Technical Writer

What does a technical writer do?
A technical writer prepares information that helps users. This can include:
  • instructions for programming your video
  • a maintenance guide for your car
  • on-line help for a computer program
  • procedures for large businesses or local authorities
  • multimedia presentations for schools
  • the content of web pages on the Internet

Where does a technical writer work?
A technical writer may work in many places, such as
  • in manufacturing industry
  • in financial institutions
  • in software companies
  • for government agencies

What skills does a technical writer need?
A technical writer needs a variety of skills, such as
  • an excellent standard of written language
  • curiosity about the way things work
  • interviewing skills
  • graphic design awareness
  • planning and analysis skills
  • ability to communicate information
  • structure information logically
How can I become a technical writer?
You can train to become a technical writer in a number of ways:
  • ISTC Open Learning courses leading to certification
  • specialised degree courses
  • related degree courses followed by practical training
  • practical training and on-the-job placement
Details of courses are available on the ISTC web site
http://www.istc.org.uk/Training_education/training_overview.htm

Who does a technical writer work with?
A technical writer will work with
  • subject matter experts
  • graphic designers
  • training developers
  • printers and publishers
  • development engineers and designers
  • and most important of all, with users

Related occupations:
  • other professional writing in marketing, journalism and advertising
  • editors and proofreaders
  • printing and publishing
  • graphic design
  • multimedia design

More information
The professional body for technical writers in the UK is the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators (ISTC)

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