



ANALYSIS

What does analysis mean?

- To analyze something is to ask what something means. It is to ask how something does what it does or is what it is. Analysis makes connections that may not have been evident at first.
- To analyze, you:
 - *Break a subject into its defining parts, its main elements or ingredients*
 - *Consider how those parts are related, both to each other and the subject as a whole*
 - *Consider how meaning is made through the individual elements working independently and together*
 - *Ask questions and look at different scenarios.*
 - *Gather feedback and adjust or revise*

Defining analysis

- Analysis is not evaluation – Evaluation is making a judgment about something. Ex. That was a terrible basketball game!
- When you analyze, you think about how the component parts work independently and together in order to make meaning; analyzing is an attempt to understand something.

Ex. Reviewing the video to understand what made the basketball game terrible.

Five analytical moves

1. Suspend judgment – step away from your feelings about something and try to consider *how it works*

Example: Two rival sports teams playing for a chance to make the playoffs

2. Define significant parts and how they are related to each other and the topic as a whole – What is the subject made of? How do these parts relate to the whole?

Example: Weather, coaches, city hosting game, holidays near, teams' record, coach's history, members on the team, players injured, schedule (first or late game), referees, fans, twitter beefs, etc.

Five analytical moves (#3)

3. Make the implicit (unstated) explicit (stated) – you are looking for implications – for example, you may detect that through a reporter that the star player has been missing parts of practice for an undisclosed injury. But, the opposing coach is not going to get on tv and say that his players are targeting them. *You* will discover that while watching the game.

Example: Dallas Cowboys Ezekiel Elliot's left hamstring is sore, since his is running to the right only. Philadelphia Eagles defensive coaches notices he is running right more than left during the first 5 plays of the game. Since, the Coaches make the decision to blitz to the right to force Elliot to run to the left.

Five Analytical Moves (#4)

4. Look for patterns:

- Repetition or resemblance – These tend to be signs of emphasis. If a writer emphasizes something, it's probably important.
- Binary oppositions – When a writer sets up elements in contrast to one another, this contrast creates tension. What meaning can you detect through this tension or the resolution of the tension in the story?
- Anomalies – really an anti-pattern. What in the document doesn't seem to fit? Why is it there? What might it mean?

Example: Using wide receivers as screens to confuse the defense. Quarterbacks looking in the opposite direction that they throw the ball. Using a shotgun format instead of a huddle to call plays. Certain players like to do the same things during a game. Hail Mary passes and the Philly special.

Five Analytical Moves (#5)

5. Keep reformulating questions and explanations – Analyzing something is to ask questions about what that thing means, how it functions, and attempting to answer those questions. Keep trying new questions. Keep trying new answers.

Example: What happens if Elliot has a breakout moment and can maneuver left? What play will we call after getting a stop? How can we force a fumble? How can the linebacker apply more pressure? Which play will rattle the defense? How can team get a first down? Is it worth it to punt or attempt a first down on 4th down?

Analyzing technical documents

- **Identify** the audience-who are they? What are their expectations? Background knowledge? What is your goal with them? Best way to reach them?
- **Reflect**-Think about what document (type) will best help you to reach your goal-why does one thing work, but another won't? Benefits? Drawbacks?
- **Create**- Create first version of your document. This is the rough draft. The goal is to commit to ideas. You will create many versions in order to find the best option
- **Evaluate**-Ask for feedback. How are you creating meaning or communicating? What is being communicated through documents (since it's not explicitly stated) through the design, font, organization, branding, etc. How are the pieces working independently and together.
- **Edit**- Revise document based on feedback. Documents change and improve based on many rounds of feedback from audience.

Remember

- The document will be constantly analyzed and changing to meet the demands, expectations, and needs of the audience.
- The applies to ALL technical documents. As a technical writing you **must** analyze **all** documents that you create or review.
- Remembering the goal of the document will help you to analyze effectively and meet the needs of your audience.
- Analysis is an ongoing process. It is NOT a one-time thing.