CERTIFIED TECHNICAL WRITER

CERTIFIED TECHNICAL WRITER (CTW)

STUDY GUIDE

Sponsored by:

BT Business Training Institute

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Please use this study guide to assist in preparation for the Certified Technical Writer (CTW) examination.

Our goal is to offer the most challenging technical writing certification program in the industry while also providing all of the learning tools possible to ensure participants get the most out of the experience. By testing the knowledge depth and comprehension from the materials digested, the CTW certification prepares individuals for successful, real-world application.

The Certified Technical Writer (CTW) program is sponsored by the Business Training Institute and offered by the Business Training Institute. This certification program is designed to show and certify that you have gained an in-depth understanding and specialized knowledge of technical writing fundamentals, best practices, and models to follow.

In addition to the benefits of gained knowledge, growing industry recognition, more knowledgeable career choices, and networking, our organization is also developing additional resources for CTW Participants. This includes video and MP3 recordings on Q&A or strategies and tactics, webinars, access to interviews with internet marketing professionals who have more than 10 years of experience in the industry, among many more benefits.

4 STEP CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Register for the certification Program → Study using our Study Guide, Resources & Required Books → Complete and Pass the Exam → Benefit from 10+ Alumni Benefits & Resources

Timeline & Examination Dates:

Programs are offered through open enrollment, making our programs 100% flexible to accommodate your current work or academic schedule. After joining, you can select an examination date that works best for you. We hold examinations on the 1st Wednesday of each new month, providing you with 12 different options each year.

The Business Training Institute exams are administered 100% online.

To register for an examination date email Support@businesstraining.com.

Benefits of the Certified Technical Writer (CTW) Designation:

- Gain confidence in your ability to deliver content as a technical writer to gain new business.

- Understand the fundamentals and key concepts to develop your technical writing skills.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF THE CERTIFIED TECHNICAL WRITER (CTW) PROGRAM:

- Strategies to get hired as a technical writer in industries such as science, engineering, health care, government, business and project management, etc.

- How to approach technical writing projects and leverage resources and subject matter experts.

- Learn about fundamental terms/techniques, and emerging for technical writers.

- How to use technical writing as a tool to attract new clients and business leads.

- Positioning your expertise through technical writing.

- How to find careers within the technical writing industry.

Required Readings: We have selected what we believe to be two of the most practical yet dense, and valuable books on technical writing. These two books below are not written by our team, they are the best books available anywhere we believe, and we don't include them in the program price as we have some participants in New York City and others in China and Egypt who would rather get a Kindle e-book version, a copy for free from their local library, or buy a used copy, etc.

Once you read these two books you will see how our training portal's video modules and audio interviews complement these texts, and how together they are an amazing value for your investment of time and money in earning the Certified Technical Writing (CTW) certification program. The value of this program being put together by a professional who is not only a professional technical writer, but who also teaches technical writing at universities, can be found throughout this program in the selection of these books, and professionals who are interviewed in the CTW program.

Elements of Technical Writing *by Gary Blake & Robert W. Bly* ISBN#: 978-0020130857 (Price $9.95)

The Insider's Guide to Technical Writing *by Krista Van Laan* ISBN#: 978-937434-03-8 (Price $24.95)

If you have trouble getting these books purchased and mailed to you directly from an online bookseller such as Amazon.com, based on your geographical location, please let us know and we can help arrange for their delivery to you, please email us at Team@BusinessTraining.com if this is a challenge you are facing.

CTW Exam Preparation

Exam Composition:

The exam has a total of 100 available points which can be earned from the multiple choice or true/false questions that are worth 1 point each, and 1 essay question worth 10 points. Please see the chart below for the composition and distribution of the points:

Topics and Weights

Best Practices & Common Mistakes	22 questions (22 pts)
Active & Passive Voice	9 questions (9 pts)
Terms, Concepts, and Types	28 questions (28 pts)
Technical Writing Rules & Processes	16 questions (16 pts)
Technical Writing Careers/Industry	15 questions (15 pts)
Essay Question	1 question (10 pts)

You will have 2 hours to complete the exam. Those who have not made the effort to read the materials will have a hard time completing the exam within the allotted time, but for participants who have read

the required readings, 2 hours will be sufficient. Please note that in order to schedule your exam date, your request must be received at least 2 weeks before the exam date.

Certificate Embossed with Leatherette holder

Terms & Concepts to Know

Below, please find an example of terms and concepts you should be able to define after having read the required readings. Please define the terms from the required readings rather than a dictionary. You will be tested on the definitions that the authors have written.

- Abstract
- Abstractor
- Active Voice
- Animation
- API
- Augmented Reality
- Back Matter
- Big Data
- Blog
- Courseware
- Cookie
- Desktop Publishing
- Digital Literacy
- Digital Marketing
- DITA
- Executive Summary
- Formal Report
- Front Matter
- GIF
- Glossary
- Graphic
- Haptic Interfaces
- Headings
- Heuristic
- Inclusive Language
- Internet of Things
- Instructional
- Design
- Jargon
- Java
- JavaScript
- JPEG
- Memorandum
- MPEG
- Online Help
- Passive Voice
- PDF
- Pixel
- Procedure
- Serial Comma
- SME

- Style Guide
- Style Sheet
- Technical Communication
- Technical Writer
- Topic Statement
- Transitions
- Troubleshooting
- Usability
- White Space

Sample Questions

Please choose the answer that best answers the question or completes the phrase. Try answering the questions before looking at the answers further below.

1) Em dash is another term for dash – as it is_____.

  a) a pause for the reader
  b) the length of a printed letter m and longer than a hyphen
  c) used for programming and reference manuals exclusively
  d) both A and B

2) Parentheses are curved lines that separate explanations.

  a) True

  b) False

3) In the book, The Insider's Guide to Technical Writing, some technical writers feel that "documentation always comes last."

  a) True
  b) False

4) Technical writers are required to have a background in which of the following:

  a) Engineering
  b) Computer sciences
  c) Advertising
  d) All the above
  e) None of the above

5) What should technical writers do as a best practice?

  a) Keep sentences short
  b) Break things down into steps
  c) Keep paragraphs short
  d) All the above

Sample Question Answers:

Please see the following answers to the sample questions provided.

  1. D
  2. A
  3. A
  4. E
  5. D

Book Reviews

Elements of Technical Writing ISBN#: 978-0020130857

By Gary Blake & Robert W. Bly

Author Robert Bly has a background as a technical writer and teacher of technical writing as well as being the author of 17 books on writing and business. He teams up with consultant Gary Blake to write this comprehensive look on the subject of technical writing. We get a good overview of the field and basics in this book. The book helps those looking to enter the industry as a technical to get a background in the subjects covered. The book is also a great resource even for those experienced writers get a good review of the basicsincluded.

Introduction

The book covers two aspects of the subject: elements of technical writing and tasks of the technical writer. The authors address how to write clear and concise materials that include proposals, reports, manuals, letters, and memos. They also include an appendix on writing in a systems environment and another appendix on software for writers.

Part 1

In the first major part of the book on elements of technical writing we see a good look at how to write numbers, units of measure, equations, and symbols; rules of punctuation, grammar, abbreviations, and capitalization; and words and phrases commonly misused in technical writing.
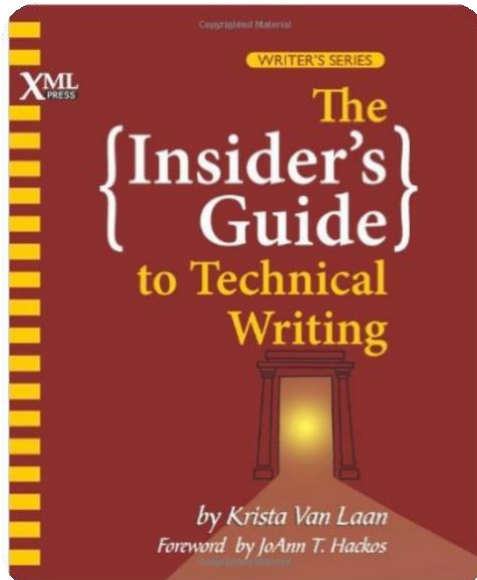
Part 2

In the second major part of the book we see the section on tasks of the technical writer including work associated with proposals and specifications; articles, papers, abstracts, and reports; letters and memos; and manuals and documentation.
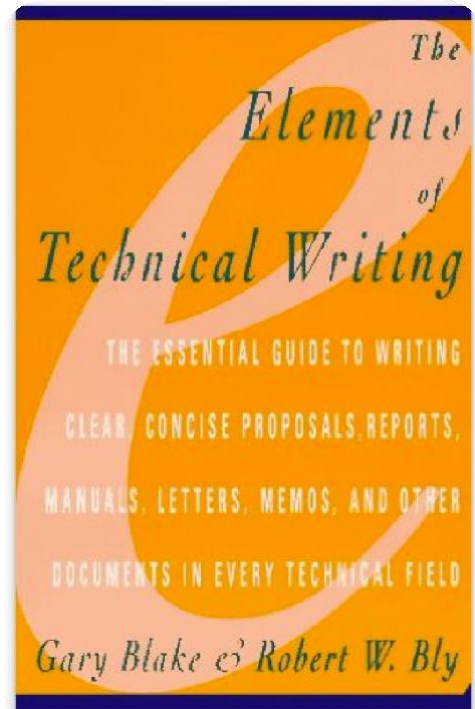
<u>The Insider's Guide to Technical Writing</u> ISBN#: 978-937434-03-8

By Krista Van Laan

The author of this book works in Silicon Valley and provides what she calls an insider's view - full of tips and ideas – about the field of technical writing. She explains how product users need to have an explanation of the products they use and technical writers provide that needed explanation. These technical writers - also known as technical communicators - are part of what the author considers a growing field. Those who work in the technical writing field must have skills that include an understanding of technology, the ability to write, and the ability to get along with teams and people.

The book provides a good overview that could help both the novice and an experienced technical writer. Here are some of the topics the author covers:

1. What does it take to be a technical writer?
2. What skills can help you get started in the field
3. How do you manage projects including setting up schedules?
4. How do you stay on track to deliver what is needed on time?
5. How should you approach issues such as templates, layouts, style guides, and indexes?
6. How should you approach issues of localization and translation?

The author gives a unique insider's view when she talks about what she calls the dark side of the job. She says documentation is sometimes an endeavor that is not as she says much respected.
She explains how "documentation always comes last" and what challenges writers have due to this approach. She goes on to say she feels deadlines are either aggressive or insane - and neither of these is a great choice of course.

Another of her insider views is that there is no "upward mobility" for technical writers. Sometimes writers move from company to company just to keep from getting bored.

She says insightfully - "Tech writing jobs have always been plentiful for writers who work in high tech areas like Silicon Valley or New Jersey's pharmaceutical belt, but other don't have the option of moving on to a new job." This is the kind of observation other books on the subject do not give. We can say it really is an insider's view and worthwhile for this and the general overview the book provides.

Questions?

Have questions or need more information? Please see our FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section on the Business Training Institute website here: http://BusinessTraining.com/FAQ

You can also get in touch with the Business Training Institute team via email at Support@BusinessTraining.com, or by phone and through our Live Chat tool, accessible from our website.

Thanks for joining Business Training Institute and please let us know if you have any questions by calling us at (305) 503-9050.

Business Training Institute

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