

**AUDIENCE** |

# TECHNICAL WRITING



- is writing about technical information in a way that your intended audience can understand and use easily
- is an **audience-centered** means of communication that provides a reader with clear and easy access to information.
- is NOT academic writing
- does not contain a strict format
- must be able to **adapt to different audiences and their needs**
- contains clear and specific goals

# AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

Every choice that you make as a writer should be based on your absolute understanding of **Audience** and **Purpose**

When you approach a document as a technical communicator, or as a consumer, always consider purpose and audience

**Audience** - the group of readers or viewers that the document is addressing

❖ Think: Who is this for?

Always Remember: A general audience does not exist. Writing always targets some specific group

**Purpose** – the goal of the communication

❖ Think: What is this for?

# PURPOSE

There are 4 broad purposes for writing:

To inform

❖ Text: I get off work at 4, and then I am meeting Shay for dinner.

To persuade

❖ Text: You must go to the Beyoncé concert, or you will be mad when everyone is talking about it the next day. Don't be silly.

To analyze

❖ Text: Do you think that Billy was upset in class? He was unusually quiet and left early.

To entertain

❖ Text: Did you see *Chopped*? There is a dude on there cooking teddy bears!

# REMEMBER

You must have a clear purpose in mind to identify your target audience

- ❖ If it is not clear, it will be unclear in your writing.
- ❖ If your purpose contains many layers, break down your ideas into manageable pieces.
- ❖ The directions/company goals will guide you. Let them.

# AUDIENCE

The **AUDIENCE** decides if your writing is effective!

Audience is reflected in

- ❖ Diction (word choice)
- ❖ Content (Subject Matter)
- ❖ Length of document or format
- ❖ Assumptions made by author
- ❖ Examples
- ❖ Information included or left out

There is always an **intended** audience AND an **unintended** audience.

- ❖ Intended - the group for whom the document is being created
- ❖ Unintended - the group who sees/interacts with the document

# TYPES OF AUDIENCES

**Experts** have complete knowledge of the topic (sometimes more knowledge than you)

**Informed** have general knowledge of the topic, but could still learn more

**Uninformed** have no knowledge of the topic and possibly no interest in and/or resistance to the information

**Hostile** has no interest in the topic and is likely hostile to its subject matter

**Business** only concerned with minimal important information

Always remember

**Know your audience** (identify and understand your audience),

and

**No, your audience** (return to the audience and purpose as the center of your work).

# THINGS TO KNOW

- ❖ Inappropriate language can alienate your audience, weaken your argument, and even damage your credibility
- ❖ Audience will not be receptive to argument if they are alienated.
- ❖ It makes the writer appear unprepared and out of touch.
- ❖ If the purpose is unclear, audience will checkout (ignore communication)
- ❖ You always want to be an authority on your topic, do not do anything to damage your creditability or ethos.
- ❖ Formality exists on a scale and is determined by your audience. An academic paper or business letter requires a formal style, while a personal letter or a humorous article might be informal in style.

# REMINDERS

- ❖ Being a Technical Communicator involves manipulating your writing style to fit the needs of audience.
- ❖ Goal is to get facts across to reader base (Audience).
- ❖ Keep goal and audience in mind when creating documents
- ❖ Use Rhetoric to help you persuade audience
- ❖ Be willing to adapt and be flexible according to audience needs.
- ❖ Accept that revision is part of the process, create and write in order to rewrite and recreate
- ❖ Practice receiving feedback and making changes to meet audience's expectations