



Kaplan Technical Writing: A Resource for Technical Writers at All Levels

By Carrie Hannigan, Carrie Wells, Carolyn Stevenson, Tanya Peterson, Diane Martinez

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Content Summary

Technical writing is an essential form of straightforward communication that allows readers to accomplish a specific task using easy-to-understand directions. Our book also dispels the myth that all technical writing only pertains to user manuals; rather, technical writing covers a host of purposes including interoffice memos, e-mail, and other basic forms of daily communication.

Part I of our multi-purpose textbook is written, designed, and sequenced for an introduction to technical writing course. Taking into account that most students in such a course are not familiar with technical writing, or consider it a form used only by scientists or "techie," the material in Part I is introductory in nature.

Only the most relevant details that students would need to apply to their own writing projects are examined. Each of the sections in Part I is developed on a much more advanced level in Part II, where students in an introductory course can refer if they have an interest in learning more about a given topic.

Part II also has a dual purpose in that it can be used as a textbook for several advanced technical writing courses or as a technical writing handbook or desk reference for working technical writers—it presents full coverage of topics and issues in technical writing. Topics that a technical writer would encounter on the job are covered with precise detail. Students in an introductory technical writing course have to know how design affects the overall readability and success of a document; Part I will introduce students to the concepts of basic page design.

However, in Part II, students will go beyond the basics and learn details about the kind of document design that is expected in a professional setting. Part II also discusses digital document collaboration, professional development, and research methods to give the book an innovative, multi-faceted approach.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Carrie Hannigan earned her BA in English from the University of Illinois in Chicago and her MS in Written Communication from National-Louis University. She has been teaching in the Composition Department at Kaplan University since 2004 as an adjunct faculty member, and working at CCH, Inc., a WoltersKluwer company, since 1998. Currently, she is a Technical Communication doctoral candidate at Illinois Institute of Technology.

Carrie Wells holds a B.A. in English -- Technical Communication from the University of Central Florida, a M.A. in English Language from Hardin-Simmons University, and is a PhD candidate in Education at Capella University. She has professional experience in technical communication, journalism, and public relations and has been with the Kaplan University Composition Department since 2004 and teaching literature, composition, and technical writing since 2000.

Diane Martinez is an online composition and technical writing instructor, course developer, and course leader for Kaplan University, and has been with the University since April 2004. Previous to teaching at Kaplan, she worked for 12 years as a technical writer in higher education and for engineering government contractors. She has experience writing and editing proposals, technical reports, scholarly papers, and working as a freelance writer. She is a member of STC, NCTE, and other professional organizations dedicated to professional communication. She writes book reviews for *Technical Communication*, and has presented at several conferences.

Tanya Peterson received her B.A. in English from Pepperdine University and her M.A. in English from Chapman University. She has been teaching College Composition and Technical Writing since 2001 and has designed both technical writing and composition courses. She has experience editing professional and technical documents. She joined Kaplan University in October of 2004 as an adjunct instructor and then served as a full-time faculty member beginning in January of 2005. She is currently serving as a chair in the Composition Department.

Carolyn Stevenson is the Academic Program Director for the Communication degree programs for Kaplan University. She holds a B.A. in English, M.A. in Communications, and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Organization Change with a higher education concentration. Dr. Stevenson has been with Kaplan since 2004, and has held the positions of adjunct faculty member, department chair for communication, and full-time faculty member. She has over thirteen years teaching and administrative experience in both face-to-face and distance learning formats. Prior to pursuing a career in education, she worked as a developmental editor for Irwin-McGraw Hill, Assistant Managing Editor for Mosby, a writer for an employee benefits publishing company, and technical writer for a consulting firm contracted by Kraft General Foods.

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