Technical Writing Checklists

A handy guide to ensure your technical documentation is clear, accurate, and effective. This cheat sheet provides checklists for various stages of the writing process, from planning to final review.

Planning & Preparation Checklist

Content Definition

- ☐ Define the target audience (skill level, background).
- ☐ Identify the purpose of the document (inform, instruct, persuade).
- ☐ Determine the scope of the document (what's included/excluded).
- ☐ Outline the key topics and subtopics.

Information Gathering

- ☐ Gather all necessary information from reliable sources.
- ☐ Verify the accuracy of the information.
- ☐ Organize the information logically.

Template Selection

- ☐ Choose a suitable template that aligns with the document's purpose and audience.
- ☐ Ensure the template is accessible and user-friendly.
- ☐ Customize the template as needed to fit the specific content.

Writing Style & Grammar Checklist

Clarity & Conciseness

- ☐ Use clear and concise language.
- ☐ Avoid jargon and technical terms unless necessary and properly defined.
- ☐ Write short, simple sentences.

Grammar & Mechanics

- ☐ Check for grammatical errors (subject-verb agreement, tense consistency).
- ☐ Proofread for spelling and punctuation errors.
- ☐ Ensure consistent use of capitalization and abbreviations.

Tone & Voice

- ☐ Maintain a professional and objective tone.
- ☐ Use active voice whenever possible.
- ☐ Avoid biased or subjective language.

Formatting & Layout Checklist

Visual Hierarchy

- ☐ Use headings and subheadings to create a clear visual hierarchy.
- ☐ Employ bullet points and numbered lists to break up text.
- ☐ Use white space effectively to improve readability.

Graphics & Visuals

- ☐ Include relevant graphics and visuals to illustrate concepts.
- ☐ Ensure images are high-quality and properly labeled.
- ☐ Provide alternative text for images for accessibility.

Consistency

- ☐ Maintain consistent formatting throughout the document.
- ☐ Use the same font, size, and style for headings, body text, and captions.
- ☐ Ensure consistent use of terminology and abbreviations.

Review & Finalization Checklist

Technical Accuracy

- ☐ Verify the technical accuracy of all information.
- ☐ Consult with subject matter experts to ensure accuracy.
- ☐ Update the document to reflect any changes or updates.

Usability & Accessibility

- ☐ Ensure the document is easy to navigate and understand.
- ☐ Make the document accessible to users with disabilities (e.g., screen readers).
- ☐ Provide clear instructions and examples.

Final Review

- ☐ Proofread the document one last time for any errors.
- ☐ Get feedback from others and incorporate it into the document.
- ☐ Ensure the document meets all requirements and objectives.