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MEMORANDUM

TO: William Morton, Professor for Writing for the Technical Professional
FROM: Julia Southwick, Student
DATE: April 27, 2017

SUBJECT: FOUR MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN
PREPARING A TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Summary

The four most important things to consider when preparing a technical communication are the purpose of the writing, the reader, the stakeholders, and the reader-centered approach.

Analysis

Purpose of Writing

It is important to know the purpose of the writing when preparing a technical communication. This is important to know so that the writer can keep the communication on topic and give the reader the information he or she needs quickly and concisely. The reader wants to find the main point of a communication or the parts of the communication they need in as little time as possible. If the writer does not keep the purpose of the writing in mind, the writer will likely go off topic and lose credibility with the reader. The writer can avoid forgetting the purpose of the communication by writing it down and referring back to it often when preparing the technical communication.

Be Aware of the Reader

Being aware of the reader is also important to consider when preparing a technical communication. The writer cannot write an effective communication if he or she is not aware of his or her reader. As part of being aware of the reader, the writer must also consider the reader's purpose. The reader will read the technical communication with a particular goal in mind, if they have trouble finding what they need they will become frustrated. To avoid having this happen the writer can write down what the reader's purpose and refer back to it when writing as a way of remembering to consider the reader.

Consider the Stakeholders

When preparing a technical communication, it is important to consider the stakeholders. What is written in a technical communication not only affects the readers, but the stakeholders as well. The stakeholders could read a communication and get a false

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impression of the writer's understanding of a situation and become offended. This miscommunication could create many problems that could have been avoided if the writer had kept how the stakeholders would be affected in mind. The writer can avoid having to correct misunderstandings between themselves and the stakeholders by writing down what part in the technical communication the stakeholders have and referring back to it during writing.

Use the Reader-Centered Approach

The most important thing to consider when preparing a technical communication is the reader-centered approach. Above all else, a technical communication must be written in a reader-centered rather than writer-centered way or it will be ineffective. The writer must write only what the reader needs and wants to know rather than everything the writer wants to share, unless the two groups of information are the same. The reader-centered approach also means that the writer should not over complicate sentences or graphics. The writer also needs to use an easy to read design for each part of the communication while keeping a consistent simplistic design throughout the entire communication. The best way to ensure a reader-centered approach is for the writer to have a colleague and then a reader in the target group read the draft and make suggestions that the reader will then use to revise the draft.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the four most important things to consider when preparing a technical communication are:

- the purpose of the writing
- the reader
- the stakeholders
- the reader-centered approach

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If you need more information, do not hesitate to contact me.