The 7 C's of Technical Report Writing

Society of American Military Engineers
Student Mentoring Program Workshop

Complete

- Plan the report
- Follow specifications and evaluation
- **NO binding**
- Submit five unbound copies three-hole punched

Clear

- Outline the report
- Design the report
- Use paragraphs with topic sentences
- Use transitions
- Connect ideas.
- Use iterative writing: write, review, revise

Concise

- Report limit 20 pages
- Appendix unlimited for graphics and tables
- Condense, no redundancy
- Use tables and illustrations or bulleted lists instead of paragraphs

Consistent

- Write in a single voice
- First person active: "We collected the surveys."
- Avoid the passive voice: "The surveys were collected."
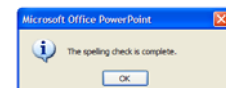- Use consistent verb tense
- Use uniform spacing

Correct

- Check all data tables, totals, and drawing dimensions
- Use proper grammar, punctuation and spelling
- List all sources used
- Do not plagiarize.

Considerate

- Know your audience
- Follow report requirements and evaluation closely
- Use visual appeal
- Make report reader-friendly:
  - Use color if possible
  - Use white space
  - Use graphics and pictures
- Generate interest
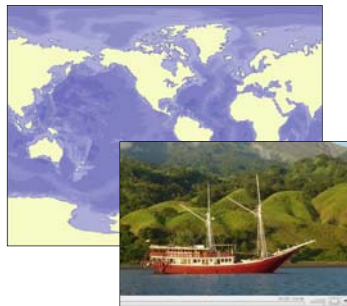- Define technical terms when first used

Convincing

- Draw the reader in
- Use persuasive language
- Sell your project
- Provide examples
- Demonstrate project is relevant and feasible

The 7 C's of Technical Writing

- Complete
- Clear
- Concise
- Consistent
- Correct
- Considerate
- Convincing

Program Website

- Google: PKI Nebraska SMP
  http://www.pki.nebraska.edu/simp/new/
- Archives
- SMP Manual

SMP Manual

- Submittals (page 3 and 4)
- Written Proposal (pages 5 and 6)
  - Due: March 8, 2013 at 5:00 pm
  - Five (5) copies unbound Three-hole punched
  - Electronic copy (PDF preferred) for winning teams

Written Proposal

- Format
  8 ½ x 11 Double sided for text
  (Optional) 11 x 17 single sided for figures
- Pages
  Written report 20 page limit
  Double sided so 10 sheets of paper
  Appendix optional and unlimited pages

Required Elements

- Title Page
- Project Problem Statement
- Recommendations (Project Solution)
- Action Plan for Implementation
- Team Organizational Chart
- Process Description (Journey)
- Lessons Learned
- Acknowledgements

SMP Manual

- Presentation
- Appendix
  – Evaluation Forms
  – Rubrics

Problem Statement

- What is the problem?
- Who do you want to help?
- Who has needs?
- Who will benefit?
- Why is the project needed?

- What is the demand?
- What is lacking?
- What are the challenges?
- What needs to be fixed?
- What needs to be created?

- What is your objective?
- What is the purpose?
- What will be accomplished?
- What is the reason?
- How will your project be useful?

- Where did the idea come from?
- What is the origin of your idea?
- How did you come up with the idea?
- Why are you doing this project?

- What value will your project add?
- How will it make a difference?
- Why invest in this project?

Your Turn
Try writing your problem statement

Selling Your Project

- Answer questions from pages 7 and 8
  – Why is your project important?
  – Who does it benefit?
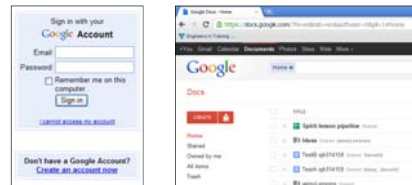 – What need does it address?
- Write a final sales pitch

Journey and Lessons

- Document your project
  – What did you do today?
  – To whom did you talk?
  – What did you learn?
- Tell your story
- Journal about each step
- Journal each day

Google Documents

- Create, edit and upload quickly
- Access and edit from anywhere
- Share changes in real time

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Evaluation of Reports

- Look over reports
- Evaluate using form
- Pick one criteria
- Share evaluations

Program Schedule

- Oct 12, 2012   Submittal 1
- Oct 13, 2012   Workshop
- Feb 6, 2013   Submittal 2
- Mar 1, 2013   Submittal 3
- Mar 8, 2013   Written Proposal
- Apr 11, 2013   Competition

Good Luck