or not using them when they are needed. It has always been frustrating for me.”

Three-point initial response:

“Grammer is my main weakness. I do not like to write in general, but trying to remember grammatical rules is always a challenge. Why do we need to know things like how to use semi-colons? I prefer using simple sentences that end in periods, period.

Two-point initial response:

“I have problems with semi-colons. I am not sure how to use them, and I typically try to avoid them when possible, which often gets me in trouble with the English instructors.”

One-point initial response:

“I’ve never been good at putting sentences together. Grammar is my major weakness.”

Zero-point initial response:

“Grammar.”

Four-point reply to a response:

“I agree. Semi-colons are typically useless. When you find yourself using too many of them, remember the basic rule that a high-school teacher once introduced to me: ‘If the semi-colon became extinct, writing would improve 100 percent.’ I think her comment suggests that we find ways to remove semi-colons and use commas or periods appropriately.”

Three-point reply to a response:

"Try using semi-colons to separate complete thoughts that have some kind of connection. It really does serve the same purpose as a period, though sometimes semi-colons can also be used like commas to separate items in lists. Maybe periods and commas are better."

Two-point reply to a response:

"I have always wondered about colons myself. Why worry about all the extra kinds of punctuation when periods and commas do just fine?"

One-point reply to a response:

"Keep practicing. The handbook has some good examples of proper use of semi-colons."

No-point reply to a response:

"I agree with you totally."
Attribution Builder

16. Deliveryman Note Discussion

Okay. Simple assignment, right? I'm sure you all found her note to be awful. But let's take a few minutes to discuss why it's awful. From a technical writing perspective, remember that you have to think about both the content and design of documents.

I would like each of you to comment on what you think is wrong with the note. For instance, what about the opening: Milkman.? Who thinks she should have written "Dear Milkman," and why? And what about the asthma information? Remember, in technical writing, we always want to keep the reader in mind. We write for the reader's needs, not ours.

Talk about some of the things you did to improve the memo. How did you make it readable? How did you help the milk carrier's job easier?

Then I would like you to respond to at least two other comment from a classmate. That way, we can start some lively discussions on reader-writer relationships. Also, comment on any suggestions you had for the previous section on what makes a good movie. Did you improve that document? Good luck. Remember, you are trying to collect at least 12 points.

Please remember to check out these discussion areas on a regular basis. Don't come in on one day, put in a bunch of responses and then disappear. I'd really like to see a lot of effort put into these discussions. Thanks.

PART IV

MODULE 2: READER/WRITER RELATIONSHIPS

17. What's Due When

Module Overview: This module will emphasize the relationship between reader and writer. We will study the need to recognize why you are writing documents and what your reader expects the document. We will talk about the active role readers take: you want them to respond to your writing in an active manner.

Module Learning Objectives: Understanding the reader-writer relationship.

Identifying the importance of design in technical documents.

Using parallelism in lists.

Recognizing the importance of communication within and between organizations.

Assignments: Parallelism Worksheet; Organizational Summaries

Discussion: Locating and identifying good examples of technical writing.

18. Audience/Purpose/Message

Technical writing, you'll find, is much different from any other type of writing you have probably experienced in English class. For instance, take a look at this poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson:

The Eagle
He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world he stands.
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

Hopefully you recognize this simple poem as artistic, aesthetic, perhaps even beautiful. But it is obviously not technical writing. In fact, technical writing is not an artistic expression; it is a craft we use to communicate **specific information** to a **specific audience** for a **specific purpose**. An example of technical writing on this same topic would look more like this:

Eagle – Any of various large birds of prey of the family Accipitraidae, including members of the genera Aquila Haliaeetus … characterized by a powerful hooked bill, long broad wings and strong, soaring flight. It feeds mostly on fish and rodents and calls with rapid, sharp chips.

In technical writing, then, you need to think about three major components: the *audience*, the *message* and the *purpose*.

Analyzing Your Audience

Whenever you are communicating with an audience through written words, you need to “put yourself in your readers’ shoes.” You need to understand their knowledge of your topic, their attitude toward your topic, and why the topic should be of interest to them.

Think about the readers’ experience, occupation, education and relationship to you. From that, figure out what they know about your subject and how they feel about your subject. Also, try to determine what their attitude is toward you.

For instance, you are applying for a job in computer programming at IBM. The job opening was advertised in an on-line job-placement service. What do you need to know about the reader’s background (remember, you should always know who you are writing to: someone in personnel, management, etc.)? Obviously, these people know a great deal about computer programming to begin with. In your letter, it would be a waste of their time for you to start defining technical computer terms for them.

What is the reader’s attitude toward your resume? They have advertised for this position, so you know they need to fill an opening. It would be much different if you were applying to a company that did not have a specific opening. In that case, you would have to convince them why it would be to their benefit to find an opening for you. In this case, with the opening already there, you need to convince them that you are the best choice for that specific opening. And you have to do it in a professional manner.

Always remember your objectives: why do you want the reader to read your document? For the resume, it’s clear that you want them to understand your skills and background, but more importantly you want them to respond to what you have written and call you up for an interview.

Identify Your Purpose

Who are you? Why are you writing this document? Always keep in mind your purpose: that will help you to design your document's appearance and the tone and style of writing that you need to use. Documents come in many shapes and sizes, single spaced and double spaced, full of graphics or simple white space, less than a page or more than 20 pages. You need to know what kind best suits your need.

If you are dealing with a serious issue, it would not be helpful to begin your document with a joke. But you should always begin documents with a friendly buffer. Your company is going to increase its fee for providing the public with a service. Sure, they may be doing it because the high-cost of living requires them to give their employees raises, but does the public really care about that? Wouldn't it be more effective to let the public know that services are going to be improved, more options will be available to them? It's up to them to make sure their employees deserve a raise, not you.

Here's a simple phrase that will be important throughout the course: "*write to express ideas, not to impress your audience.*" You are an expert at what you are discussing, but you need to be able to express yourself in terms your audience will understand. Do not make your reader decipher what you have written. Your reader should be able to understand it as he/she is reading it. This may sound ironic, but technical writing is best accomplished through simple language and a simple writing style.

Identify Your Message

You are establishing a relationship with your reader. Writing, obviously, is an active process. How many of you sweat over writing exercises? How many of you have aches and pains following a difficult writing assignment? How many of you have said, “This sure is a hard assignment- I think I’ll do it later.”? Well, the reader should have an active role in writing as well. The reader, as you just learned, has to respond to technical writing for it to be successful.

That means you have to use all of those concepts you learned in so many other English courses: grammar, spelling, mechanics, organization, development. We are dealing with professional documents in this course, and they need to appear professional. Know what kind of document you are writing and what rules determine that document’s appearance. In business correspondence, you should always sign your document with a full name. In memorandums, you don’t. It’s as simple as that, but there are many, many different kinds of documents.

How can you make your document most effective? Will graphics make it better or worse? Is single spacing okay, or will double spacing help the reader respond? Should you use two pages, or would it be better to find a way to shrink the content and make it one page? For that matter, do you need more content? Is your information clear, concise and complete? There’s lots to consider.

19. Self/Source/Audience- the three components of Tech Writing

Three components for understanding the process of technical writing:

Self (writer)

Recognize your role in the writer/reader relationship. Be familiar with these questions:

o Who am I (in the writing process)? Why am I communicating information?

o What are my goals? Where do I want to go (with the info I provide)?

o What is my purpose? Why do I want to go there?

o How am I going to achieve my goals and purposes? What method of communication will I use?

Source (organization)

Recognize the group/individual for which you are writing, whether it's for a business, a non-profit group or your own personal needs.

§ Whom am I representing? What are their goals/purposes?

§ What position do I have with them?

§ How do I represent them? What resources do I need?

§ Why do they need representation?

Audience (reader)

Recognize the individual, group that you will be presenting information to.

What do they need to know? How do I decide?

How do I go about doing that? What tools do I need?

What is their level of understanding (**knowledge**)?

How do they feel about the topic and about me (**attitude**)?

Why are they involved with this written communication (**purpose**)?

20. Evaluating Technical Writing

How will your grades on written work in Technical Writing class translate into on-the-job performance? The following discussion of three categories of technical writing may offer some insight and may help you to determine your own goals for yourself in this course.

Excellent Technical Writing will gain points for you in on-the-job situations. It will lead to raises, promotions, and other recognition of the excellence of your work. It will consistently get your recommendations accepted, your proposals funded and your reports praised. (*Translation*: B+/A grade in this course)

Adequate Technical Writing will keep you from embarrassing you on on-the-job situations. It will be accepted and passed on but largely without comment. It won't hurt you, but it certainly won't help you. (*Translation*: C/B)

Unacceptable Technical Writing is the kind that you'll get back to do over again until it's right. It will clamp a ceiling on all of your other technical skills and will be an impediment to your professional growth. (*Translation*: F/D)

I like to put it in these basic terms:

You're a night cleaner for the local X-Mart. Your job requires you to be in the store from 10 p.m. until 7 a.m. Your responsibilities are simple: you have to make sure the store looks good before the manager comes back in the morning.

One of your duties is to sweep the floor each night. You do it without complaint, each night going up and down the aisles making sure the dust and grime from a day's business is removed. Each morning, the boss comes in, says good job and pats you on the back. No problems, but no rewards either. That is the average job, the type of paper that will receive 2 points in this course.

One night, your mind isn't on your job. You've had some problems at home, and you are not fully involved in what you are doing. The sweeping does not seem important to you, and you rush through the store, missing some spots and hiding dirt in piles underneath rugs in other spots. The boss comes in and immediately notices the mess. He/she scolds you and warns you never to leave a mess like this again. If so, it will probably mean your job. In technical-writing terms, that is a poor job, a paper that will receive no more than 1 point.

So the next night you decide to show the boss exactly what you can do. Not only do you do the best job sweeping ever, you also take some extra time to put a layer of wax on the floor. In the morning, the boss is overwhelmed with the extra work you've done. "Great job," he/she says. It is the kind of extra initiative that will get you noticed. It's also that kind of effort that will ensure excellent papers with 3 points, the maximum each can receive.

I don't like to put so much emphasis on point totals and grades, but hopefully you will see that this means a lot more than grades you receive on papers. Like it or not, communication in professional situations is a key ingredient toward success. If you can express your ideas in easy, confident terms, you will impress the people you communicate with.

21. Parallelism worksheet

Rewrite each of the following examples to correct faulty parallelism. Try to leave items in lists, so you are correcting parallelism, not eliminating it:

1. The town was small, quiet, and the atmosphere was peaceful.
2. Her lost assignment is in her closet, on the floor, and the clothes are hiding it.
3. One clerk polished the antique spoons; they were placed into the display case by the other clerk.
4. My favorite armchair is lumpy, worn out, and has dirt spots everywhere.
5. She enjoys reading novels, studying the flute, and also sews her own clothes.
6. He admires teachers who make the classroom an exciting place and willingly explaining material more than once.
7. The exam was challenging, long, and it showed a creative imagination.
8. Many people in developing countries suffer because the countries lack sufficient housing to accommodate them, sufficient food to feed them, and their health-care facilities are inadequate.
9. Eat, drink, and let us be merry.
10. I came; I saw; the enemy was conquered.

22. Knowing Your Audience

One of the most important skills you can develop to enhance successful professional writing is to know your audience fully. I will be spending a lot of time over the next several modules emphasizing this need, including the requirement of a pre-writing cover sheet designed to help you take time analyzing your audience's knowledge, attitude and purpose.

You need to realize that in professional communication, you often do not know your audience. However, you still need to take time to understand what your audience may know about your topic and how your audience feels about the topic and about you, the writer. As an example, I have provided below the Cover Sheet format in which I have assessed English 235 students. I do not know most of you, but I can estimate your knowledge and attitude toward English class based on past experience.

Take some time to study this form, and then try it on your own: analyze what you know about me: what is my knowledge toward the course; how do I feel about the course; how do I feel about students; and what do I hope to achieve as the teacher of this course.

See, you do know me, even if you have never met me.

ENGLISH 235- TECHNICAL WRITING MEYERS

COVER SHEET

Assignment: Assessing Audience

Organization: Clinton Community College

READER(S)/AUDIENCE (what person or group): English 235 Class

Position in organization: Students

Prior knowledge of this subject: Students have taken English classes throughout their education. They have passed freshman composition and have varying skills with the written language. They probably do not have a strong understanding of technical writing and the implications of professional communication in the working world.

Prior attitude toward this subject: Most students do not like English classes to begin with. Many are taking it because it is required for their program, and they probably wish they did not have to take it. Some are fearful of writing courses and have a negative perspective on having to do lots of writing.

Prior attitude toward me (the writer): Many students will be undecided about me as the instructor of this course, though some will already have an animosity toward any English teacher. Some will be hopeful that I present them with information that is relevant to their future careers. Many expect me to be prepared and professional in my presentations.

Reasons for reading (how reader will use document): They hope to become more familiar with English 235. They want to do well in the course and expect this information to benefit their overall work.

Probable response (action expected) to this: They will put the information to use and be more confident in their approach to technical writing. They will refer to it over and over again, and their grades will reflect their knowledge.

WRITER/SENDER (Name and section): Jeff Meyers – English 235

Position (for this writing): Instructor

Purpose for writing: To emphasize the importance of understanding your audience when writing professionally. To introduce the Cover Sheet. To start the class energetically.

Tone wanted here: Serious, encouraging, professional.

CONTENT/MESSAGE

Type of document: Syllabus.

Order of information: General to specific.

Use of graphics: Charts to highlight important concepts such as grade schedule.

My source of information: Several years of experience; professional cover sheets used by several industries.

23. Parallelism

This *is* an English class, so we will discuss a few things about grammar and writing style. I'd like to take a few minutes to talk about something important in your first required assignment: parallelism.

Your first assignment, which will be discussed in Parallelism Worksheet module, requires you to list several items. In order for those lists to be clear and easily understood by your audience, they have to be written in a parallel manner. That means each item in the list should use the same grammatical structure.

For instance, two parts of a balanced sentence need to be parallel in structure: "John won $20, and the news was very exciting for him." The first half of this sentence is active: John did the action of the verb. But the second half is passive: John has become the object of the sentence. For it to be parallel in structure, it should read: "John won $20, and he was very excited about it."

Look at the following sentence:

I like to run, to swim and playing tennis.

Obviously, that is a grammatical mistake: "to run" and "to swim" are different grammatical structures than "playing tennis." They need to be similar if given in a list, so it would be correct written "to play tennis" (or all ing words).

So think of the order of words whenever you have a list, whether in a sentence or listed in a column. They should be the same. They should have a similar sound. Your first written assignment in this module will be a practice in using parallelism. Try doing all the exercises. If you don't understand any, ask questions.

24. Mini-lesson: Parallelism

To strengthen your understanding of parallelism in sentence structure, review the videos below:

Parallelism in Writing – What it is and how to avoid problems

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://library.achievingthedream.org/clintontechnicalwriting/?p=46

Parallelism in Grammar

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://library.achievingthedream.org/clintontechnicalwriting/?p=46

25. Instructions for Organizational Summaries

In order for you to understand your audience, an important part of this course, you first have to understand who you are and from where you are writing. I would like you to choose two organizations you have been involved in and analyze several aspects of the organizations, including types of activities conducted there, types of writings used there and connections with other organizations.

Organizations can include jobs you've had, civic and non-profit clubs you've been a part of, church and school organizations, or teams and musical groups you've been involved in, just to name a few. You can choose organizations that you are currently involved in or ones you belonged to previously. But you should have a comfortable familiarity with the comings and goings of the organization: for the next 15 weeks, you will be representing that organization through written communication.

Study the following Organizational Summary example. Use a format that is clear for you audience and highlights the major points you want to highlight. Remember, you need to write two organizational summaries for this assignment. But before you begin, remember to try the practice exercise in the next document in this module, "Parallelism Worksheet.

ENGLISH 235
MEYERS

Organizational Profile
By Joe Student

FULL TITLE: English 235 Class, Clinton Community College
OVERVIEW OF GOALS AND PURPOSES:
To understand concepts relevant to professional writing
To develop a professional attitude toward written communication
To achieve a successful grade based on technical-writing knowledge and skills
ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED THERE: (Please note: the following bulleted lists could be placed into columns to help balance the page.)

- Daily classes
- Workshop practice exercises
- Group discussionsProfessor lectures and review sessions
- Homework assignments
- Mid-term and final writing activities

PROBLEMS DEALT WITH THERE:

- Complex technical-writing concepts
- Weak student participation
- Poor weather
- Cell-phone use
- Inconsistent attendance
- Dull lectures
- Personal emergencies
- Assignment deadlines

PEOPLE INVOLVED, HOW ORGANIZED:

- One instructor
- Up to 20 students

CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

- Tutoring Center

- VPAA's office
- English chair's office
- College library
- Personal organizations connected to assignments
- Various college degree programs
- Textbook company

TYPES OF WRITINGS USED:

- Instructional handouts
- Professor notes (on overhead and chalk board)
- Student notes
- Several types of tech-writing documents
- Textbook resource information
- Various reference materials

MY EXPERIENCE THERE:
I have been involved in English 235 class for just over two weeks. So far we have learned some important basics about technical writing, and the professor has prepared us for what to expect with his syllabus and introductory information provided in class.

26. Organizational Summaries

Use this area to create your (two) organizational summaries. Remember, you **have to** send over your documents as an attachment, and save under Word or Rich Text Format (RTF). Also remember that each summary is a separate document. Make sure Summary 2 begins on a new page.

27. Discussion: Technical Documents

For the next few days, I would like you to look for examples of technical writing in the real world: brochures, correspondence, product instructions, reports and media announcements, to name a few. As you are studying the different documents you find, jot down the strengths and weaknesses you find in both the content and design of the documents.

In other words, what makes them good examples of professional documents and what makes them weak examples.

Then, on line, describe one kind of document you found and what you feel the strength or weakness is. Discuss with your classmates why you think it is good or bad. Good luck. If possible, include the document as an attachment for classmates to look at.

PART V

MODULE 3: CONTENT AND DESIGN

28. What's Due When

Module Overview: This module will reemphasize the two-pronged approach to technical writing: content and design. We will discuss the use of simplistic writing and the need to be concise in what we write. We will also examine more closely what makes a good document and what weakens a document from the perspective of appearance.

Module Learning Objectives: To identify good technical writing from poor technical writing; to use prewriting exercises for all written documents; to write an effective newsletter summary.

Assignments: Reader/Writer Relationships; Writing a newsletter summary, with Cover Sheet.

29. The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

Take a look at the following documents. Notice how simple adjustments in design and content to Document A improve our understanding of the information in Document B.

DOCUMENT A

I am writing to inform you that everything you will be doing has a purpose. Organization, clarity and coherence are essential to the success of your writing style. You need organization to help your reader understand where your writing is going, clarity to help your ready understand what it is you are trying to say, and coherence to keep your reader from straying from the topic you have presented. Without these three ingredients, combined in all your writing, including the most technical report imaginable, your writing will falter beyond belief. You will lose your audience, and your message will become lost.

DOCUMENT B

Everything you do, in technical writing, has a purpose. Any successful document has three essential components: *organization, clarity* and *coherence*. In order to master the concepts of technical writing, you need to master these three components.

Organization

It is essential to keep your paper organized to help your reader get from the beginning of your paper to the end.

Clarity

You need to use language your reader can understand and sentence structures you reader can follow, so your reader can understand your message without difficulty.

Coherence

Although you are an expert at your topic, you cannot "show off" for your reader by providing all you know. You need to stick to the topic you have introduced and present the material as quickly and efficiently as possible.

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Obviously, these are abbreviated versions of technical documents. But hopefully they illustrate this concept well: by using such simple tools as headings, boldface and italics, you can make documents much more easily read and understood by your reader. The purpose of writing technical reports is to express information for your audience, not to impress them with your knowledge. Remember that statement: write to **express**, not to **impress**.

Now take a look at the next short document. It uses good design techniques, but obviously, that is not all that is needed in technical writing:

GRAMMATICAL RULES OF TECHNICAL WRITING

In order to write successfully, one must remember that a plethora of grammatical rules and regulations regulate how we use the English language, both in the case of mechanics and usage, which are very important guidelines to ensure a properly written English document.

Modifiers

Use modifiers sparingly, but use them correctly. Misplaced modifiers are killers: they will destroy the understanding of technical reports and should be avoided at all costs. Dangling modifiers present ten times the severity in loss of understanding. When you see either misplaced or dangling modifiers, eliminate them.

Phrases and Clauses

Again, technical writers must always be wary of using too many repetitive phrases. **Gerund** phrases are acceptable but only occasionally, perhaps two or three per page. **Participial** phrases can be more difficult to identify but can also be useful when using **imperative voice**. **Noun** phrases and **prepositional** phrases can kill good writing in an instant. **Subordinate** clauses, also, may be misleading for you audience, so most clauses should be **coordinating,** except when a **dependent statement** relies on **active voice**, of course only on Tuesdays when the sun is shining.

##################################

.

Huh??? Obviously lots of writing tools are used here. But how effective is it? This is plain ugly writing. The writer takes no time to explain what he/she is referring to, and the reader is lost in the muck of confusing language. Another important statement to remember: *define* any words that your reader might not know.

Written communication is a two-way process: you need to keep your audience in mind at all times. Everything you write is for your audience's benefit: how the reader understands, interprets and uses your material. If your audience is confused with language, for instance, your audience will not be able to participate in the writer-reader relationship. You provide information for your reader, and your reader participates by responding actively, doing something based on the material you've provided.

Sometimes, in technical writing, you will have to use language your reader may not know (a medical document written for a patient that uses medical terms, for instance). It's important to know the medical terms, because you will be confronting those terms in other situations. So we do not simply remove all complicated language. It is better to use simple language, but when you need to provide technical terms (as stated above), define those terms.

Your next assignment will be to create a Cover Sheet to be used for every document you write in this course. The Cover Sheet relies on both design and content to make you and me familiar with the topic you have chosen to write about.

30. Cover sheets for assignments

It is very important to understand your audience when writing technical documents. You need to know their background, their knowledge, their education, their skills. You also need to know their attitude, how they feel about yoru subject. Are they going to be supportive or antagonistic?

For every written assignment you do in this course, I want you to perform a simple pre-writing technique. I want you to submit with your document a Cover Sheet that analyzes such concepts as the writer's knowledge and attitude, as well as your purpose for writing and what style of writing you are using. This is a procedure that will require you to think about audience prior to beginning your assignment. I want this done as a pre-writing exercise. I **will not** accept a Cover Sheet for an assignment after the assignment is completed.

Use the following format to organize and develop your Cover Sheet. Remember, you will use this format for each document you write.

ENGLISH 235- TECHNICAL WRITING MEYERS

COVER SHEET

Assignment: Memo (or whatever document you are writing)

Organization: Kmart (what organization are you representing? You are not yet referring to your reader)

READER(S)/AUDIENCE (what person or group): Wanda Guynup

Position in organization: Personnel manager.

Prior knowledge of this subject: Has dealt with this situation before; knows how to handle it; knows me and other employees.

Prior attitude toward this subject: Does not know or see what is going on; not there when it occurs; does not like dealing with this situation because does not like conflict; not favorite area.

Prior attitude toward me (the writer): Expects me to be a diligent worker Has faith in my ability to provide accurate information.

Reasons for reading (how reader will use document): It is part of her job to solve internal conflicts; curious.

Probable response (action expected) to this: Will read it; do something to solve the problem; use my suggestions; ignore it.

WRITER/SENDER (Name and section): Nichole Smith – Engish 235-02C

Position (for this writing): Employee seeking solution.

Purpose for writing: Fed up with other employees not doing their work; tired of picking up the "slack;" want a solution.

Tone wanted here: Serious, encouraging.

CONTENT/MESSAGE

Type of document: Bad news memo: Full-block format.

Order of information: (How are you going to organize your information?)

Graphics needed/included: N/A. (many documents will benefit from graphics)

My source of information: My own experience and from other employees' experiences with the same problem.

31. Five Concepts to Strengthen Professional Writing

The following concepts can be beneficial in helping to improve your professional writing style:

Use Short Sentences: On average, your sentences should be between **12 and 18 words**. You need to always think about **varying the length** of your sentences, some with fewer than 12 words and a few with more than 18 words, but keep them **short on average**.

Choose Simple Language: **Complex terms** are sometimes needed in technical writing, but they are often unnecessary for the reader's comprehension. Choose **simple words** when you have the choice.

Use Visual Language: **Vague images** make writing **dull** and **unclear**. Choose **short, concrete words** that the reader can **visualize**.

Connect to Experiences: Readers feel **more comfortable** with what they **know**. Find a way *to connect to a new idea* with something your reader is *already familiar with.*

Express Thoughts Clearly: Trying to impress your audience with your knowledge and skills can sometimes lead to complicated messages. Present your ideas **simply**and **directly**.

32. The Two-Pronged Approach To Technical Writing

Content
Format/Design

Word
choic
e
Headings/Subheadings

Sentence structures Bulleted lists
Paragraph length
Paragraph types
Grammar/Usage Clean copies
Clarity The big 3: BIU
Specific details Graphics
Order of information Single space/double space

Both *content and design* should be directly related to audience awareness: how is your audience going to use the document; how much does your audience already know about the document; how does your audience feel about the document?

Both content and design will be directly related to the type of document required. A **press release** will look much different than a **newsletter summary** and should have a totally different purpose/response.

The same holds true for:

- Instructions/Process Description;
- Letter of Inquiry/ Letter of Application;
- Business Letter/Memorandum, etc.

Think about what you say in a professional document and about what the document looks like.

33. What is the Writer/Reader Relationship?

The following information will help clarify the Writer/Reader Relationship:

- The writer provides valid information (proposes an idea).
- The reader accepts that information (accesses and understands information) and responds with active participation.

Using persuasion in your writing will help to promote audience participation. The following tips can be used to strengthen persuasion in documents:

- Know your audience (the reader's knowledge and attitude).
- Know what you want your audience to do (the reader's purpose for being actively involved).
- Use clear and specific content within a business and technical format/design (the two prongs of technical writing).

34. Avoiding Passive Voice

What's wrong with this sentence: *The ball was hit by Joe?* The ball, in this case, is not doing anything. John is the person performing the action of hitting the ball. If it wasn't for John, the ball would have reached the catcher's mitt, and John might have struck out. Fortunately for him and his team, he swung and hit the ball.

>>

The ball was hit by Joe is an example of **passive voice.** The subject, in passive-voice structures, is not performing the action of the verb. In this case, *was hit* is the verb, but Joe, the person performing the action, has been relegated to the object of the sentence. The subject and verb are a team and should almost always work together: *John hit the ball.*

Look at the following examples and think about why active voice is better than passive voice:

His neighbor stole the boat.

The boat was stolen by his neighbor.

In this case, passive voice is too wordy; why say something in seven words when you can say it in five?

The oldest child was interviewed by me and my partner.

My partner and I interviewed the oldest child.

Although passive voice in this example is also wordy, it also lacks emphasis. The reader loses identity with the most important part of a sentence in the passive voice: the subject.

Try improving the following sentences by changing them to active voice. This is a practice. You do not need to submit your answers, but if you have any questions, ask.

At every performance of the symphony, the music was enjoyed by me more.

A consultation meeting was called.

The time of arrival is considered important.

The day I discovered corrupt politics will never be forgotten by me.

It was stated that the client had stopped working.

We will discuss, in an upcoming module, the possibility of using passive voice. But for now, avoid it. Simply make sure your subject is performing the action of the verb (I know, that sounds like an English teacher talking, but you do need to know subjects and verbs.)

35. The Passive versus Active Voice Dilemma

Teachers actually get fired up about this issue. You may have had a frustrated (and frustrating?) professor write on your paper "Use passive voice!" or "Avoid passive voice!" during your studies, and your grammar checker will be happy to flag and condemn all passive sentences for you. Further, your English textbook might suggest that the active sentence "Jack hit the baseball" is better than the passive sentence "The baseball was hit by Jack." As well-intentioned as they might be, these tidbits of advice don't help much, do they? You are not likely to have anyone named Jack hitting any baseballs in your papers, and obviously *both* passive and active voice are powerful tools in the right hands.

You are probably already able to identify whether or not sentences are written in the passive or active voice, but if not, here is a refresher: In the simplest terms, an active voice sentence is written in the form of "A does B." A passive voice sentence is written in the form of "A is done by B." Both constructions are fine. In fact, notice how the sentences below, depending on the context in which they appear, are equally acceptable:

> *Passive voice:* The rate of evaporation is controlled by the size of an opening.
>
> *Active voice*: The size of an opening controls the rate of evaporation.

The passive choice slightly emphasizes "the rate of evaporation," while the active choice emphasizes "the size of an opening." Simple. So why all the fuss? Because the habit of overusing passive constructions rules too many writers, who habitually produce grammatically tangled sentences such as this one:

> Groundwater flow is influenced by zones of fracture concentration, as can be recognized by the two model simulations (see Figures 1 and 2), by which one can see . . .

Forget it. The sentence is becoming a burden for the reader, and probably for the writer too. As often happens, the passive voice here has smothered potential verbs and kicked off a runaway train of prepositions. But the reader's task gets much easier in the revised version below:

> Two model simulations (Figures 1 and 2) illustrate how zones of fracture concentration influence groundwater flow. These simulations show . . .

To revise the above, all I did was look for the two buried things (simulations and zones) in the original version that could actually *do* something, and I made the sentence clearly about these two nouns by placing them in front of active verbs. This is the general principle to follow as you compose in the active voice: Place concrete nouns that can perform work in front of active verbs representing the nature of the work done.

But suppose you are writing a report where you may not use “I”, or you are writing about a sentence subject that can not actually *do* anything. What to do when the passive voice is the best, most natural choice?

The answer lies in writing direct sentences—in passive voice—that have simple subjects and verbs. Compare the two sentences below:

> Photomicrographs were taken to facilitate easy comparison of the samples.
>
> Easy comparison of the samples was facilitated by the taking of photomicrographs.

Both sentences are written in the passive voice, but for most ears the first sentence is more direct and understandable, and therefore preferable. Depending on the context, it does a clearer job of telling us what was done and why it was done. Especially if this sentence appears in the “Experimental” section of a report (and thus readers already know that the authors of the report took the photomicrographs), the first sentence neatly represents what the authors actually did—took photomicrographs—and why they did it—to facilitate easy comparison.

Note well: Using passive voice does not have to create ambiguity nor complicate wording. When you use the passive voice, seek economy and clarity. Avoid such empty and ambiguous phrases as “it might be thought that” (try “perhaps”) or “it is to be supposed that” (try “presumably”) or “the theory that is held by the writer of this report at the present time of this writing” (try “It is theorized that”) or “one should think of” (try dropping it completely). At times the passive seems unavoidable, but the passive can often be switched to the active with some simple rewording, and *both* the active and the passive voice can be direct, efficient, and clear in context. In your writing, you must strive to use both of them well.

Self-Study

For examples and exercises on passive vs. active voice, check out these websites:

“Choosing between Active and Passive Voice Verbs When Writing” page from Kennesaw State University

Active and passive voice discussion and examples from a professor at Seton Hill University

36. Point System Review

Just a reminder that documents are evaluated using a point system with grades of 1 through 3 given based on the quality of the design and content (sometimes a paper may receive a “Redo” if I believe a student will benefit from more work on it). A “2” paper is a good paper. It’s not something to frown at, but you do have the option to revise a 2 paper if you’d like.

Don’t think of the point system as a percentage, 3 being 100 percent, 2 being 66 percent and so on. It’s not like that. WIth straight 2s, you would definitely receive enough points for a C grade and possibly more based on other points (from discussion and homework). So don’t be discouraged with “2” grades. A “3” grade is a great paper, a professional document. Usually they come about with revision.

37. Newsletter summary

Assignment #2 will be to write a newsletter summary. Newsletters often abbreviate versions of articles written in other periodicals. Since space is at a premium in newsletters, the design and content of summaries is very important. You need to say what the original article said in about one-third the space , so you need to pick only the most important information. Summaries don't have the luxury of using colorful language or long descriptive details. You need to look for the basic facts only.

I would like you to find an original article in a newspaper or magazine. Then I would like you to submit a summary of that article to *Clinton Times*, the CCC newsletter (you will really be submitting it to me, but let's pretend it is being submitted for publication). You need to choose a full-length article, not a list of information. In your summary, you are putting the most important info from the article into a list. Also, make sure you pick a topic that will be of interest to the college community and one that they will actively respond to, not just read.

In the introduction to your newsletter summary, state the article's topic and the original source, including author, title and date. Then, you need to use some kind of tabulated list (bullets, dashes, numbers) to highlight the five or six most important points that came from the article. A brief conclusion, emphasizing the importance of this information, may also be beneficial.

The following is an example of a newsletter summary. Also, look for some newsletters in the community to identify the use of content and design.

Prevent CATastrophy

Six Steps to Nine Lives

By Thomas A. Hilderbrand

Your cat's health is important: it ensures that special bond you have will last a long time. An article in *Better Homes and Gardens*,February 2003, "Keep your Cat Feelings Purr-fect," by Cheryl Fritz Long, has six suggestions for a healthier feline.

1. Make yours a house cat. Cats residing inside live twice as long as cats that run free. Life indoors limits injury from fights and lowers risk of feline leukemia and feline immunodeficiency disease.

2. Get regular checkups. Vaccinations against rabies, combined distemper virus and leukemia are a must for all cats. Your veterinarian can suggest additional tests to ensure your pet's health.

3. Feed your cat properly. Nutrients your cat needs are found in brand-name foods; table scraps don't meet a cat's nutritional demands.

4. Neuter or spay. Neutering or spaying your cat makes it a better pet by reducing spraying and eliminating the female estrogen cycle, thus reducing the chance of breast cancer.

5. Protect against hazards. Because cats eat almost anything, be sure to keep them away from poisonous plants, household chemicals and medications. Cats shouldn't play with string or tinsel; a ball is a much safer toy.

6. Know your cat's stool. A cat's stool is normally firm; their routine is consistent. Consult your veterinarian with any problems.

Following these simple guidelines will help keep your cat healthy and will help keep your relationship with your favorite feline strong.

Now go to the next module, Writing the Newsletter Summary, to create the assignment. Remember to send it to me as an attachment, preferably an RTF document.

38. Newsletter Summary Example

ENGLISH 235- TECHNICAL WRITING
MEYERS

COVER SHEET

Assignment: Newsletter Summary
Organization: Clinton Times
READER(S)/AUDIENCE: Parents of young children
Position in organization: Students, faculty, staff, administration
Prior knowledge of this subject: Have dealt with kids before and may appreciate these tips.
Prior attitude toward this subject: Do not like dealing with the negative attitudes that kids give them.
Prior attitude toward me: Understands that I am representing the newsletter and have taken the time to research this topic. Expects me to be professional
Reasons for reading: It will enlighten him on how to add creativity and fun into daily routines with kids.
Probable response to this: Will read it; will use the suggestions; ignore it.

WRITER/SENDER: Roxanne Lamberton – English 235-02C

Position: Staff Writer.

Purpose for writing: Tired of fighting with the kids to get daily necessities done.

Tone wanted here: creativity and inspiring.

CONTENT/MESSAGE

Type of document: Good newsletter: Full-block format.

Order of information: Introductory paragraph with source info followed by a highlighted list of important info, listed in emphatic order. Wrapped up with a concluding statement to my reader.

Graphics needed/included: N/A

My source of information: An article from "Parenting", May 2003 and my own experience.
Jazz up baths, bedtime, and more
Four Steps to Break from the Routine
By Roxanne Lamberton
Kids thrive on regular schedules; however, every now and then the whole family can benefit from a little something different. An article in *Parenting*, May 2003, "Make over your day," by Barbara Rowley, has four steps for jazzing up baths, bedtime, and more.

1. **Playtime: Color outside the lines.** Go to a different playground than usual. Introduce new elements to playtime and your kids can be elevated from typical to great. One example is painting the dollhouse furniture. It blurs the line between pretend play and arts and crafts.

2. **Meals: Think venue and menu.** A couple of changes at dinnertime can help resolve conflicts, spark conversations, and even encourage more adventurous eating. Occasionally have your dinner backwards where sweets come first. Have your kids help plan an out-of-the-ordinary meal. It generates excitement and inspires them to help.

3. **Bathtime: Just add to the water.** Use plastic items from around

the house. A salad spinner makes whirlpools for little boats. Draw over baby dolls with washable markers before the kids go into the tub, then scold the dolls for their mess and scrub them clean. Consider the once-in-a-lifetime experience of a clothes-on bath when the outfits are as dirty as they are.

4. **Bed: Simplify your strategy.** A bit of night air is calming for everyone. Stargazing helps turn off the busy part of the day and prepares for the quiet, cozy part of the night which is bath, books, and bed. A short walk around the neighborhood to say good night is also relaxing.

Following these tips will spruce up the everyday routines. You can add fun into any daily routine and transform it into a memory.

39. Writing the Newsletter Summary (with Cover Sheet)

Remember, do the Cover Sheet first. The Cover Sheet is a pre-writing document you are doing for this class. You are writing the Newsletter Summary for *Clinton Times*. Your summary should be about a third the length of the original article. Choose the most important information.

40. Newsletter discussion

Take some time to find a couple of professional newsletters, either on the Internet or as hardcopies within organizations you may have access to, (check out area libraries, local organizations or nationally-known special-interest groups) and compare the content and design between the newsletters. I'd like each student to make at least one comment about a similarity/difference you've found and then respond to your classmates' observations.

PART VI

MODULE 4: WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

41. What's Due When

Module Overview: In this module, we will be looking at several kinds of written correspondence, including letters of inquiry, letters of application (with resumes) and memorandums. There will be three written assignments due over the next three weeks, focusing on professional quality (perfect) documents.

Module Learning Objectives: To learn how to write business correspondence, including several options for formatting letters. To write in a professional manner, eliminating all typos, spelling errors and other writing mistakes.

Assignments: Letter of Inquiry; Letter of Application (with resume); Interoffice Memorandum.

42. The Power of Correspondence

Years ago, I worked for a plastics company. I had graduated from college but had not found a position in the career I wanted to pursue. But this full-time job helped me and my family survive at the time.

I then obtained a part-time teaching position here at Clinton Community College. My full-time job was from 4 p.m. to midnight, so it did not interfere with classes I taught at college. But then one semester I was offered a Monday evening course at one of the area correctional facilities.

I immediately went to my boss at the factory and asked if I could have Monday evenings off and work a four-day week for the next 15 weeks. He knew that my future was in teaching, not making plastic bottles. However, he didn't think I warranted the day off and told me I couldn't have it. I then told him that I couldn't work there anymore, in that case, and left the plant.

My work ethics at the factory, I believe, had been exceptional, and I did not think I had been treated fairly. I wrote a letter to the company's main office in Montreal, explaining the situation and providing management with production sheets showing that I was doing a very good job.

About a week later, I received a call from the local plant manager. I will never forget the words he said to me: "Jeff, I guess I have to eat crow," meaning that he was apologizing for letting me go and had been told by headquarters to hire me back and allow me to work four days a week for the semester.

I no longer work at the plant, but that letter proved to me how powerful proper correspondence can be. When you write professional documents, whether to complain about service at a local store or to apply for a job opening, you need to write in a professional manner. You need to be brief but emphatic, succinct but specific. Convince your audience that what you are writing about is important to both you and your reader.

Our next mini-lecture will focus on a specific kind of business correspondence, one that can be used for many business letters: the bad-news format.

43. Bad-News Formula

For many people, bad news brings images of tragedy, lost loved ones, lost opportunities, lost hopes. But in technical writing, the bad-news approach to correspondence refers to information that your reader may not readily want to hear.

Take, for instance, a letter that you send to a retail store where you were treated poorly. Sure, the management wants to know that they have a problem with an employee, but it is really news they would rather not hear: in a perfect retail world, customers are always treated kindly.

Or you want to write a letter to a company asking them to replace a defective product you bought. A successful company will definitely want to replace the item, but they would rather have never had the occasion to receive the letter in the first place.

What if you're writing to a business asking them to explain some policy they have developed. The business will be excited about answering queries from prospective clientele. But picture the person who has to reply to you. He or she probably has a million other things on the daily agenda and now has to squeeze one more item onto the schedule. That's not necessarily good news.

As the writer of correspondence, you have to influence your reader not only to read your letter but to act upon it. Remember, reading is an active process. You want the manager to correct the employee's attitude, not laugh at you as just another complaining customer. You want the company to replace the defective part immediately, not put your letter aside for someone else to handle. And you want the business to answer your questions quickly and fully.

The bad-news formula can help influence your reader to react by organizing your letter in five distinct sections:

- a friendly opening

- an explanation or analysis of the problem
- the bad news
- an alternative solution
- a friendly closing

Let's look at the five sections in a letter. This letter is in response to a customer who wanted an appliance company to replace his broken dryer. The company cannot replace the dryer but wants to keep the customer satisfied. Look how the bad-news approach organizes the letter:

Thank you for your call about your dryer (the letter begins). As you know, following your call, our service representative, Sophia Montana, examined your dryer.

This paragraph uses a basic friendly approach: "Thank you." Those two words can go a long way in keeping your reader happy. Openings should be very short, but they should always have a friendly tone to them. Let the reader know you appreciate them reading this letter, no matter how angry you are.

She found that the dryer's motor had been overheated so much that it is damaged beyond repair. She also noted that the lint filter was so clogged with lint that it was not functioning properly. As a result, the lint packed into the motor, causing the overheating. She also reported that on a previous service call to your house, she had found the lint filter clogged. At that time, she showed you the warning in your operating manual that points out that failure to clean the lint filter after every use of the dryer may result in overheating and damage to the motor.

This paragraph reminds the reader of some important concepts. It's nothing new for the reader, but it is putting on record information that will help the reader understand the upcoming bad news. Don't over explain background details, but give enough to help your reader's understanding of the issues.

Your replacement guarantee only covers defects by the manufacturer and improper installation by us. Since neither was a factor in the motor's overheating, we cannot replace your motor free of charge as you have requested.

This is definitely bad news. The reader is probably fuming at this point. He wanted a replacement and he's not going to get it. You can't hide the bad news. You have to be open and let your reader know exactly what you are writing for. Hopefully, the two previous paragraphs will have helped "buffer" the reader's anger.

However, we are anxious to help you get your dryer working again. If you want our service representative to install a new motor, please call us. We can bill the installation as a continuing service call at $35 *rather than the normal installation fee of* $60, *saving you* $35. *The cost of the motor itself* is $150, *so your total cost would be* $185.

Here's the alternative. Show your reader that you are willing to help out, compromise, as it were. It's bad news, but it's not the end of the world. It can be corrected with both you and your reader in agreement.

We value you as a customer, so we hope that our solution for replacing your motor will be acceptable to you.

A friendly closing is just as important as the friendly opening. Both act as bookmarks, reminding the reader that all is not lost. This formula isn't fool-proof, but it is often successful in keeping anger to a minimum or influencing your audience to take an interest in what you have to say.

44. Resumes can be powerful, too!

You may already have a resume. But as you read this module, or do homework in another class, or punch the clock at your part-time job, your resume is changing. It's growing constantly. Everything you do can have a connection to future career goals, and a successful resume will help you make that connection.

When you apply for a job opening that requires you to submit your resume, you are probably going to be competing against many other people, many other resumes. And most of them will have comparable information on their resumes. You need to make sure yours stands out, so your audience will consider it. The professional style of technical writing we have been focusing on plays a very important role in creating and designing your resume.

Pay particular attention to your résumé's appearance. Obviously, you don't want to have coffee stains or smudgy fingerprints on it, but you also don't want the slightest writing, spelling or grammatical error either. I once created a resume I planned to send to several companies. But on a final reading, just before I was ready to put it in the mail, I noticed I had spelled "maintenance" incorrectly (maintainence). I know students often say that English teachers are always over-emphasizing the importance of spelling, but that one mistake could have damaged the overall success of the resume.

Bosses want to know that their employees are going to do the best possible job for them. If they see a resume that isn't the best it could be, a boss will definitely wonder if the person will make the same kinds of mistakes on the job. A spelling error on a resume could turn into a huge mistake in the monthly figures for a company.

Study resumes. Your textbook has two different formats emphasizing the order of information in your resume. Try to decide which is best for you, and place your experience in an order that will want your reader to meet you. Remember, the resume will not get you hired, but a successful resume may get you into the door for that all-important interview. The resume will also be the foundation for the interview, so make sure your prospective boss has valuable information from which to proceed.

As I said before, everything you do can become a part of your resume. When you are listing your educational experience, why not also mention the significance of what you took in school. Everyone is going to list their degree and significant courses they took. But try to mention some specifics about how those courses will benefit your reader. Why would your boss care that you took English 235? Well, because you learned so much about communicating succinctly and professionally, an asset any boss will appreciate.

The same holds true for jobs you have held. How on earth would the job at McDonalds you held five years ago have anything to do with the position for a social worker you are applying for? Well, you remember how important it was to communicate with the customers? How you had to keep smiling despite the rough day you were having? Jobs like that are full of experiences that will come handy in your life.

Your resume, in modern lingo, is an attachment, an enclosure. You will also be sending a cover letter, or letter of application, with the resume. In fact, it's what the reader will see first. You need to influence your reader to turn to the resume. Borrow some important specifics from the resume to use as bait, kind of like the previews of a movie. The producers pick the best clips to influence people to go to the movies. Pick your top skills, experiences, activities and highlight them in your Letter of Application.

Your letter can also show your potential boss that you have knowledge of the position/company. You should always resaerch the postion/company. It will help you in showing that you have an interest in this job and in this company, but it will also help you decide whether you want to pursue the position. If you feel you are not truly qualified for the position or will not truly be happy with the company, then you may want to reconsider applying. Also, when you are offered the job, it becomes your decision on whether to accept or not. Knowing as much as you can about the position/company can help you with that life-changing decision.

45. Information to be included in resumes

Essential Information

1. Name, address, phone (with area code) and e-mail address.
2. Education (in reverse order)
a. All schooling/training after high school
b. List degree/certificate received; if none, give the years you attended
c. School name, city, state
d. Relevant courses and activities
3. Work experience (in reverse order)
a. Job title; duties and accomplishments (use action verbs: designed, repaired, supervised, organized, etc.)
b. Dates worked, company, name, city and state
4. Qualifications
a. Not jobs you've had but what you know and can do
b. Skills, knowledge, licenses, ability to use equipment, and so on
5. Accomplishments
a. Not what you can do, but what you've done that reflects hard work, creativity, leadership, reliability and similar qualities.
b. Proofs: awards, citations, high grades, publications, language certificates
6. Military service (if any)
a. Branch, highest rank, honorable discharge
b. Job duties, security clearances
c. Schools attended and academic achievements and recognitions
7. Citizenship, if other than this country

Optional information

1. Employment or career objective: tells what kind of position you want now or in the long run
2. High school: include only if courses or activities relate to your career field
3. Clubs and organizations, including offices held
4. Job-related interests and hobbies
5. Statement that references are "available on request"

Omitted information

1. Personal data: age, sex, height, weight, health, handicaps, your picture
2. Street addresses and phone numbers of schools and jobs
3. Names of supervisors
4. Salaries
5. Reasons for leaving prior jobs
6. Names and addresses of references (to protect their privacy)

Writing and Layout

1. List only things that sell you as a good employee. Don't list everything.
2. Make the resume easy to read. Employers skim many resumes rapidly.
a. Items are briefly stated
b. Sections are labeled and separated
c. Most important selling points stand out
d. Page is not cluttered or dense with print
e. Blank spaces reflect reader and ease the eye

3. Professional appearance

a. Neat

b. Well written and error free

c. Typed, typeset or printed by a high-resolution printer

4. Distinctive and individualized: make yours stand out from the hundreds read by employers

46. Sample resume

Here is one format you can consider. Remember that a resume is a personal document- its content/design is a reflection of your skills and experiences.

Resume of Kim Smith

41 Hale Storm Drive
Chatham, N.Y. 12999
Phone (518) 923-9445

Objective To use my skills as a press operator.

Skills *Pre-press*

v	Price quoting	v	Pasting up
v	Graphic designing	v	Platemaking
v	Inventory tracking		

Press

v	Multigraphics 1450	v	AB Dick 30 Pro
v	Multigraphics CopyBinder 24	v	Itek 617 S

Post-press/Bindery

v	Collating	v	Stapling
v	Padding	v	Laminating
v	Book binding	v	Drilling
v	Cutting	v	Billing

Employment **1987-2005** **Champlain Valley Educational Services**

Plattsburgh, NY

Offset Press Operator

v Sample jobs include: school newsletters, report cards, brochures, letterhead and envelopes.

Education 2004-2005 Clinton Community College

Plattsburgh, NY

Pursuing an AA in Medical Lam Technology

v Courses include: Technical Writing, Intro to Microcomputer Applications; Biology I & 2, Psychology, Sociology, English Composition, Algebra

1985-1987 Champlain Valley Educational Services Plattsburgh, NY

Printing & Photography Program

v Skills include: Darkroom techniques, metal plate making, paper plate making, chemical mixing, computer billing, press running and maintenance.

References Available upon request

47. Additional sample resumes

Click here for additional sample resumes

48. Block formats for correspondence

The most important thing to remember with written correspondence is to be consistent: indent all paragraphs or block all paragraphs. But this document will review the major formats for correspondence.

Block format (everything lines up on the left margin):

(RETURN ADDRESS)

123 Smith Street

Plattsburgh, N.Y. 12901

(DATE)

Feb. 21, 2006

(INSIDE ADDRESS)

Mr. Milton Bradley

President

Johnson Packaging Company

4242 Jones Road

Canton, N.Y. 13084

(SALUTATION)

Dear Mr. Bradley:

(BODY- don't indent paragraphs- skip lines between paragraphs)

I am writing….

Please….

(Signature line)

Yours truly,

Jeff Meyers

Modified block:

123 Smith Street

Plattsburgh, N.Y. 12901

Feb. 21, 2006

Mr. Milton Bradley

President

Johnson Packaging Company

4242 Jones Road

Canton, N.Y. 13084

Dear Mr. Bradley:

(Don't indent paragraphs- skip lines between paragraphs)

Yours truly,

Jeff Meyers

The semi block format is similar to modified block except that paragraphs are indented and it is optional to skip lines between paragraphs- do so consistently if you want to spread info out more on a page.

The simplified letter can use any of the block formats, but it does not include the Greeting. Instead, it has a subject line identifying the topic of the letter. It is used when you don't know the name of a person you are writing to. It's sometimes better than using "Dear Sir or Madam:" or "To Whom it May Concern."

49. Memo example

Memos are documents used within organizations. They have a much different format from business letters. Note the heading of the following sample, identifying TO, FROM, DATE, and SUBJECT. Also note that there is no signature line in a memorandum.

MATH COUNTS
CHAMPLAIN VALLEY CHAPTER
MEMO
TO: Mr. Rogers

FROM: Erin Facsimile **EF**

DATE: October 12, 2015

RE: MATHCOUNTS 2003

On February 15, 2003, the annual MATHCOUNTS competition for local middle school students will take place at Plattsburgh High School. It is very important to keep you up to date with the number of students who will participate and the current funds we have accrued in the Champlain Valley Chapter.
At this time, we currently have a total of 24 students and only $120.00 in the local chapter's checking/savings account. The following breakdown indicates an estimate of where the cost to sponsor this program and the funds stand:

	Chapter Account	**$120.00**
q	Savings Bond	$ 50.00
q	Awards (i.e. trophies)	120.00
q	Breakfast snacks (i.e., donuts, muffins)	50.00
q	Beverages (i.e., juice, milk, coffee)	50.00

q	Misc. paper products (i.e., cups, plates, napkins)	20.00
	TOTAL	$290.00
		120.00
	GRAND TOTAL	**-$170.00**

Our expenses far exceed the money we have attained and I feel that we will need to find a way to make this event happen each year. I suggest that we look for volunteers and/or donations from local businesses. Possibly a store may donate some donuts and beverages for this event.

Your help in this matter is critical at this time. In a matter of months, this will take place and we need to be fully prepared to put the competition on. Please let me know when you wish to discuss this matter.

Thanks for your help!

50. Information needed for cover sheet

Please review the following information relevant to the cover sheets you are writing for each assignment- this cover sheet is specifically referring to what kind of information you should put on the Letter of Application cover sheet:

ENGLISH 235 MEYERS
TECHNICAL WRITING 08/30/
14

COVER SHEET

Assignment: Letter of Application, with Resume

Organization: (this is the organization you are representing with this document- who is going to benefit from the reader's response?)

READER (S)/AUDIENCE: (this is the person/organization you are writing to; remember that with a letter of application, knowing a person's name to send the letter to is one way of advancing above other applicants)

Position in organization: (this is the position of the person listed above as well as the company he/she represents)

Prior knowledge of this subject: (what does your reader know about the information you are providing? About the process involved?)

Prior attitude toward this subject: (how does the reader feel about filling this position?)

Prior attitude toward me: (how does the reader feel about you as an applicant? As a potential employee?)

Reason for reading: (why is the reader bothering to look at your material?)

Probable response: (how do you hope the reader with actively respond to your document?)

WRITER/SENDER: (this is your name and your course number- remember to separate the document you are writing from the course- you are writing a professional document, not a student homework assignment)

Position for this writing: (what is your role in the writer-reader relationship?)

Purpose of writing: (why are you involved in that relationship?)

Tone wanted here: (what kind of mood do you want to create with this document? A humorous approach? A serious approach? A stern approach? Think about the different kinds of tone you can use- refer to the handout on cover sheets.)

CONTENT/MESSAGE

Type of document: Formal business letter

Order of information: (What kind of format are you using for the letter? What kind of resume are you using?)

Graphics needed: (is a photo, chart, table or other graphic relevant to this document?)

Source of information: (did you do any research? Is the information coming from personal experience? From others you've talked to?)

51. Memorandum explaining how to write a memo

Memo

MYTHIC UNIVERSITY ONLINE

DATE : August 9, 2008
TO : Users of *Style for Students Online*
FROM : Joe Schall
SUBJECT : Writing Memos for your Classes

This memo provides you with tips on writing memos for your classes, with special attention to a memo's audience, format, organization, content, tone, and style. Because my advice comes in the form of a memo, you can use this document as a model for writing your own memos.

The Audience for a Memo

It is useful to begin by considering that a memo is essentially a one-on-one communication between writer and reader. Although a memo may be written to a group of people or with various audiences in mind, usually it is a highly goal-oriented communication between two people who need to share information. When you write a memo to a professor in the classroom setting, you are much like the employee who has been assigned to investigate a problem and report back to a supervisor. Therefore, you are expected to provide concrete information, even information that the supervisor might already know, in a form that clarifies ideas and puts them into context. Finally, a memo enjoys a broader context than an essay; hence, you might refer to other related memos as you write, or you might respond to specific requests made by the audience in your text, in effect, carrying on a professional conversation.

Typical Memo Format

The overall format of a memo can be broken down into the heading, the body, and the closing notations. What follows is a brief description of each component.

The Heading

The heading has two parts: part one includes two centered lines at the top of page 1, identifying the name of the company or institution on the first line, with the word “memorandum” on the second line; part two includes the “DATE,” “TO,” “FROM,” and “SUBJECT” lines at the left margin, filled in appropriately.

The Body

The body of the memo follows the Introduction, and it is usually presented in single-spaced paragraphs with a line skipped between each paragraph. The first lines of new paragraphs can appear at the left margin or they can be indented five spaces.

The Closing Notations

The closing notations, used to identify such things as attachments, appear at the left margin two lines below the text of the final paragraph. By simply typing the word “Attachment” as a closing notation, you automatically refer the reader to any attachment, such as a map, a set of calculations, spreadsheets, or a References page.

How Memos are Organized

The general organization of a memo mirrors that of an essay: an introduction, followed by body paragraphs, followed by a conclusion. However, the first paragraph of a memo is typically used as a forecasting device. Note how the opening paragraph of this memo defines the memo's function and reflects its organization. It is sensible to open memos for your classes in the same way, first directly stating the memo's purpose, then setting forth the organization and noting how the memo can be used.

Organization in the body of a memo is typically characterized by the use of section headings and short paragraphs. Paragraphs should not be too bulky—five or six per page is usually ideal. On the sentence level, you should take full advantage of the same organizational tools that you employ when you write an essay: meaningful topic sentences; carefully selected transition words; focused section headings; indented blocks of cited text; a bulleted series of examples; powerful punctuation marks such as the colon, semicolon, and dash.

Selection and Citation of Content

A memo's content, of course, is guided by the assignment and the research required. It is important to remember as you present the content that selectivity and relevance matter greatly. Your job is to select and present the most pertinent, most current information available to you. Do not hesitate, of course, to let your memo's content be heavily informed by your research, but also provide your own interpretation and organization of this research.

As in any essay, you must document the sources of your information so that your reader could find the original source of the information if desired. If your memo uses sources, provide the bibliographic information related to your sources on a References page as an attachment at the end of the memo—just as I have in this memo.

A Memo's Tone and Style

Memos for your classes require a highly informative and straightforward tone, but allow for a slightly informal style compared to essays. As in this memo, "I" and "you" are handy because they provide a straightforward way of communicating, but you must be careful not to overuse these terms. Stylish prose is key to good memo writing, and you should not hesitate to use active, interpretive adverbs and verbs and concrete, carefully chosen adjectives and nouns.

A memo need not be written in a dry, dull fashion; rather, it should emulate the same stylistic standards that good prose has always embraced. These standards are summed up neatly in the popular style guide, The Elements Of Style, as follows:

A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary
sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines
and a machine no unnecessary parts (Strunk and White 1979).

As this quote suggests, good prose can achieve elegance by its clarity, efficiency, and sense of purpose.

Conclusion

The conclusion of a memo should not simply provide a summary of the memo's entire contents, but it should be a true conclusion—that is, an articulated conviction arrived at on the basis of the evidence presented. The closing paragraph is the place to spell out the bottom line to the reader. Therefore, I close with my bottom line about writing memos for your classes:

- Study and use standard memo format to present your text;
- Use internal organizational tools such as section headings, topic sentences, transition words, and powerful punctuation marks to enhance the flow of ideas;
- Write with the same clarity, grace, and efficiency expected of you in any essay.

Attachment
ATTACHMENT

References

Strunk, William Jr and White, E.B., 1979: *The Elements of Style*. Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., New York, 92 pp.

52. Cover Sheet Review

Ok, let's take a closer sheet at the purpose and design of the cover sheet, a prewriting technique used to analyze your audience, your purpose and your direction.

First of all, the **Cover Sheet** is broken into three sections: *Reader/Audience*;*Writer/Sender* and *Content/Design*.

The *Reader/Audience* section has to look at your topic from your reader's perspective. When it says "**Prior knowledge of subject,**" that means what is the reader's knowledge of your topic before he/she begins to read your document? You have to know this because it will help you develop your paper. You will know what material is necessary and what material is obvious, unnecessary.

For instance, with the **Letter of Inquiry,** you're writing to a company about its product. Obviously, the company is very familiar with the product, so you don't need to give lots of background information. If you were from the company and writing to potential customers, then you would have to use lots more background because the reader's knowledge is not that good.

You need to know the reader's **attitude,** both toward the subject and toward you. Again, it's sometimes obvious that the reader doesn't know you as a person, but he/she knows you as the writer of this document. What is he thinking about you before he even starts to read? Analyze that. Put yourself in your reader's shoes. Know how he/she is going to respond.

So everything between *Reader/Audience* and *Writer/Sender* is reader-oriented. The *Writer/Sender* section simply helps you recognize what you're doing and why, gives your own position importance. The *Content/Design* section helps you think about how you might want to display your information. Remember, we're not writing the same kind of document each time. Each one requires different kinds of design techniques.

The lines above the *Reader/Audience* section are for to identify yourself. Organization: means which organization are you writing from? Is it personal, or is it one of the two organizations you described in your opening assignment?

Also, keep your design of this document in mind. How does it look, visually? **Boldface** heading, indent subheadings. Make it look professional. Although, I don't grade the **Cover Sheet,** it can influence your overall grade for an assignment (I take one point off if it's not handed in). So spend some quality time on this important prewriting technique. Thanks.

53. Instructions for Letter of Inquiry

Write a letter asking for information about a product or service or program related to one of your organizations or your personal needs. Don't write a letter of complaint. You're asking for help/information.

The information must not be readily available in an advertisement or brochure. In other words, you are going to be asking your reader to do some leg work (remember our bad-news formula). You are going to have to convince him/her that replying to you is worth the effort.

Consider the following guidelines when designing your letter:

*Express your needs with specific questions.
*Use a tabulated format and bullets.
*Follow the bad-news formula.
*Keep your **reader** and your **purpose** in mind.

Follow this outline:

Introduction:

Introduce yourself (NOT "my name is…").
Tell why you are writing, what your plans are.

Body of letter:

Explain what you want the reader to do.
Offer an incentive, if possible.
Write a question for each kind of info you need.
Use good indenting and spacing.

Conclusion:

Be politely specific about when you want the info.
Express your appreciation.

The following student paper may be beneficial to you. Your book also describes different kinds of block format. Be consistent with which kind you choose.

86 Needham Hall
Southern Polytechnic Institute
Bailey Springs, MS 39320
March 14, 2003
Mr. Robert Bradley
Vice President of Personnel
Ace South Transport, Inc.
100 By-Pass I-440
Memphis, TN 31111
Dear Mr. Bradley:
As an industrial technology student at Southern Polytechnic Institute, I am writing a paper for one of my courses on how firms such as yours screen recent graduates of college programs for employment.
I have done considerable library work on the subject, but I want to

augment my reading with information collected from some of the larger industrial firms in the tri-state area. The results of my study will be shared with my classmates. I would also be happy to send a copy to you.
Would you please spend a few minutes answering the following questions about the way your firm screens potential employees:

- What priorities do you place on a candidate's academic performance, experience and on-campus or in-plant interviews?
- What do you expect of a candidate's behavior and dress when they report for an interview?
- How much importance do you place on recommendations from faculty, school officials and previous employers?
- Do you give any standard or in-house tests to candidates? If so, how much weight do you give to the scores?

My paper is due April 10. I appreciate your taking the time to read my letter and hope to receive a reply from you in early April.
Sincerely,
Jill Kehoe

Now turn to the Assignment Document: Letter of Inquiry/ With Cover Sheet to complete this assignment.

54. Letter of Inquiry, with Cover Sheet

Using your prewriting cover-sheet technique first, submit your letter of inquiry here. Remember, be professional, be brief, but be convincing. Also, remember to send the document as an attachment so you don't lose design techniques.

55. Instructions for Letter of Application/Resume

For this assignment, you will be writing a Letter of Application and Resume to send to a job opening that actually exists. Although I don't expect you to actually send it to the business (unless you want to), I do expect professional quality from you.
Find a job listing (an advertisement or at a placement bureau) which appeals to you and for which you feel qualified or will feel qualified in the near future. It may be a full-time or part-time job.

Write a letter of application for the job. Follow this outline for the letter:

Introduction: Tell of your interest in the position.
*the position you are applying for.
*where you heard about the job.

Body: Explain why you are a desirable candidate.
*show knowledge of the company.
*show understanding of the job requirements.
*show preparation for the job: training, education, experience (be specific).
*explain why you are leaving your present job (optional).
*let your reader know you are ready to learn new aspects (don't mention weaknesses- speak to your
strengths).

Conclusion: Motivate action.
*request an interview.
*refer to the resume.

Do not ask questions about salaries, benefits, etc. Remember persuasive strategies: *credibility*, *facts*, *non-emotional tone*. Include a photocopy of the listing. Include your resume.

Following is a sample student letter of application. For resumes, you can check for samples in local placement offices and in your textbook.

32 Hillcrest Avenue
Plattsburgh, N.Y. 12901
February 23, 2005
Mrs. Betty Bates
Director of Field Services
North Country Girl Scout Council
155 Boynton Avenue
Plattsburgh, N.Y. 12901
Dear Mrs. Bates:
I am applying for the position of Career Program Coordinator being offered by the North Country Girl Scout Council. I feel I possess the proper professional qualifications as well as enthusiasm and a capacity for work that would make me a valuable addition to your staff.
I have earned two degrees: Liberal Arts and Recreational Leadership. My education enables me to view the overall picture of Career Program Coordinator from an administrative aspect as well as from actually working with area youths; this background should benefit your total program.
I have a good working knowledge of the community. I am currently serving actively in four Girl Scout committees: as the Preferred Delegate to the Board of Directors; as the leader of two local Girl Scout troops; and as director of Cadette Planning Board. In the five years I have lived in Plattsburgh, I have coordinated twenty-three programs as a Girl Scout volunteer. I have also worked with local 4-H groups by providing them with training sessions.
My experience with Girl Scouting demonstrates my ability to

handle this position and my dedication to the program of scouting and to working effectively with area youths.
My resume is enclosed. I will be happy to provide any additional information that you might require and will be available for an interview at your convenience.
Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,
Sharon L. Vogel
SV/jb
Enc.

Now turn to the Asssignment Document: Letter of Application/ Resume with Cover Sheet to complete this assignment.

56. Letter of Application/ Resume, With Cover Sheet

Remember to keep both content and design in mind, and remember that a **Cover Sheet** is required for this assignment: analyze your audience's knowledge and attitude toward the subject you are writing about.

57. Writing a Memorandum

This assignment will be somewhat different from the other two. You will not need to include a Cover Sheet for this assignment (though you certainly are free to pre-write). You are concerned about a problem in one of the two organizations you wrote about earlier. Write a memo to a person or persons in your organization addressing one of the following scenarios:

a. If you have been given the responsibility of dealing with the problem, write to your supervisor and explain your response (actions, suggestions, decisions).

b. If you have discovered the problem and want another person or group to solve it, then write to that audience and persuade them to respond (to come up with a solution or to follow one you've suggested).

Use short sentences and short paragraphs. Don't try to fit everything into one big section. Also, provide some depth to this. I can't analyze a document that is too brief to include technical content and design components.

58. Bad News Discussion

Have you ever had an experience where you were dissatisfied with a product or how you were treated by an employee while shopping at a business, or while eating in a restaurant? Let's take a few minutes to talk about those kinds of incidents and then analyze some options to dealing with the problem through written communication. In other words, how did you react to the situation, and what suggestions do you have now for better dealing with what happened?

59. Job Search Discussion

Most of you have probably gone through some kind of job interview. Those can be some of the most grueling moments of our lives. I would like to spend this discussion time sharing your experiences with applying for a job, being interviewed and getting the job or getting turned down. We've been talking together for a few weeks now. This will be a great opportunity to get to know each other a bit better while taking a closer look at the job-search process. Have fun with this.

Talk about your experiences on the job hunt. Your comments can be serious, funny, happy, sad. Look at interviews you've had, preparations for them, how they turned out, what worked and what didn't. And let's help each other out. If a fellow student experienced a not-so-nice situation, do you have any suggestions for how he/she could improve the situation next time?

PART VII

MODULE 5: INSTRUCTIONS AND PROCESS DESCRIPTION

60. What's Due When

Module Overview: In this module, we will be looking at two related kinds of writing: instructions and process description. You may have written similar kinds of writing in composition classes, but these documents will be much different. Specific details will be very important, but you will need to give them in a brief, concise manner.

Module Learning Objectives: To write clear, easy-to-follow instructions for an audience to follow. To write clear, informational process descriptions to help an audience understand a specific process. To identify the similarities and differences between the two writing styles. To identify the importance of graphics in documents.

Assignments: Set of Instructions/Process Description; Short-answer review.

61. Incorporating Text into Graphics

Graphics can be very beneficial in supporting text: A good graphic can help you separate numbers from text or can help you reduce the number of words you need to describe something. But graphics can ruin a document if not used correctly. I'd like to discuss some additional points about graphics in the next few paragraphs.

First of all, let's separate documents into three categories: *object*, *symbolic* and *abstract.*

Objective graphics depict reality. When you look at an objective graphic, you clearly see the object you are depicting. Photographs are the most obvious form of object graphic. Most of the time, photos show the reader a clear image of what the writer is providing. They are good for helping to reduce the amount of descriptive words in a document: a picture says a thousand words, after all. Illustrations can also be objective, but remember, they have to visually represent the object they are portraying.

Symbolic graphics, naturally, symbolize reality. That's why illustrations don't always have to be objective. A graphic artist can distort an illustration to emphasize a point. Caricatures, for instant, do not depict reality. They resemble people, but noses or eyes or ears stand out to symbolize a point. Maps are examples of symbolic graphics. The lines for states and roads and cities are all symbolic of what is really there. Topographic maps, however, that actually show the terrain and not human-made objects, are more objective. Legends are often symbolic. In a map of Lake Champlain depicting marinas, the marina locations might be symbolized by a triangle.

Abstract graphics, in a nutshell, are everything else. More specifically, abstract graphics are charts, tables, graphs, graphics that pull numbers out of text. They are very useful because lots of figures in text can become confusing and lost. A pie chart or bar graph, used correctly, can do wonders in presenting figures clearly.

Let's talk about the placement of graphics. As I said, they can ruin a document if they are not done well.

..........*Use graphics that are *perceptible*. They should be separated from the text with white space. Some kind of border, ruled lines perhaps, can help keep graphics separate from text, so they can be easier to see and understand. They should be large enough for your audience to understand. I once saw a photo in the local newspaper depicting about 100 former Oscar winners. The picture was so small that you couldn't make out any of the faces. It was basically a wasted photo.

..........*Make your graphics *accessible*. They should be as close to the text that they are referring to as possible. They should always be on the same page as the related text, unless you are dealing with a folded text (like a book) and the graphic is on the facing page. If you are using many graphics in a document, you should use an appendix to place them all in one section.

..........**Clearly label* your graphics. Study graphics in textbooks, newspapers and magazines and see how objects in graphics are labeled. Lines are neat and definable and clearly point to the objects they are defining. Language used is not complex but easy to understand upon viewing the graphic.

..........**Integrate* your graphics into the document. Callouts (See Graphic A, See Table I) should be used in the text, and the graphic should be labeled clearly (Graphic A, Table I). Labels used in the graphic should match wording in the text. If you call it an antenna in your text, don't refer to it as a aerial receiver in the graphic.

..........*Use graphics that are *easy to understand*. I have seen plenty of bad graphics made by professionals who did not do a good job with explaining the content of the graphic. Don't let jargon from your field overwhelm the graphic. Use simple, clear language.

……….*Choose graphics that are *relatively easy and inexpensive to prepare*. Remember, you're creating these documents for organizations, and cost is always an issue. Don't let the graphic overwhelm the project.

Finally, this is not a course in computer graphics. We will be doing the written portion of documents, but we can also judge what kinds of graphics might make the documents better. Although I won't be assigning you to create specific graphics, feel free to consider the use of graphics, what you might tell the graphic designer in your company what you would like to accompany your document.

62. Readability

A clear short sentence:

John (subject) hit (verb) the ball (object).

Can become:

In his first Little League game, young <u>John</u>, the coach's son, <u>hit the ball</u> weakly to the pitcher's mound, retiring the side and justifying in the minds of all present the thought that John was in the lineup merely because he is the coach's son.

In standard English, the average sentence is about **17** words. Sentences with up to **25**words are much more difficult to understand, and sentences with more than **25** words are extremely difficult for most readers to comprehend. Successful professional writers average in the low 20s.

<u>For your writing:</u>

- Keep to an average of 20 words or fewer per sentence; limit the number of subordinate clauses, phrases and modifiers;
- Put separate facts and ideas into separate sentences;

- Give the reader breathing space;
- Allow the content of your writing to be understood more easily and remembered longer.
- Use simple language when possible. In technical writing, sometimes you will have to use complex language (beginners will need to know the terminology they will use in their futures); if you use complex language make sure you define the information. We can't always avoid complex language.

NOTE: *This advice is not justification for short, choppy, repetitive sentences.*

63. Readability Factors

Readability (the process of making documents easier to read, understand and respond to) can be divided into two main categories: content and design. Technical writers have to make conscious efforts to make both the information and the document stand out.

Here are a few ways to make papers more readable:

Content

Language:

Use simple language whenever possible.

Define complex language.

Choose strong active verbs (avoid passive voice most often).

Sentences and paragraphs:

- Use short sentences on average.
- Use short paragraphs. Look for ways to break one longer paragraph into a series of shorter paragraphs.
- Single space most documents. Skip lines between paragraphs when convenient.
- Use parallelism in lists. Help your reader get from beginning to end.

Message

- Be specific. Give your reader images he/she can see.
- Provide enough information for the reader to understand and respond to. **Length only matters to the point of having fulfilled the audience's needs**.
- Don't provide unnecessary information. Learn to omit material as easily as you add material.
- Use an opening that lets your reader know why you are writing and why they will benefit from reading the information.
- Define unfamiliar language.
- *Understand your reader's needs.*

Design

Emphatic tools

- Use things like boldface, italics and underline to help your reader understand important issues.
- Use headings and sub-headings to help separate sections and to help your reader remember what it is you are focusing on.
- Use columns and bulleted lists to help make items stand out.
- Use white space to help influence the reader to read: psychologically, it looks a lot better when it's not filled with words.

Graphics

- Use tables, charts, graphs to pull numbers out of text.

- Place graphics close to the information they pertain to.
- Use objective or symbolic graphics to help your reader see images you are having difficulty describing.

Formatting

- Use consistent design from beginning to end of the document.
- Choose reader-friendly fonts and prints. Help the reader read the information.
- *Don't let your design overwhelm your content- pick and choose design tools.*

This is only a basic review of readability factors. Everything we discuss and evaluate in technical writing relates to the two prongs of technical writing: content and design. The bottom line is, **make your documents professional quality**.

64. Instructions-Process Descriptions

These two types of documents have a lot of similarities, but there are many differences as well. It is important to identify those differences in order to decide which assignment you will want to choose.

Instructions are specifically written for an audience to follow, step-by-step, to complete a process. Instructions can be found everywhere: on the back of packages, on single sheets of paper inside boxes of merchandise (bicycles, for instance) or in such infamous booklets as VCR manuals. Good instructions allow the reader to complete the process without difficulty. Poor instructions make the process seem like it's written in Greek.

Process descriptions, on the other hand, are written to provide the reader with background information on how a process is or was accomplished. The reader is not expected to complete the process and does not have to be an "expert" in the field, but does need details to help understand the complexities of the process. Therefore, process description is often longer and more detailed than a set of instructions.

Since readers are expected to complete the instructions, they should be written in the second person: to the reader. Instructions should be "how-to" steps, placed in chronological order. You need to give your reader the information he or she needs to complete each step, so you need to know your reader's background, knowledge and understanding of the topic. Remember, you are not writing an essay, so you should use a tabulated format, numbering each step and listing auxiliary information in sub-steps. Your textbook has good examples.

The way you give your instructions is very important. Your reader needs to know that they *must* perform the steps as you give them. So use the imperative voice (commands). It is much better to say *turn off the light* then *you should turn off the light.*

Also, try not to use the verb “take” in your instructions. In other words, “take the butter knife and spread the jelly evenly” is overwritten. You could just as easily say “spread the jelly with the butter knife.” That reduces the step by two words.

Process description uses a more traditional paragraph approach, since you will be giving your reader more background information. The process should still be written in chronological order, but numbered steps are not as necessary. You have to explain more of the whys in a process description. So headings and other technical writing tools will be important for process description.

Process description may be written in the past, present or even future tenses, but it does not use the imperative voice. In fact, process description some times uses that old nemesis we’ve talked about before, passive voice. Think about it: you are looking at a process, not who is performing the process, so passive voice can be used to emphasize the process. Imagine someone talking about how a pipeline was repaired. They probably would say “The pipe was uncovered at 9:20 and removed at 9:35.” The fact that workers uncovered it is not as important as the step itself.

In the next lecture, I will give you two examples looking at the difference between instructions and process description.

65. Set of Instructions/Process Description Examples

Study the two example that follow before deciding whether you want to do the process description or the set of instructions for assignment #6.

Note: The drawings for the Process Description would fit in the blank spaces.

Instructions for opening your pool

The way you open your pool will determine what kinds of problems you will have keeping it clean throughout the summer. Better maintenance early will save lots of money in the long run, as well.

Adhering to the following steps will ensure that your pool will not be costly in time or in chemicals:

A. Back flush the filter.

1. Open the pump valve to "Back Flush."
2. Turn the pump on and let it run until the water coming out of the valve is clear.
3. When clear, close the valve and refill the filter with DE (demologized enzymes) or with sand.

B. Remove any foreign matter in the pool.

1. Using a skimmer, remove all leaves, toys, twigs or an other matter that may have gotten into the pool during the winter.

Note: The courser the debris left in the pool will determine how well your pool will clean up and how much chemical you will need to use to achieve clarity.

C. Fill the pool to its normal capacity.

1. Use water that does not have a high concentration of dissolved particles.

Note: If you fill your pool with water from a well or public source, have the water checked for total dissolved particles. If the count is too high, the expense to you in chemicals and time could be great. There are people who sell spring water for this purpose. The cost of the water versus the chemical cost may make buying water worth your while.

D. Add the <u>CORRECT</u> amount of chemicals for the size of your pool.

1. After you have added the correct amount of chemicals, turn the pump on and leave it on until the pool is clear.

Note: If you don't know how many gallons of water your pool holds, check with the installer. If the pool does not clear up in a couple of days, **do not add more chemical**. Check with the people that furnish your chemicals for advice.

WARNING: CHLORINE AND BIGUINIDE ARE STRONG OXIDIZERS. AVOID CONTACT WITH SKIN OR CLOTHING, AND AS WITH ALL CHEMICALS, KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.

If you follow these initial steps, your pool will open quickly and be more pleasurable to you and your friends and family. Remember to have your pool water tested regularly. The dealer who provides you with chemicals can do this professionally.

Making Maple Syrup

Maple syrup is a thick, sweet, golden colored liquid made from the sap of sugar maple trees. Making it is a skill which has been passed down from generation to generation. Many people, however, do not understand how a clear, sweet liquid from inside a tree can become an even sweeter topping for pancakes.

The major steps for making maple syrup are (1) taping the trees, (2) gathering the sap, and (3) boiling the sap into syrup.

TAPPING THE TREES

Each year, the maple producer carefully chooses which trees he will tap. A maple tree is usually 30 years old and at least 10 inches in diameter before it is used. Only one tap for every 10 inches of diameter is placed on the tree. Overtapping removes too much sap, the tree's nourishment, and can stunt its growth or even kill it.

As spring temperatures reach 33 degrees Fahrenheit, tapping starts. Tapping is simply drilling a 5/8 inch-wide hole 1½ inches into the side of the tree. A metal spout is snugly inserted into the hole, and a covered tin bucket is hung on a hook on the underside of the spout (See Figure 1).

Figure 1

Many producers today use plastic spouts attached to 3/8 inch plastic tubing (See Figure 2). The tubing, which weaves from tree to tree, is strung on a downhill pitch to a large gathering vat. During the "sugaring" session, an average maple tree runs 10 to 12 gallons of sap for every tap hole.

Figure 2

GATHERING THE SAP

Once the sap starts "running," the producer collects it at least once a day. The longer it stands before it is boiled, the darker the syrup will be. The best syrup (Grade A) is light golden in color and is usually made early in the season.

The gatherer carries two five-gallon pails from tree to tree, emptying buckets as he goes. The pails are then emptied into a large gathering tank mounted on a wagon or truck. Working with plastic tubing is easier than the more traditional copper tubing. The gatherer pumps the sap from the collecting vat to the gathering tank. Once collected, the sap is transported manually to the sugar house.

MAKING SYRUP

As the sap is unloaded into storage tanks inside the sugar house, it is strained through a cloth to remove pieces of bark and leaves. From the storage tank, it is piped directly into the evaporator.

The evaporator is the sugar maker's stove. It is a large oil or wood fired oven with a shallow, rectangular stainless steel pan on top. The pan has dividers connected to its outer walls that open at alternating ends (See Figure 3).

Figure 3

The sap flows in at the back of the evaporator, and as it cooks, the sap zig-zags its way through the dividers. Sap is mostly water and thickens as it boils and the water evaporates. On the average, it takes 40 gallons of sap to produce one gallon of syrup.

Regulating the heat in the evaporator is very important. If the sap cooks too slowly, it will darken, and if it cooks too quickly, it can scorch. An experienced boiler watches the syrup drain off his dipper, and when it runs together (sheets), it is ready to be drawn off. Many producers use a thermometer to make sure the correct temperature of 219 degrees Fahrenheit has been reached.

Drawing off means to open a valve at the front of the evaporator to remove, by pail, the finished syrup.

It is important that syrup be drawn off at just the right time. Undercooked syrup is thin and spoils easily, and overcooked syrup forms crystals as it cools.

Once the syrup is drawn off, it is strained again through a paper or felt filter. This removes the sugar sand, a mineral sediment that forms during boiling. The hot syrup is stored in a 20-gallon tank from which it can be graded by color.

Lastly, when it cools to 180 degrees Fahrenheit, it is sealed in various-sized containers. Now it is ready for that big stack of pancakes or chilly bowl of vanilla ice-cream.

When daytime temperatures reach into the high 40s and do not drop below freezing at night, sugaring is over for another year. Taps are removed from the trees, buckets or pipelines are washed and the sugar house equipment is thoroughly cleaned. Finally, it is time for the workers to rest.

Tapping, gathering and boiling are the basic steps to follow when making maple syrup. Through the years, these activities have produced pure, natural and delicious maple syrup.

66. Set of Instructions Example

Take a few minutes to compare the following draft and final version of a press release:

DRAFT:

How to Record Official Minutes

Official minutes for any public body are vital to the overall success of the organization. If minutes are not taken properly, vital records will be skewed, which can lead to serious legal problems if contested. Following a series of simple but important steps can ensure that the most accurate minutes will be recorded.

Prior to the meeting, make sure that you have the following items:

- One notepad
- Two to three sharpened pencils with functioning erasers
- Minutes from the previous meeting
- An up-to-date agenda
- Any necessary handouts for the body
- One bottle of water

CAUTION: Make sure you keep the water bottle cap tightly sealed when not taking a drink. Spilling water on any recorded minutes could prove disastrous.

Complete these steps in order; do not stray from the chronological list provided:

1. Choose a seat that is both close to the chairperson and is facing the audience.

2. Open the notepad to the first page and place a heading at the top of the page that identifies the organization's name and the meeting date.

3. Note the official time when the chair calls the meeting to order. Take a quick tally of the number of members present.

4. Following the agenda, create headings for each topic to be discussed and then summarize any main points introduced by the chair and the body. Identify each speaker by name.
CAUTION: Do not try to record comments verbatim. This will only lead to disaster when you find you cannot keep up with the spoken word.
5. Ask speakers to repeat comments if you feel they are worth recording.
6. Capitalize the names of any members who make motions and the members who second motions. If asked by the chair, count the number of yes and no votes for each motion. If not asked, then simply identify whether the motion passes or fails. If a motion is passed unanimously, say so.
7. Note the official time when a member moves to adjourn. Note the person's name.
8. Transfer written notes to the word processor as quickly as possible following the meeting.
9. Submit the typed minutes to the body for consideration prior to the next meeting.

It is difficult to take minutes without error, but practice makes the process easier with time. Don't be afraid to ask for help, but go into each meeting with confidence that you can do the job successfully.

FINAL VERSION:

How to Record Official Minutes

Official minutes for any public body are vital to the overall success of the organization. If minutes are not taken properly, vital records will be skewed, which can lead to serious legal problems if contested. Following a series of simple but important steps can ensure the most accurate minutes are recorded.

Prior to the meeting, make sure you have the following items:

· One notepad (*the size you choose is up to you- whatever you feel comfortable with will work best for you*).
· Two to three sharpened pencils with functioning erasers.
· Minutes from the previous meeting.
· An up-to-date agenda (*make sure you check with the chair prior to the meeting to ensure it's the most recent agenda- chairs are notorious for updating at the last minute*).
· Any necessary handouts for the body.
· One bottle of water (*it has been proven that a well-hydrated secretary functions more accurately*).

CAUTION: Make sure you keep the water bottle cap tightly sealed when not taking a drink. Spilling water on any recorded minutes could prove disastrous.

Complete these steps in order; do not stray from the chronological list provided:

1. **Choose** a seat that is both close to the chairperson and is facing the audience. You need to hear clearly from both directions.
2. **Open** the notepad to the first page and place a heading at the top of the page that identifies the organization's name and the meeting date. You may want to circle the date to ensure proper filing when you finalize the minutes.
3. **Note** the official time when the chair calls the meeting to order. **Take** a quick tally of the number of members present. Do not worry if members arrive after the meeting has been opened.
4. Following the agenda, **create** headings for each topic to be discussed and then summarize any main points introduced by the chair and the body. **Identify** each speaker by name.

CAUTION: Do not try to record comments verbatim. This will only lead to disaster when you find you cannot keep up with the spoken word.

5. **Ask** speakers to repeat comments if you feel they are worth recording. They will not mind that you interrupt them to verify accurate minutes.
6. **Capitalize** the names of any members who make motions and the members who second motions. If asked by the chair, **count** the

number of yes and no votes for each motion. If not asked, then simply **identify** whether the motion passes or fails. If a motion is passed unanimously, say so.

7. **Note** the official time when a member moves to adjourn. **Note** the person's name.
8. **Transfer** written notes to the word processor as quickly as possible following the meeting.
9. **Submit** the typed minutes to the body for consideration prior to the next meeting.

It is difficult to take minutes without error, but practice makes the process easier with time. Don't be afraid to ask for help, but go into each meeting with confidence that you can do the job successfully.

67. Cover Sheet Review

Ok, let's take a closer sheet at the purpose and design of the cover sheet, a prewriting technique used to analyze your audience, your purpose and your direction.

First of all, the **Cover Sheet** is broken into three sections: *Reader/ Audience*;*Writer/Sender* and *Content/Design*.

The *Reader/Audience* section has to look at your topic from your reader's perspective. When it says "**Prior knowledge of subject,"** that means what is the reader's knowledge of your topic before he/she begins to read your document? You have to know this because it will help you develop your paper. You will know what material is necessary and what material is obvious, unnecessary.

For instance, with the **Letter of Inquiry,** you're writing to a company about its product. Obviously, the company is very familiar with the product, so you don't need to give lots of background information. If you were from the company and writing to potential customers, then you would have to use lots more background because the reader's knowledge is not that good.

You need to know the reader's **attitude,** both toward the subject and toward you. Again, it's sometimes obvious that the reader doesn't know you as a person, but he/she knows you as the writer of this document. What is he thinking about you before he even starts to read? Analyze that. Put yourself in your reader's shoes. Know how he/she is going to respond.

So everything between *Reader/Audience* and *Writer/Sender* is reader-oriented. The *Writer/Sender* section simply helps you recognize what you're doing and why, gives your own position importance. The *Content/Design* section helps you think about how you might want to display your information. Remember, we're not writing the same kind of document each time. Each one requires different kinds of design techniques.

The lines above the *Reader/Audience* section are for to identify yourself. Organization: means which organization are you writing from? Is it personal, or is it one of the two organizations you described in your opening assignment?

Also, keep your design of this document in mind. How does it look, visually? **Boldface** heading, indent subheadings. Make it look professional. Although, I don't grade the **Cover Sheet,** it can influence your overall grade for an assignment (I take one point off if it's not handed in). So spend some quality time on this important prewriting technique. Thanks.

68. Instructions for Assignment #6

You have an option for this assignment. Choose either A (Set of Instructions) or B (Process Description).

……

………………………………………………

A) Writing Instructions Assignment

Write a set of instructions for a procedure related to your portfolio to help someone new learn how to do something (**no recipes, tire changes or oil changes**). Do not use a general set of instructions (such as how to program a computer file or how to give a dog a bath). Your instructions should be specfically written for people within your organization, not for everyone. It should not be a process you can find on any given number of web sites.

1. Choose a procedure which can be explained in one or two typed pages.

2. Write for a beginner.

…..-spell out details

…..-use imperative voice (simple commands)

…..-define unfamiliar terms

3. Pay attention to format.

…..-short sentences and paragraphs

…..-adequate spacing

…..-headings and numbers

4. Include and necessary *graphics* and *callouts.*

5. Follow this outline:

…..*Introduction*- general description of procedure with motivation, tools and materials needed.

…..*Body*– step-by-step procedures with sub-steps grouped under major steps.

…..*Conclusion*– reemphasize the advantage of doing this process.

Remember to make cautions obvious and to provide reasons for crucial steps. Include simple graphics, if possible.

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………

(B) Process Description Assignment

Write an explanation of a process you are familiar with for an audience in your organization. Make sure you organize your description to provide your reader with *understanding*. This is not a set of instructions or how-to-do-it paper.

Follow this outline:

…..*Introduction*

……….name the process

……….identify its significance and purpose

……….show the overall process by giving major steps

…..*Body*

……….step-by-step description of major parts of the process

……….one paragraph per step:

……………-topic sentence explains what takes place in each step

……………-support with details as necessary

……….use headings

……….follow order of introduction

…..*Conclusion*

……….summary of steps or additional comments

……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………

Turn to "Instructions/Process Description" to submit this assignment. Remember, you need to submit a prewriting Cover Sheet as well.

69. Instructions/Process Description

Write either a Set of Instructions or a Process Description. Remember to keep your reader in mind: do you want the reader to complete the process or just to understand it? Do you need to provide extra background information, or just the basic information to complete the task? Are you going to give commands or explain how the process was completed (passive voice)? Remember to think about how graphics could help your reader understand what you are trying to express. Remember to use a Cover Sheet and send it as an attachment.

70. Simple Instructions Discussion

Let's share some simple processes and talk about how we can present them to an audience that will understand and complete the process. Think of something you've been doing for years (tying your shoes, playing CDs) and describe in fewer than five steps the process for completing the process. Then, look at your classmates' examples and pick at least one to make comments on about its effectiveness, either its strengths or ways to improve it.

You are the expert- you've been tying your shoes since you were five. How do you instruct newcomers in tying their shoes?

PART VIII

MODULE 6: MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

71. What's Due When

Module Overview: This module will require you to write a Press Release for one of your organizations.

Module Learning Objectives: To learn to use the media for mass communication. To write effective press releases. To understand the difference between Facts, Inferences and Judgments.

Assignments: Technical Writing Review; Press Release

72. Facts, Inferences and Judgments

When writing press releases or human services reports, it is important to "stick to the facts," as they say in the movies. Although these are two totally different documents, they do share this aspect in mind, so I would like everyone to take some time to recognize the differences between facts, inferences and judgments.

Facts are observable, verifiable information. Facts are what you see, no opinions or values added. They are learned through our senses: sight, smell, hearing, etc. They exist outside the observer, meaning they are reality, not the observer's impression of that reality. Notice how these following statements describe reality without any added thoughts about the images:

- There is a ditch on both sides of Route 22 South.
- I planted a Norway maple last fall.
- Ames sells notebook paper at 89 cents for 100 sheets.

Notice it doesn't say the ditch will help alleviate flooding along the roads, or the maple will make good shade trees, or the sale is excellent. Those are opinions that have to be proven before they become facts: what if the ditch doesn't work, or what it if was built for aesthetics or traffic safety and not for water control. The fact is that it is there.

Inferences are based on analysis. They are statements of the unknown based on the known. They are derived from reason, in other words figured out based on our past experience. They exist within the observer and therefore can be different based on the observer's experience. Here are some examples of inferences based on facts:

- Ann swore, pounded on the table and threw the phone book across the room. INF: Ann is angry.

- Tom kept to himself at the party, danced only when a girl asked him. INF: Tom is scared of girls.

Maybe Ann just won the lottery and cannot control her emotions. Perhaps Tom doesn't fee comfortable about his dancing ability, or he is shy. That doesn't mean he doesn't like girls. Inferences need to be corroborated. In other words, if we asked Tom if he didn't like girls and he said yes, that would become a fact. Or if we knew more facts about why Ann was acting this way, we could prove the inference to be a fact.

Judgments are subjective observations. I don't like to use the word opinion when describing judgments because inferences are often opinions as well. But judgments are statements showing approval or disapproval. They are derived from our values and reveal our feelings and attitudes toward something. Here are some examples of judgments made from facts:

- The car went 60,000 miles with only oil changes. JUDGMENT: It was a wonderful car.

- Senator Brown was the only one who voted against the Railroad Bill. JUDGMENT: The senator was courageous/ stubborn.

- Jerry was convicted of theft: JUDGMENT: Jerry is a thief.

Most cars these days should be able to go that far without extensive repairs. It's only an average car, many would say. And you can see how judgments are based on the observers feelings: it creates debate in Senator Brown's world. Jerry is the most controversial statement here, however. Some people might say that if he is convicted, it becomes a fact, but what if he stole something out of what he deemed necessity and was caught as a first-time offender. The word "thief" connotes a long-time experience with stealing property.

In our discussion section in the module, I will give you several statements that I would like you to discuss: are they facts, inferences or judgments? But for now, I would like to split the class in two directions. Those of you in Human Services should go to the "Human Services Report document; those of you not in Human Services can go to the "Press Release" document. I am not requiring Human Services students to read the information on press releases, but I am suggesting you take the time to look at it; people in Human Services often have to deal with the media regularly.

73. Press Release

Press releases are how organizations can communicate with large numbers of people at once. Imagine if your organization is holding a fund-raiser, and no one knows about it. How much money are you going to raise? You could go door to door soliciting funds, but we all know how popular unwanted solicitors are. We could put posters up on telephone poles and at the local stores, but people have a tendency to ignore them. Announcing through the media is the best, easiest and least expensive way to get the word out.

A press release is not an advertisement. If you want to pay money for advertising, you can put an announcement into the paper or on the air, but that can become costly. Press releases are free, and people tend to look at news-type items more than ads anyway. But you cannot "advertise" in press releases. You can't identify upcoming sales, for instance. You have to be discussing non-profit topics, like fund-raisers, that the public will have an interest in.

The audience for your press release will usually be the general public. If you have announcements for specific organizations, you shouldn't use press releases. For instance, if you represent the Girl Scouts, and you want to mention an upcoming meeting for local Girl Scout leaders, you'd be better off sending out memos or letters to the leaders. A press release has to announce an event open to the public. If you are inviting people to come and see if they want to become Girl Scout leaders, that is fine.

But your real audience for a press release is the newspaper editor or the TV or radio new director. It will be up to them as to whether they will publish or announce your release. So you have to sell the idea to them. Let them know the public will be interested in your topic, that it is open to a wide-ranging audience. Find something in your opening that will be attractive to the public.

The press release is a little different than most of the other assignments you've had in that your initial reader (the editor) is liable to make some changes to it. So it should be double spaced (remember how composition teachers wanted you to double space so they could mark your essays). The press release should also include a heading identifying the topic, your position with the organization, the date this release can be used and a contact phone number so the media can contact you if need be.

Let's take a look at a press release, paragraph by paragraph, to see how it should be organized from most to least important information.

Lake Champlain Basin Program CONTACT: Bill Smith

45 Snurf Street (561-0000)

Plattsburgh, N.Y. 12901 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PLATTSBURGH – Scientists will discuss ways to reduce phosphorus in Lake Champlain

at the Oct. 11 meeting of the Management Conference.

Your opening paragraph should be very brief. Remember, in the paper, you are dealing with a different medium: columns. So *paragraphs will appear to be much longer than they are.* A *five or six line paragraph on 8 1/2 by 11 paper will be three times as long in an article.* So *pick the most important point you want to say and use it in your opening paragraph.*

The meeting, which is open to the public, will be held at Howard Johnson's in Plattsburgh

and begins at 10 a.m.

Although both of these sentences could have been combined in one paragraph, it is better to separate them in two for press releases. Again, the column issue comes into play.

strategies to reduce the amount of phosphorus that is entering the lake. Watzin and her staff

have been analyzing the impact of phosphorus in Lake Champlain over the past several months.

As the public-relations person for your organization, you may not be the expert on the topic you are writing about. You might want to interview someone you can use as a qualified source. Letting your *reader know you have done research will improve the validity of what you have to say.*

"Phosphorus loading is definitely a problem that the Management Conference has to take

a serious look at," Watzin said. "There are many possibilities (for reducing phosphorus) available

to them, but they have to look at costs and potential impacts on business and industry."

Direct quotes are very important in press releases. They add to the news-worthy aspect of the release. Someone in authority is speaking. It's not just a publicity document from the public-relations department. It also makes the information timely. Watzin is telling us right now that this is a problem.

Eric Smeltzer and Richard Croft, biologists from the Vermont Department of Environmental

Conservation, will discuss trends in phosphorus movement throughout the lake. Vermont contributes

about 75 percent of the phosphorus that is entering Lake Champlain.

Remember, you are dealing with facts here. Try to give your reader enough information to influence them to attend. If they see that more than just one expert is involved, it may be enough to get them involved.

Phosphorus is a nutrient that comes from many different sources, including sewage-treatment

plants and runoff from farms and urban areas. Too much phosphorus in the lake causes excessive

growth of algae and other plants in the lake.

Definitions are always important in all the documents we've been discussing, but this issue has been around for a long time, and most people attracted to the article would know about phosphorus. So the information has been included, but quite a ways down in the story. Remember, you are going from most to least important info.

A forum for public comment will also be held from 10:05 to 10:15 a.m. Anyone with questions or concerns about lake-related issues is invited to participate.

When announcing an upcoming meeting, you can't say everything there is to say about the meeting. You don't want to give the entire agenda. But there may be other issues besides your main point you want to present. The fact that the public can talk at this meeting is kind of important but should follow the info about phosphorus.

The Management Conference is a group of local, state and federal officials, as well as

business, educational and environmental leaders. The group is responsible for developing

a management plan for the lake's future. Funding for the program comes from the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency.

at a site to be determined in Vermont.

These last two paragraphs include information the writer wants to include but knows may not be included in the final news article. If your release is going to be cut, it will probably be cut from the bottom up, so don't put essential information there. You are vying for space on the air or in the paper. Be happy with what you get.

Information on submitting a Press Release is provided on the next page.

74. Press Release Sample

FROM: Clinton Community College
Contact: Jeff Meyers
English 235-09C
Class
562-4182
SUBJECT: Fall final exam schedule
PLATTSBURGH – The English 235-09C Technical Writing class will hold its final exam on Tuesday, May 15 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.
Students interested in taking the exam at that time should bring a pen or pencil, class notes and the class textbook. The exam will be "open book," and students can utilize all notes/handouts received during the semester.
The exam will feature an in-class writing activity. Students will receive the topic when they arrive. They will be expected to "prove" their understanding of technical writing and producing professional documents.
"I want to know that students have benefited from the semester-long activities we've focused on," English 235 Instructor Jeff Meyers said of the activity. "I want them to show me that they recognize the importance of audience awareness and professional quality."
The final project will be worth four total points.
Students will also submit final portfolios at the beginning of class. Meyers will return them with their final proposal project by end of class.
Refreshments will be served. Meyers has ordered two double-anchovy pizzas for the event.
For more questions, call Meyers at 562-4182 or email at jeffrey.meyers@clinton.edu.

75. Tips for Writing a SuccessfulPress Release

The following tips will help you create a press release that editors will want to put in the paper:

- THE EVENT MUST BE OPEN TO EVERYONE

Because of space restrictions, papers do not use notices from clubs unless the public can attend.

- TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

You wouldn't believe some of the scribble that is sent to papers. Editors can't use it if they can't read it.

- MAKE SURE ALL THE BASIC QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED: WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN (time and date) AND WHY

A recent press release read: "A free sled ride will be held 8 o'clock Friday to benefit …." It never said if that was 8 a.m. or 8 p.m. or where the ride was taking place.

- GET THE RELEASE TO US IN PLENTY OF TIME

The release needs to be edited, typed and proofed. The paper needs to get it about a week in advance.

- KEEP IT AS SHORT AS POSSIBLE

Again, because of space limitations.

- TELL THE FACTS, NOT OPINIONS

The paper can't print opinions unless they have a source to quote from the news release. If you do include an opinion, make sure it is attributed to someone.

- ALWAYS INCLUDE THE NAME OF A CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE NUMBER

If the editor has questions about a release, or wants to arrange a photo or longer story, he/she needs to know who to call.

- DON'T TRY TO BE FANCY. JUST SAY IT PLAIN

Here are two examples of recent releases editors had to change: The first, about maple syruping, read like sap to the editors: "If you've ever wondered how that wonderful concoction that you slather over your pancakes, French toast and ice cream is made, now's the time to find out."

The second, from a college professor, was to tell the editors that his class would be tracing family history. "The coursework will be focusing on concepts and methodologies of history and historical anthropology through active integration of family history." Whew!

- DON'T BE OFFENDED IF THEY CUT OR CHANGE THE RELEASE

Every release is changed to conform to newspaper style. Many are cut down because papers have lots of news to get in.

Model Press Release

From: North Country Girl Scout Council
Contact: Sharon Smith
155 Boynton

Avenue 561-0000

Plattsburgh, N.Y. 12901

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GIRL SCOUT CAMP REGISTRATION BEGINS

PLATTSBURGH – North Country Girl Scout Council will be accepting registration applications April 1, 2004 for day camp beginning July 6. Camp is open to all Scout and non-scout girls in Brownie and Junior levels (ages 6-11).

A bus, donated by the Ernest Turner Memorial Fund, will pick up girls at three designated locations – St. Peter's parking lot, North Country Shopping Center and at the Donneymede on Route 9 – starting at 8:30 a.m. Monday thru Friday. The bus will deliver the campers back to the pick-up sites starting at 3 p.m.

Tapawingo will feature four one-week sessions this summer. Weekly programs will vary, but will include health and safety awareness, arts, crafts, songs, drama, campfire skills, tent raising, recreation and field games, and water-front activities.

The weekly fee of $25 per one-week session includes a Thursday overnight with dinner and Friday breakfast and lunch. Girls are to bring a bag lunch daily and milk will be provided.

"The Lake Champlain area was the home of Native Americans and in preserving the heritage of our land, our Girl Scout Camp was named 'Tapawingo', which means 'A Place of Joy,'" stated Mrs. Jan Dean, director of Tapawingo. "In establishing a tradition with the meaning of Tapawingo, one day will be set aside as a 'Tapawingo Day' in which Indian lore and heritage and games will be experienced by the girls."

The girls will experience some hand pottery, candle dipping, creating a 'Human Totem Pole' and building a teepee. Each girl will have the option to keep a camp log (record of daily happenings) and to make name signs from cedar shingles and rawhide to hang on their lean-tos and to take home with them after the week's activities.

The efforts of volunteers enables the program to be offered at this low cost. Some volunteers work the entire time, some can give a week, and others one or two days. Other volunteers help for an hour or two to teach a special activity. A REBATE is available, for up to 2 campers, for any adult who qualifies as Volunteers Staff for a full session. The REBATE is one-half of the Session Fee for each camper. Persons interested in volunteering are asked to call the North Country Girl Scout Office at 561-0000.

Scholarships are also available to both Scout and non-Scout girls through funding received from the Clinton County Youth Bureau and North Country Girl Scout Council.

Camp Brochures are now available and can be picked up at the Girl Scout office on Boynton Avenue any weekday from 9 to 5. Other Girl Scout day camp opportunities are being offered at Lake Clear and at Pine Ridge. Residents camp is being offered at Lake Clear also.

A New York State Licensed Registered Nurse and a Red Cross Certified Water Safety Instructor will be at camp during all hours of operation.

76. Instructions for Press Release

Write a press release from one of your organizations about an upcoming event. Interview a spokesperson or informed member of the organization and gather appropriate information. Remember, you will be using some of the information in direct quotes. Do not use “you,” and avoid using “I”.

- Use valid, accurate facts. Do not use inferences or judgments, unless in direct quotes.
- Remember to identify the most important information (who, what, where, when, why) in the opening, brief paragraph. Subsequent paragraphs will provide additional information, most important information first.
- Use a double-space format for this document. Allow the editor to make adjustments to what you have written.
- Use a dateline to begin the release (where it originates from).

77. Fact, Inference, Judgment Discussion

Identify the following sentences as facts, inferences and judgments. Some of you will disagree with your classmates. Let's discuss why one might better be called an inference or judgment and not a fact. Also, listen for facts, inferences and judgments as you go through your daily routine. See how people use or misuse each. Try to bring some examples back to the discussion. Look at how they are similar to some of these examples.

The "answers" to this assignment will be posted in the next module, though you can disagree with those answers if you use logical argument to prove otherwise.

1. On a smooth road, shock absorber pistons move back and forth about 15 times a second.
2. A car's ignition is a rat's nest of wires.
3. Metallurgy is essential knowledge for someone responsible for doing theoretical research in steel.
4. The shop foreman is a considerate person.
5. Diagrams in this technical report show the parts of a door hinge.
6. Metal replacement parts are used in the human body.
7. The generator will be working when you return.
8. This is the world's best generator.
9. The way the material is machined may cause the residual stress.
10. The alloy was hard.

78. Media Responsibility Discussion

The media are often criticized these days for over-stepping their legal bounds. People feel the media “barges in” on the private lives of people too often. But the media are also responsible for keeping the public abreast of issues involving their daily lives. What do you think? Do you think the media have too much power, or are they ineffective in bringing news to the public?

PART IX

MODULE 7: PROPOSALS

79. What's Due When

Module Overview: In this module, you will write a professional proposal. This document emphasizes all the concepts we've been discussing for successful technical writing. It is somewhat more complex and involved than the other assignments you've been working on.

Module Learning Objectives: To identify the purpose of attracting an audience in proposals. To emphasize design techniques. To write a professional proposal.

Assignments: Writing a proposal; Final Review.

80. Technical Reports- Proposals

In many technical fields, reports are a crucial part of professional communication. The successful report utilizes the design and content concepts we have discussed throughout this course. Your textbook has some excellent information on reports. Please read the assigned section before moving on to my information on brochures and making your decision on what kind of document you will write for this module.

The proposal is a specific kind of report. As your textbook describes, a good proposal is broken into sections, each one presenting its own piece of the overall technical puzzle. Headings, subheadings, bulleted lists, graphs, charts and tables are all important ingredients in helping your reader understand what it is you are asking for.

There are two major kinds of proposals: solicited and unsolicited. In a solicited proposal, you are providing information that someone has asked for. For instance, the Lake Champlain Management Conference might want some scientific information on the impact of zebra mussels in the lake. The conference would advertise (solicit) for scientists to write a proposal on how they would collect the information. Scientists would then develop a proposal based on the conference's needs.

In an unsolicited proposal, the writer of the proposal is presenting information that the audience has not requested. Let's say that the University of Vermont and Plattsburgh State have been gathering information on zebra-mussel infestation in Lake Champlain and want to receive some funding to help expand their research.

Scientists from the schools would develop a proposal to send to the Management Conference. They would try to convince the conference of the need for this proposal to be carried out.

Both kinds of proposals follow a similar format, but obviously the attitude of the audience is different: in the first, you have to convince the audience that you are the person for the job; in the second, you have to convince the audience that the job is necessary.

81. Instructions for the Proposal

Using the *memo format*, write a proposal for one of the following ideas:

1. A new student activity or club

......- address it to the Student Senate chairperson.
......- send a copy to the Academic Dean.
2. A new course at CCC
......- address it to the Academic Dean.
......- send a copy to the chair of the Curriculum Committee.
3. A new program or plan for an organization with which you are affiliated.
......- address it to the person who has the authority to fund it.
......- send copies to other persons who would be interested.
....
Include the following sections (use headings):

- ABSTRACT

......- a brief, opening summary of the entire proposal

- INTRODUCTION

......- defines and explains the need for the proposal (the whys and how comes)
......- explains the planning involved

- METHODOLOGY

……- gives an overview of the process (strategies and outcomes, the hows and whats)

- WORK AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

……- tasks, with schedule
……- facilities needed
……- management plan (details of when, who and where)

- DETAILED BUDGET

……- information on costs (salaries and materials)
……- information on budget procedures

- PERSONNEL

……- relevant information on people involved, including names and titles (credibility)

- CONCLUSION

……- be brief, but wrap up the key purpose of the proposal
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………

Remember to be specific with information. Consider the interests of those to whom you are selling your idea. Again, this project should be a bit more involved than the memo you wrote earlier in this course. It will take some planning and preparations, perhaps some research as well. Remember to do your **Cover Sheet** before you start writing your proposal.

82. Proposal Sample

Here is a proposal for a new course at Clinton.
ENGLISH 235
MEYERS
TECHNICAL WRITING 08/
30/12

COVER SHEET

Assignment: Proposal writing
Organization: Clinton Community College
READER (S)/AUDIENCE: Dr Cheryl Lesser, VPAA; Lee Ann Thomas, Curriculum chair.
Position in organization: Positions responsible for moving forward new course ideas.
Prior knowledge of this subject: They may have some familiarity with William Shakespeare but will not have a thorough understanding of the specifics needed to run a successful course at this level; they do have a solid understanding of what a course like this would require for consideration at Clinton.
Prior attitude toward this subject: They may be excited about the potential for a new course that parallels popular interests in today's society, but they may have strong reservations about how students will welcome a course on Shakespeare.
Prior attitude toward me: They recognize my position as an English instructor but may have doubts about my connection with literature and Shakespeare since my expertise is in other fields. They will appreciate my hard work and effort put into other projects I've taken on.

Reason for reading: To consider the possibility of adding Shakespeare to the curriculum.

Probable response: Will discuss the topics and hopefully bring the proposal forward to the Curriculum Committee for consideration.
WRITER/SENDER: Jeff Meyers, Eng. 23501C
Position for this writing: English instructor

Purpose of writing: To promote a course I believe will be beneficial to all students at Clinton Community College.
Tone wanted here: Positive; persuasive; confident; supportive.

CONTENT/MESSAGE

Type of document: Proposal using standard memorandum format.
Order of information: Traditional proposal outline with project summary at top.
Graphics needed: Perhaps a table/chart identifying course outline.

Source of information: Past experience; Shakespeare literature.
CLINTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Memorandum
To: Dr. Cheryl Lesser (VPAA); Lee Ann Thomas (Curriculum Committee chair)
CC: John Jablonski, president of CCC
From: Jeff Meyers, English Department faculty member JM
Date: August 12, 2012
Subject: Proposal for a new Shakespeare course
ABSTRACT
The Clinton Community College English Department is considering

the addition of **Shakespeare** as an **elective for Humanities/Social Science majors**. The course will be an upper-level elective and will feature an overview of at least four major Shakespeare plays as well as a unit on Shakespeare sonnets and the time period when Shakespeare was actively writing.

We project the course to cost a minimal amount of money should an adjunct instructor be utilized, but we are also open to bringing an expert into the program on a full-time basis at a beginning salary no greater than $40,000. We anticipate offering the course by Spring 2014. English Department Chair Carey Goyette will oversee management of the project.

INTRODUCTION

With the popularity of two recent blockbuster movies based on plays by Williams Shakespeare, we have seen a rebirth in interest for the immortal bard. Communities across the nation are celebrating all that Shakespeare has to offer with local festivals, play productions and reading groups.

The time is right to bring Shakespeare back into the classroom as well. Not only will a study of Shakespeare works be relevant in promoting the important concept of critical thinking, but it will also allow our students to stay on top of this current trend toward *Shakespeare fever.*

Students at Clinton Community College have also voiced an interest in this topic. In a random survey I conducted with students while having lunch in the cafeteria, **87 percent** of those asked said they would **strongly consider taking Shakespeare** as an elective, **five percent** said they were **unsure** and **eight percent** said they would not take the course. Although this was a small sampling (83 students were questioned), I believe a more extensive and formal survey would produce similar results.

I am proposing that we develop and offer a course on William Shakespeare. The course will serve as an English elective and a Humanities elective for students in our Humanities and Social Sciences program. I also believe it will be of interest in other curriculums as well:

- *Criminal Justice* majors will find Shakespeare's study of forensics fascinating;
- *Human Services* students will empathize with Shakespeare's ability to identify and address human suffering.
- *Computer programming* and *electronics* majors will connect with Shakespeare's use of logic and critical programming skills.

METHODOLOGY

The **first step** in establishing a course on Shakespeare would be to **hire an instructor**who has a <u>solid background in both literature and specifically in Shakespeare and his works</u>. We need to make sure the instructor is comfortable in presenting the bard's works and in translating Shakespeare's messages to students with various backgrounds and interests. The instructor must also be able to <u>transform the language and actions of Shakespeare's characters into a modern world</u>, so that his ideas are relevant for today's students.

Next, an appropriate curriculum **must be considered**. Although we would like to work closely with the instructor on this issue, we believe it is imperative that the course focus on <u>standard works deemed most relevant for a young but mature audience.</u>O*thello* and *Macbeth* are two Shakespearean dramas the class must examine along with *All's Well that Ends Well*, Shakespeare's most important comedy. A unit on Shakespearean sonnets is also a must.

The course should also utilize modern depictions of Shakespeare plays, whether through movie renditions of the bard's plays or with field trips to live Shakespeare productions.

The course will be a **three-credit English or Humanities elective** and will run for 15 weeks. We believe a M-W-F format would be most effective since larger doses of Shakespeare during a 75-minute course may not be as rewarding for students. The course should be limited to **25 students**.

Class discussion, written assignments and two major exams (midterm and final) should constitute the grading schedule for this course, though the instructor will have autonomy to design and grade assignments by his/her standards.

Task and Management Plan

In order for this course to work successfully, I have identified a specific timeline (which can be adjusted by the instructor to meet his or her needs), the proper facilities/equipment needed and overall management of the course as it unfolds.

Task With Schedule

As mentioned earlier, this will be a 15-week course, broken into 45 classes. Students should be expected to complete at least four plays along with a selection of Shakespeare sonnets. The informal class outline is as follows:

- Week 1- Introduction of Shakespeare course, including a history of Shakespeare and his time.
- Week 2/3- Reading and discussion of *Othello* (instructor will determine his/her preference in testing students).
- Week 4/5- Reading and discussion of *All's Well that Ends Well*.
- Week 6/7- Reading and discussion of *Macbeth*.
- Week 8- Review and midterm exam.
- Week 9- Presentation of movie/live performance (this could be adjusted depending on when live performances are available).
- Week 10/11- Reading and discussion of a fourth play (instructor's choice).
- Week 12- Review of Shakespeare drama and comedy as literary mediums.
- Week 13/14- Reading and discussion of Shakespeare sonnets.
- Week 15- Review and final exam.

Again, this is a tentative schedule; instructors should have control over how they present material, and this schedule should be used as a guideline for assistance in setting up the course syllabus. The instructor should have final say in evaluating students, based on participation, quizzes and exams. **But again, we emphasize the need to cover the three plays previously identified.**

Facilities
Although there is a 25-student limit for this course, it is suggested that a classroom be suitable for presenting skits during the semester. The classroom should have access to open space; **a stage-like area would be ideal, but there should be room for students to act out important scenes from the plays**. Also, the instructor should have access to up-to-date technical support to utilize Internet opportunities for exploring Shakespeare's history. Also, the instructor should have final say in the specific textbook for the course, but it is recommended that a **text with Shakespeare's complete works be utilized**: students will want to continue with their Shakespeare studies following completion of the course.

Management
We want to stress the need for bringing an instructor on board immediately to help with planning for the course; however, support from **the English Department chair** will be essential in ensuring a successful program. The chair will be responsible for overseeing any possible field trips and in accepting documentation that the course covers the core requirements for an upper-level Shakespeare course.

BUDGET

The major financial needs will be in staffing the Shakespeare course with a top-notch instructor. Since we may hire internally, this cost will not increase the college's overall budgetary figures, but a nationwide search could also have to potential of attracting an applicant with increased qualifications. Textbooks will be a responsibility of the students, but any outings to attend Shakespeare events should be included in overall costs.

The breakdown for expenses is as follows:

Item	Cost	College Responsibility	Student Responsibility
Instructor	$3,300 (3-credits adjunct instructor) $42,000-$45,000 full-time English)	$3,300 to $45,000	None
Textbooks	Approx. $55	None	$55
Field trips	Approx. $300 (based on one trip per semester)	$300	None
Classroom materials	None (teacher responsibility)	None	None
Totals	$3,655 to $45,665	$3,335 to $45,335	$55

The class could also be involved in a series of fundraisers (bake sales, for instance) to help offset the cost of bringing Shakespeare performers to college.

PERSONNEL

As noted, **Carey Goyette, the chair of the English Department**, has spoken favorably of the concept for a Shakespeare course and has agreed to oversee activities, beginning with the posting of a job opening for the position. Again, we are specifically looking for a part-time instructor but will consider full-time if an applicant has outstanding credentials with Shakespeare studies and is willing to take on an additional load of English composition courses.

Ms. Goyette has 13 years experience at Clinton Community College and has been chair of the department for three years. She studied English Literature in college and earned her Master’s degree in British Literature of the 1800s from Boston University. She has taught a variety of courses at Clinton, including British and Early American Literature.

Two existing full-time professors, Susan Raab and Judith Cavanaugh, have also taught English Literature and have voiced an interest in teaching Shakespeare. Both instructors will be welcomed to submit applications with resumes to enter the job search. However, we will make a final decision based on all applicants and subsequent interviews.

CONCLUSION

We anticipate the ability to offer Shakespeare as an English elective by Spring 2014. We anticipate the course's popularity will allow us to run Shakespeare during the fall and spring semesters and will consider an on-line version in the future. Shakespeare has never been more popular, and this course will benefit from that global interest. I have strong confidence in its success.

83. Proposal Discussion

Sharing ideas is an important part of any writing. I'd like to give you some time, during this discussion period, to talk to your classmates about your proposal. Describe your strategies, your techniques. Ask for suggestions on how to make your document better. As you're working on the project, look to fellow experts for help. Don't be afraid to share your ideas. This is an open discussion, hopefully for your benefit. Enjoy

84. Answers to Facts/Inferences/Judgments from Module 6

1. On a smooth road, shock absorber pistons move back and forth about 15 times a second. Fact- this is something that can be proven to be true (or not).
2. A car's ignition is a rat's nest of wires.
Judgment- giving the complexity of the wires a negative perspective.
3. Metallurgy is essential knowledge for someone responsible for doing theoretical research in steel.
Inference- based on past experience, this seems true, but with new technology, someone may be able to do everything solely through machines.
4. The shop foreman is a considerate person.
Judgment- good or bad quality.
5. Diagrams in this technical report show the parts of a door hinge.
Fact- you can see it.
6. Metal replacement parts are used in the human body.
Fact- I don't not if this is true, but I can find out.
7. The generator will be working when you return.
Inference- anytime you're looking into the future
8. This is the world's best generator.
Judgment- good or bad quality.
9. The way the material is machined may cause the residual stress.
Inference- future
10. The alloy was hard.
Perhaps a trick question- Perhaps there are different levels of hardness, but the levels are hard just the same. This should be a fact.

PART X

MODULE 8: FINAL PROJECT

85. What's Due When Final Project

Module Overview: You will be writing a memo to me describing the similarities and differences (from a technical writing perspective) between two documents.

Module Learning Objectives: To use good memo format. To identify good and weak points in technical writing. To include a table with the memo.

Assignments: Writing the memo/with table of comparisons

86. Comparison/Contrast

Throughout this course, we have been looking at good and bad qualities of technical writing. You know that long, complicated sections are not good for your reader's understanding. If you use shorter, simpler passages, your reader will more easily remember what you are saying. Also, such basic tools as headings and bulleted lists can help your reader get from the beginning to the end a lot easier than huge blocks of information. Word choice, simple vs. complex, is also important in keeping your reader involved.

Now, I am going to ask you to use what we have been practicing. I am going to give you two documents and then ask you to analyze them from the two-pronged approach to technical writing: content and design. I am going to ask you to develop a table of facts, listing the similarities and differences between the two documents. You should probably come up with about 12 to 15 items (I will give you some instructions later on how to format a table using Microsoft Word).

Next, I will ask you to pick three of the most significant similarities/differences you've identified and discuss them in a memo to me. In the memo, you will elaborate on why you think one document is stronger than the other based on these three points you've identified.

It's an opportunity for you to "practice what you preach." In other words, if you say Document A is better because it uses shorter sections, then you better be using short sections in your memo. It's not enough to identify good and bad writing. You have to use good writing and avoid bad writing.

Take some time to brainstorm: list the different kinds of technical writing concepts we've discussed: writing style, word choice, use of white space, audience, etc. Those are the kinds of things you will be highlighting in your table. Then, which three do you think are most pronounced in the documents. That's what you would expand on in your memo.

In the next two sections, "Document 1," and "Document 2," I will give you the two documents. Print them out so you can analyze their strengths and weaknesses. Then go to the "Creating a Table of Data" document, and I will discuss your Table of Data. Finally, the instructions on the comparison memo itself will be given in the "Comparison Memo" document. Good luck.

87. Document 1 (from David McMurray's Online Technical Writing)

1102 West 30th
Lawrence, KS 66321
August 4, 19XX

Dr. Maria Gomez-Salinas
Director of the Diabetes Clinic
St. David’s Hospital
1000 Greenberg Lane
Wichita, KS 66780

Dear Dr. Gomez-Salinas:

I am writing you in hopes of finding out more about how the new Glucoscan II blood glucose monitoring system, which a representative at Lifescan informed me that your clinic is currently using.

Originally, I saw Lifescan’s advertisement of this new device in the January 19XX issue of *Diabetes Forecast* and became very interested in it. I wrote the company and got much useful information, but was recommended to write several current users of the system as well.

For a technical report that I am writing for a technical writing class at Johnson County Junior College, I need some help with the following questions:

1. How often does the Glucoscan II need to be calibrated in practical, everyday use conditions?
2. How accurate is the Glucoscan II compared to other similar systems that your patients have used?
3. What problems do your patients experience with this new device?

The Lifescan representative indicated that your clinic is one the leaders in implementing new technology for diabetics, and therefore I am eager to hear from you. In the report I will acknowledge your contributions, and I will send you a copy of the completed report if you wish.

Thank you for your time, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Anita Teller

Student, Medical Technology
Johnson County Junior College

88. Document 2, Resume (from David McMurray, Online Technical Writing)

Carol N. Brand

2201 Silvermine Lane
Austin, Texas 78700
(000) 000-0000

Objective

- To utilize my writing and graphic illustration skills and experience to pursue a career in Graphic Design or Technical Writing.

Summary

- Over three years of diverse technical writing and graphic illustration experience
- Excellent business writing and communication skills
- Extremely detail-oriented and organized

Professional Experience

Oct 1994–present	***Project Administrator***—Austin, Texas Dell Computer Corporation (Portables Industrial Design & Product Development): Establish company processes through analysis, development and implementation. Draft budgets and schedules for various programs and projects (Excel and MS Project). Track and audit products as they move through the phase review process. Maintain technology roadmaps for Portables Department (drafted in Powerpoint).
Mar–Sept 1994	***General Manager/Office Manager***—Austin, Texas Object International (object-oriented software company): Managed small software company including product marketing, generating copy and artwork for magazines (8 publications) in PageMaker software, human resources, supervision of employees, coordination of all aspects of trade shows and conferences.
Jan 1992–Mar 1994	***Office Manager/Technical Writer***—Austin, Texas International Software Systems Inc. (computer software company): Managed facility of 65 people including human resources, benefits, facilities, security, and produced white papers, government contracts and documentation. Also served as a member of the technical writing team in creating software manuals and "how to" guides in FrameMaker.
Sept 1989 –Dec 1991	***Administrative Secretary***—Austin, Texas Fluid Conservation Systems (high-tech engineering firm): Drafted documentation and presentations (in Word Perfect), coordinated training schedules (for customers), supported 15 people, maintained databases and elaborate utility files.

Education

Dec 1997	AA in Communications at Austin Community College
1997–1999	Pursuing Bachelor's Degree in Communications at the University of Texas

Seminars and Courses in Project Management

May–July 1996	Project Management Institute Certification Courses (PMI) (includes budgets, contracts, risk assessment, schedules and communication)
Apr 1996	Project Management Fundamentals (Dell University) (includes Dell-specific budget, schedule, and project information)
Feb 1996	Planning and Managing Projects (IPS/Dell University) (advanced version of previous seminar)

89. Creating a Table

When you create a table of comparisons/contrasts, you probably will be dealing with three columns, one for the standard you want to compare (audience, use of white space, paragraphing, headings, etc), one for one document and one for the other document. Then you will create as many rows as items you have to compare/contrast. You will also create headings for the different sections of your table (one for similarities and one for differences, for example).

The following menu is for creating a table using Microsoft Word. If you follow it from top to bottom, you should be able to create a table that you can use to plug your facts into. Remember, use phrases for each comparison (example: Use of White Space: Document 1- None, Document 2- Plenty).

Create a Table
Go to "Table," Click on Insert Table
Choose 3 columns, 10 to 15 rows.
Click OK.
Edit Table
Join Cells:

- Block three cells in a row by depressing left button and dragging cursor to the right (cells should be darkened).
- Go to Table, choose Merge Cells.

Lines:

- Go to View, Toolbars, click Tables and Borders so check appears.
- Go to Line Style (the icon with one long, single line on it).

- Click upside-down triangle and select Double Line.
- Go to Edit and Select All (the entire table should be darkened).
- Go to Border Icon (a square with four smaller dotted squares inside).
- Click Outside Border.
- To edit any other lines, place the cursor in the cell you're editing and choose the lines you want to edit (top, bottom, inside, etc.). You can also change lines to dotted, dashed, darkened, etc.

Shade:

- Place cursor in cell you want to shade.
- Go to upside down triangle next to Paint Can icon.
- Choose fill from one of the shaded squares (20 percent is good).

Your table should look similar to the following example looking at apples and oranges. However, your table will obviously look at two documents and their similarities and differences.

Table of Comparative Data		
Standard	Apples	Oranges
Similarities		
Size	3 to 6 cm.	3 to 6 cm.
Weight	2.5 to 3 oz.	2.5 to 3 oz.
Shape	Round	Round
Source of fruit	Trees	Trees
Differences		
Texture	Very firm	Very soft
Taste	Vary from sweet to sour	Tart, often sour
Color	Vary from red to golden	Orange, sometimes dark yellow
Skin	Can be eaten but often is peeled	Bitter and always peeled before eating
Pie	Delicious	Not a standard use

90. Comparison Memo

Using the following outline for the body of your memo, write a comparison of three significant points about the two documents. You should create your table first, listing 10 to 15 similarities and differences. Then you can pick and choose the three most important, from a technical-writing perspective.

In the Introduction:

- Write a brief description of the two documents you are comparing.
- Explain the purpose of the comparison (to choose the best option; to illustrate differences, to impress the instructor, etc.
- List the features which you will analyze in some detail (refer to the table of data) and which will be the basis of your judgments and inferences about the way these two documents affect the reader.

In the Body:

- Analyze the three most significant points using headings for each point and subheadings and bullets for supporting details. You should eventually end up with three sections, each one of fairly balanced length.
- Use your technical-writing prowess. Make this document look professional and sound professional.

- Keep your reader in mind. What does he know about the topic? What is his attitude toward the topic? You don't have to submit a Cover Sheet with this assignment, but you do have to consider the ideas we used the Cover Sheet for.

In the Conclusion:

- Briefly state your recommendations or summary judgments of these two documents.

Remember to:

- Use proper memo format with the organization (where you're writing from) in the letterhead position.
- Define unfamiliar terms for your audience.
- Use headings to name the documents and the features you discuss. Use parallel form (parallelism).

Turn to the "Writing the Comparison Memo" section to complete this assignment

91. Writing the Comparison Memo, with Table

Use this section to submit your comparison memo. Remember, you are writing to me, and you are a student of Clinton Community College. But it's a professional document- no typos. Think about both content (what the writer says) and design (how the writer presents info). Include a table of facts with your memo identifying standards that you have found in comparing the two documents. Remember to use facts. Each cell in your table should be a short phrase, not a complete sentences. Make sure your table is professional in appearance: no empty cells, rows or columns.