



Professional Communication Society Newsletter

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Letter from the Editor

Candidates for election to PC's AdCom for 1982-84 are listed in a ballot, shown in photographs, and discussed in brief biographies elsewhere in this issue. Tom Patterson, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, reports that, as usual, he had difficulty in obtaining six names, but it is encouraging to note the variety in education, experience, and residence of the nominees. Remember, PC-ers, that you can recommend yourself for election to our AdCom, volunteer to work on any committee, or offer your services in any capacity that you find congenial.

During this summer, six PC-ers have indicated, by mail or in person, that they would like to help with Society projects:

J. Scott Marin	(Texas)
David L. McKown	(Pennsylvania)
Carl C. Miller	(Indiana)
Michael P. Patrick	(Pennsylvania)
Edwin J. Podell	(New Jersey)
Albert Sebo	(Illinois)

There is PC work for these and others; you will hear more about all of them.

This newsletter was written before, but will be issued after, the PC's September Conference because of unfortunate circumstances and poor timing. However, an account of the Conference will appear in the October issue.

New Journal on Medical Imaging

Four IEEE organizations--

Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing Society

Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society

Group on Sonics and Ultra Sonics

Nuclear and Plasma Sciences Society--

have formed a Steering Committee to establish and jointly sponsor the IEEE Transactions on Medical Imaging, a new, tightly refereed, quarterly for scientists and engineers whose research involves the generation, processing, and display of medical images.

The new Transactions will pertain to the common ground where instrumentation, systems, transducers, computer hardware and software, mathematics, and physics meet. Research topics to be discussed will include ultrasonics, x-ray imaging and tomography, nuclear isotope imaging systems, image processing by computers, microwaves and nuclear magnetic resonance imaging, radiation sensors and detectors, mathematical tools and analysis of image formation, perception, display, and pattern recognition.

It is planned that the first 100-page issue of the IEEE Transactions on Medical Imaging will be published early in 1982. Obtain further information from Dr. Glenn Knoll, Dept. of Nuclear Engineering, 119 Cooley Bldg., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109 (313-764-4260).

IEEE Professional Communication Society AdCom Candidates



Ira M. Berman

Ira Berman became Senior Editor of Power Engineering in 1978. A graduate of the New Jersey Institute of Technology (BSEE) and the University of Pennsylvania (MSEE), he has worked in the U. S. Naval Air Development Center, General Electric Missiles and Space Division, and Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory.

He was chairman of IEEE's Schenectady Section for one year (1977-8) and edited the Section's Newsletter for four years (1975-8).

His publications include feature articles on such subjects as fluidized-bed combustion, solid-state design, valves, and pressure vessels.

Non-professionally, he is interested in photography, community theater, model railroading, and American Mensa.



William D. Bulloch

Bill Bulloch, now Director of Bell Telephone Laboratories' Publication Center, has been Editor of the Bell System Technical Journal since 1957 and a Bell employee since 1952, except for one year spent as Public Information Supervisor with American Telephone and Telegraph Company.

He has a BA degree from Dartmouth College and an MS degree in Physics from the University of North Carolina, where he taught mathematics, physics, and astronomy from 1946 to 1952. From 1952 to 1956, he served on the editorial staff of the Bell Laboratories Record.

In 1976, as a one-year member of IEEE/PCS, he submitted a set of recommendations that the Society's AdCom has followed to achieve improved publications and increased membership.



Craig Harkins

Craig Harkins, now Site Communication Manager for the International Business Machines Corporation, has been an IBM employee for 20 years in a variety of activities related to communication and education. Before joining IBM he was a computer operator on a UNIVAC I for Pacific Mutual Insurance Company (Los Angeles), a reporter-photographer with the St. Petersburg (Florida) Evening Independent, a news broadcaster-writer for WDAE (Tampa, Florida), and an information specialist in the U.S. Marine Corps.

He has BA and MA degrees in English from Colby College and New York University, an MA degree in communication arts from Columbia University, and a PhD. in communication from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Dr. Harkins has served as Secretary of IEEE/PCS, on the Board of Directors of the Society for Technical Communication, and on the Editorial Board of the IEEE Spectrum. His articles have appeared in Audio-Visual Communications, Technical Communication, Technical Photography, IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication, and Proceedings of the IEEE.



Lacy R. Martin

Lacy Martin has more than twenty years of corporate experience in planning, writing, editing, and producing technical proposals, promotional documents, in-house communications, foreign-language booklets, and material for trade shows. He has worked for IBM Corporation, Litton Systems, Dames and Moore, Pullman Swindell, and, most recently, Hughes Aircraft Company.

Lacy holds a BS in journalism and an MA in English from the University of Mississippi. He is a Senior Member of the Society for Technical Communication and a member of IEEE/PCS.



Della A. Whittaker

Della Whittaker edits manuscripts on research in physics, chemistry, mathematics, engineering, and computer science at the U.S. Army's Harry Diamond Laboratories in Adelphi, MD. She also teaches technical writing and speaking at the University of Maryland, from which she holds three degrees (BA, MA, and PhD) in English education.

Della has lectured in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School and the U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory. She was Program Chairman for the 28th International Technical Communication Conference of the Society for Technical Communication in May 1981 and also for the IEEE/PCS Conference in September 1981.

The author of articles on various aspects of communication and reviews of books

on technical writing and illustrating, Della has presented papers at conferences of the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing and the National Council of Teachers of English. She has published in the IEEE/PCS Transactions, STC's Technical Communication, Quality Progress, The Toastmaster, and the Journal of Technical Writing and Communication.



Robert M. Woelfle

Bob Woelfle, Manager of Proposal/Presentation Services at E-Systems in Greenville, Texas, coordinates the preparation and publication of marketing documents and the development of films and displays. He holds BS and MS degrees in electrical engineering, is a Registered Professional Engineer in the State of Indiana, and teaches a course in management at Eastfield College in Dallas.

A Senior member of both IEEE and the Society for Technical Communication, Bob has presented papers at conferences of both organizations and served IEEE/PCS as AdCom member and committee chairman. For five years, he edited The Nucleus for the South Bend/Mishawaka (Indiana) Section of IEEE.

Bob prepared a chapter for the Handbook of Technical Writing (1971, Wiley) and edited A Guide to Better Technical Presentations (1975, IEEE Press).

IEEE Professional Communication Society Ballot

Ballot for Election of AdCom Members
Term 1982-1984

Vote for six candidates by marking their names with X.

☐ Ira M. Berman
☐ William D. Bulloch
☐ Craig Harkins
☐ Lacy R. Martin
☐ Della A. Whittaker
☐ Robert M. Woelfle
☐ Other (write-in)

Mail completed ballot to T. T. Patterson, GTE Labs, 40 Sylvan Road, Waltham, MA, 02154.

Welcome PC-ers

In May and June, 1981, our society was happy to add 119 new names to the roster; 59 from the United States and 60 from other countries.

Australia

Domjan, P. J.
Stone, V. R.

Brazil

Rubens, A. G.

Canada

British Columbia

Donald, B. J.
Seaton, K. J.

Nova Scotia

Osborne, J.

Ontario

Apap, E.
Clinton, D. J.
Doran, D. G.
Gittings, P.
McTaggart, L. R.
Sadler, S. A.
Signarowski, G. F. P.
Sobiesiak
Ventola, S. R.

Ecuador

Cabezas, G. V.

Hong Kong

Chin, S. C.
Yau, N. T.

Italy

Alberigi, A. Q.
Baglivi, B.
Frugone, G. P.
Medici, I. C.

Jamaica

Davis, R. A.

Korea

Cheon, E. H.

Mexico

Sanchez-Gayosso, A.

Peru

Bartet, J. F.

Singapore

Quek, G. P.

Sweden

Linder, J. G.

Yugoslavia

Zmago, B.

South Korea

Lee, C-G.

United States

Arizona

Burggraaf, P. S.
Rosenblatt, S. J.

California

Bedrosian, P. G.
Chang, H. L.
Dula, D. A.
Economidis, T.
Primer, J. E.

Colorado

Pelham, T. D.

District of Columbia

Prevatte, R. L.

Georgia

Holberton, P. M.

Indiana

Pohnert, D. L.
White, G. S.

Massachusetts

Janson, J. E.

New Jersey

Fisher, R. B.

New York

Lash, D. M.
Leung, H. C.
Mayo, W. H.
Pultorak, D. M.
Refaie, A. F. E.
Schur, A.

Texas

Helmer, C. A.
Rainwater, W. R.
Scheff, H. M.

Utah

Alt, L. E. Jr.

Virginia

Hornby, R. R.
Russell, T. G.

Washington

Markham, C. H. Jr.

Wisconsin

Nailen, R. L.
Warner, W. E.

PC Conference

PC's first conference in many years will be held at the Crystal City Marriott Hotel, Arlington, VA, on September 16 - 18, 1981. Presentations will pertain to the fact that successful engineering careers depend on communication skills as much as on technical knowledge. Topics will include:

- *writing and presenting engineering papers
- *giving legal and legislative testimony on engineering subjects
- *writing successful grants and proposals for engineering projects
- *using new communication techniques to improve engineering presentations
- *getting, keeping, and awarding engineering jobs.

Meetings Scheduled

1. International Conference on Cybernetics and Society
October 25-8, 1981
Atlanta, Georgia
Information:
Dr. Joanne Green
Georgia Tech. Engr. Exp. Station
Systems Engineering Lab.
Atlanta, GA 30332
(404) 894-3491
2. Annual Meeting of National Association of Government Communicators
October 29-30, 1981
Washington, D. C.
Information:
Mrs. Sara R. Torrence
A640 Administration Building
National Bureau of Standards
Washington, D.C. 20234
(301) 921-2721
3. International Electron Devices Meeting
December 7-9, 1981
Washington, D.C.
Information:
Melissa Widerkehr, 1981 IEDM
1629 K Street, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 296-8100
4. 8th Annual SIETAR Conference (Society for Intercultural Education, Training, and Research)
March 30-April 3, 1982
RMS Queen Mary
Long Beach, California
Information:
Dr. Diane L. Zeller
SIETAR, Suite 102
1414 22nd St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20037
(202) 862-1990
5. EUROCON '82--European Conference on

Electrotechnics (Reliability in Electrical and Electronic Systems)

June 14-18, 1982

Copenhagen, Denmark

Information:

Conference Office

Technical University of Denmark

Bldg. 208, DK-2800 Lyngby

Denmark

Tel: 45(0)2 882300

Telex: 37529 DTHDIADK

6. Software Documentation Workshop
March 3, 1982

Gaithersburg, MD

Information:

A. J. Neuman

Institute for Computer Sciences and Technology

National Bureau of Standards

Technology A265

Washington, D.C. 20234

(301) 921-3486

CCS

The Annual Seminar of the Council of Communication Societies will be held this year at the Crystal City Marriott Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia, December 3-5. The preliminary program is as follows:

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3

9am-12noon	Executive Director's meeting
1-5pm	CCS Board meeting
5-6	Reception for CCS Board

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4

8:30-9am	Registration
9-9:30	Introduction, Overview of Program

9:30-10:20	<u>Robotics in Communication</u> (Speaker will discuss current and future applications of technology similar to robotics in industry; i.e., the Kurzweil Reading Machine for the blind, etc.)
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10:20-10:45	Coffee break
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10:45-11:45	<u>Implications of Electronic Publishing</u>
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(Speaker will bring us up-to-date on new developments in electronic journalism, including ATT standards, experiments being conducted throughout the U.S.)

12-1:30pm	Luncheon (Speaker from the Federal Communication Commission will discuss the Administration's position on various communication issues)
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- 1:30-2:15 Communication with the Global Village
(Speaker will discuss international communication problems and ways in which US organizations can deal with them.)
- 2:30-3:15 Small Group Sessions on such topics as
Using Data Bases
Legal Issues of New Technologies
Membership Communication and Retention
Using Minicomputers
- 3:15-3:45 Coffee break
- 3:45-4:30 Federal Update, Panel Discussion or other small-group sessions
- 4:30-6 (Evening Free) No-host cocktails and dinner

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5

- 8:30-9am Registration
- 9-10 Careers in Communication
(Discussion of the expansion of careers in the field, based in part on the CCS Guide to Careers, which will be published in the fall.)
- 10-11 Panel Discussion, Succeeding in Communication
(Representatives from Broadcasting, Library, Government, Industry will discuss opportunities and advancement)
- 11-11:30 Light Buffet
(fruit, sandwiches, cake and coffee) and informal conversation
- 11:30 Contrasts in Communication
(Well-known speaker)

Summary

Gobbledygook

On May 6, 1981, at the request of Senator Proxmire, the Congressional Record (p. S4414) reprinted a memorandum that had been issued two months earlier on "key factors" to be considered by those who prepare letters for Secretary Malcolm Baldrige of the U. S. Department of Commerce. The factors were listed under a request for "clarity and brevity"--that is, for short words and short sentences expressed in "plain English."

In addition to urging that authors shun passive verb-forms and use as few adverbs

and adjectives as possible, the memo pointed out that subsequent means after (not before) and that datum and criterion should be used as singular forms, with data and criteria as their plurals.

Don't use the following, warned the memo:

image	institutionalize
input	maximize
orient	hereinafter
viable	finalize
prioritize	as you are aware
subject matter	bottom line
needless to say	it is my intention

Avoid redundancies like serious crisis, untimely death, personally reviewed, new initiatives, and great majority, said the memo, and substitute "preferred" for "sloppy" expressions as follows:

<u>Don't Use</u>	<u>Prefer</u>
hopefully	I hope
ongoing	moving forward
prior to	before

In "The Talk of Our Town" (citation lacking) Washington columnist Martin Kaplan refers to the Commerce memorandum, describing bureaucratic prose as "garbled, pompous, graceless, bloodless," but calling the war against government jargon "unwinnable."

Bureaucrats speak the way they do, he says, because they have nothing to say and because they want to say nothing. He sees jargon as having evolved to meet a need--as being "verbal excelsior" to fill a sheet of paper on which one's job of doing nothing must be described as a "position," or "tools of obfuscation" with which to fashion a non-response to a difficult question.

Bureaucratese appears to Kaplan as "the language of advanced culture, a perfectly adapted instrument of evasion, "used in a society in which clarity is fatal and accountability means death."

"Simply Stated"

The center fold of this issue of PC's Newsletter reproduces a recent issue of another newsletter--"Simply Stated"--with the kind permission of its editors.

The long lead article in this borrowed publication contains very good advice that can be applied to documents in particular and to documentation in general. For example, "No document should simply be written once and sent out.... Rewriting should be seen as a positive step, not a negative one."

Common sense, is it not? Common sense written out can be very useful.

Simply Stated

Editors
Robbin Battison
Joanne Landesman

The Process Model of Document Design

Introduction

Advice about improving written language commonly focuses on the technical aspects of writing at the level of words and sentences. However, studies of written language and of how people read and write suggest that we should focus instead on how writers make decisions as they write and how readers make sense of written material. Writing is a *process*, and we should treat it as a process. At the Document Design Center we have developed a process model which we have found to be helpful both when we are revising a document and when we are creating a new one. We recommend this process approach, and we teach it through our workshops and manuals. We thought that you, our readers, might find it useful, too, so we are sharing our most recent version of the model with you in this issue.

The model (diagrammed on page 3) divides the process of designing a document into three stages: pre-design, design, and post-design. Research has shown that expert writers spend a large part of their time planning before they write. The kinds of planning they do are included in our pre-design steps. The pre-design steps all come before we even start to write a document:

1. Determine the *scope* of your document.
2. Define your *purpose*.

Continued on p. 2

Plain Language Laws

Minnesota recently became the sixth state to enact a "plain language" law for consumer contracts, following in the footsteps of New York, Maine, Connecticut, Hawaii, and New Jersey (SS 9, 11). H.F. No. 616, Chapter No. 274 was signed into law on May 28 and takes effect on July 1, 1983.

The Minnesota Plain Language Contract Act follows the standard first established by New York, calling for clear writing, everyday words, and appropriately divided and captioned sections. It also provides for new review and enforcement procedures. The Act gives the Attorney General authority (beginning immediately) to review contracts for plain language. It also allows a court to rewrite a contract if it violates the Act and threatens substantial harm to consumers. For further information, write or call Daniel Kleinberger, Special Assistant Attorney General, Ford Building, 117 University Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55155; phone 612/296-4023.

Developments in other states include:

- *Michigan.* Substitute Bill 4197 passed the House on June 11 and was sent to the Senate Consumer Affairs Committee. (Contact Sheila Faunce—517/373-9116.)
- *California.* A.B. 1869 had its first hearing in the Assembly's Judiciary Committee on May 6. Another hearing will be scheduled. (Contact Assemblyman Art Torres—916/445-1670.)
- *Georgia.* Bill held over for next Senate legislative session.

Process Model, *continued*

3. Define your *audience*.
4. Determine the nature of the *task* that the document will require of your audience.
5. Determine the *constraints* that you must work under.

Only when we have studied these pre-design elements thoroughly do we actually begin to draft the document. With a long or complex document, we frequently write up the analysis as a planning memorandum, to explain to others how we see this particular writing project. When we are ready to write, we follow these four basic design steps:

1. Select the *content* for your document, based on what you have learned about your audience and what is appropriate for them.
2. *Organize* in a way that will help your audience to find their way around in the document and perform the required task.
3. Use *language* that is clear and simple and is geared to your audience's knowledge and experience.
4. Use *graphics* to help clarify your message.

In the post-design stage, we *review* the document. Review points out ways in which we need to *revise* and *edit*. Once we have a draft that we think is good, we *evaluate* it to answer the question: "Is the document actually achieving its purpose for its intended audience?"

Pre-Design Steps

Scope—Determining the scope means having a clear idea of the subject or content the document must cover. What message do you want to convey? Will this document be one of a group of documents that form part of a program? What policy decisions have been made or will need to be made that will affect the content of the document?

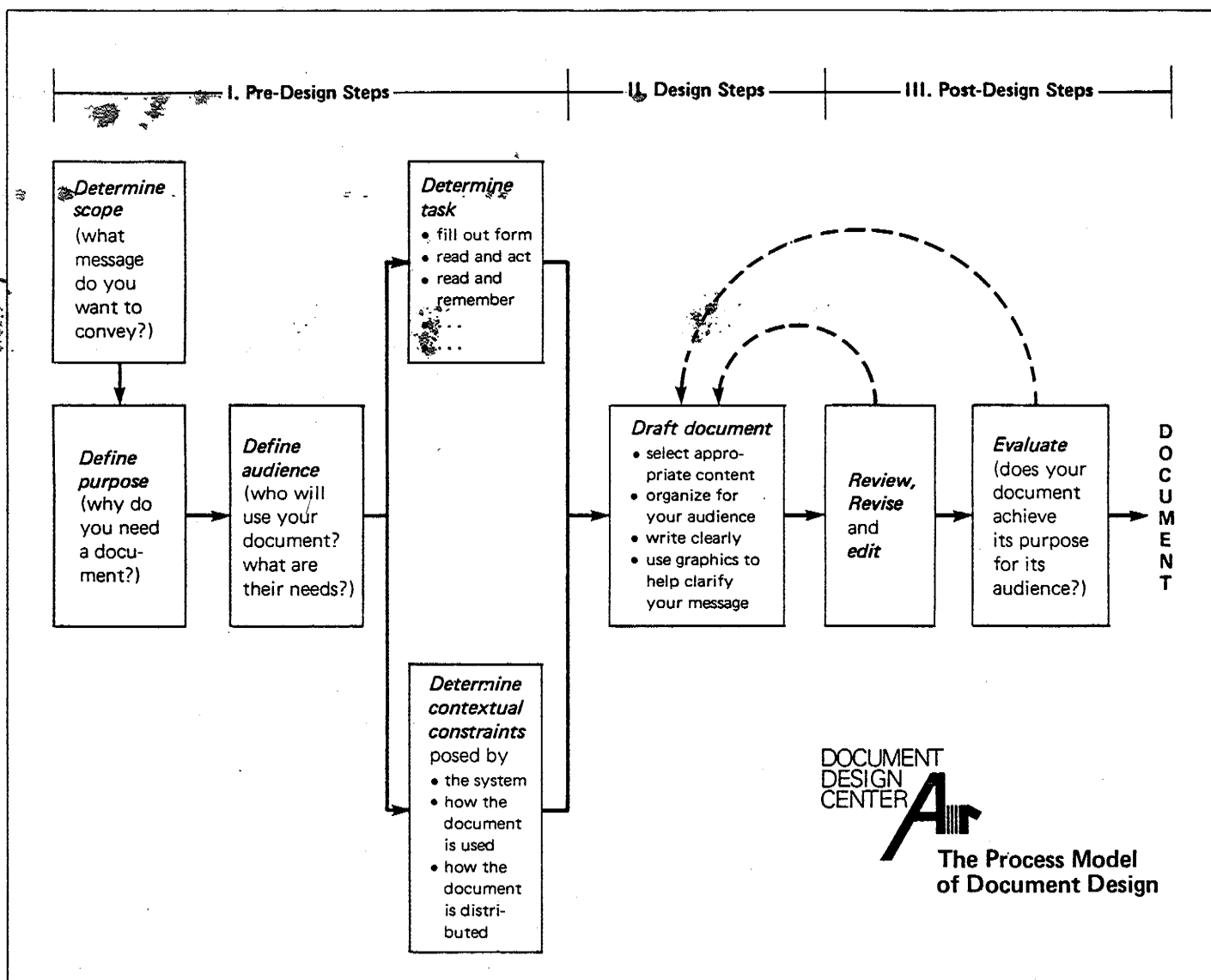
Purpose—Before you begin to write you should have a clear idea of what you expect to achieve with your document. Why do you need a document in the first place? Understanding your purpose will help you decide, for example, if you should write an information sheet or a long booklet. It should help you decide if your form really needs to have all those questions to get the information you need.

Audience—You may want to select a particular type size or page format because of your audience. Your choice of words, sentence structures, and sentence lengths will vary with the audience. Content and organization will be influenced by the general background and knowledge of your audience. Therefore, you will need to know: Who will be using your document? Will they be motivated to read it or fill it out? What is their level of education, their native language, their socio-economic level, their reading level, their age? You may find that you have multiple audiences with conflicting needs that will have to be balanced in the final document—the users and the processors; lawyers and engineers; your internal reviewers and your external readers. With thought, you can write a document that works for multiple audiences.

Task—"Purpose" focuses on the writer, but "task" focuses on the audience. What do you expect your audience to do with this document? Will they just read it once for background and then throw it away? Do you expect them to read it and remember information, or to read the document and then keep it for reference? If people will be using the document for reference, you need to have a clear organization, useful headings, and a table of contents that matches readers' questions.

If your document is a form, the reader's task is to be able to work through the questions, filling out the appropriate ones correctly. Will the users need to refer to other documents to answer the questions, and are those documents likely to be readily available? Have you grouped questions so that readers will not have to go back again to the same outside document? What are the consequences to the user of not filling your form out properly? What are the consequences to your agency? Knowing how difficult a task you are requiring people to do may lead you to change the way you organize the document, reduce or expand your content, change your language, or redefine the audience you want to reach.

Constraints—Constraints are conditions or practices which will limit what you can do. If you know early enough what your constraints are, sometimes you can change them. Sometimes you cannot, so you need to work around them. Constraints are likely to fall into one of three categories: 1) material constraints, such as budget, deadlines, page size or paper weight, mailing restrictions, and graphic capabilities; 2) policy constraints, such as legislation or regulations, the way in which your audience is defined for you, the intended uses of the document, required content or notices, and your reviewers and the review process in your agency; 3) systems constraints, such as how your document may



fit into a program or a group of documents—either inside or outside your agency.

Design Steps

Content—Even when you know the scope the document must cover, you will still have to make decisions on specific content to include or to exclude. The audience analysis you did in the pre-design stage should tell you what you need to include to meet your readers' needs. Tailoring the content to the audience can sometimes allow you to write a much shorter document than you otherwise might.

Organization—Your audience must be able to follow the logic of your presentation and find what they are looking for in your document. Many documents, for example, are used for reference but are not set up to allow quick access

to information. Informational headings placed graphically so they stand out on the page will help you to *show* your organization to your audience. If you are designing a form, some good ideas are to use large type headings and numbers, to make your section headings parallel in the form and the instructions, and to create separate pathways for different groups of users, which you can show by color-coding.

Language—Use language that your intended audience can understand. Using clear and simple language does not mean “talking down” to your audience, but it does mean avoiding unfamiliar jargon, technical terms, acronyms, legalese, long or convoluted sentences, and impersonal constructions. Some constructions that are difficult for readers are the passive voice, double (and multiple) negatives, noun strings (for example, “individual retirement annuity brochure”), non-parallel constructions, and the use of “shall”

and other words and phrases that may be ambiguous. In particular, it helps to use personal pronouns, address the audience as "you," and refer to your agency as "we" or by name. Remember that "plain English" need not always mean simple English. Some readers can easily understand compound sentences and words from Latin roots. But even readers who understand formal, literary English do not always understand the jargon and the abstract, convoluted prose that characterize many public documents.

Graphics—Good design can reduce the audience's burden in reading a document or in filling out a form. This will in turn help you to achieve your purpose. Some useful guidelines are: keep your typesize readable—8-10 points; use larger type for headings and for numbering items; use boldface—sparingly—for emphasis; use upper and lower case letters rather than all capitals; keep columns of type to 50/70 characters wide; leave enough "white space" to provide a resting place for the eye.

Post-Design Steps

Review, revise, edit—No document should simply be "written" once and sent out. Let it sit for a few days and then read it again. If you have no review process built into your agency, pass it around to your colleagues. Edit with your pre-design decisions in mind.

Evaluate—Before you can pronounce your document successful, you must find out—preferably by empirical testing—whether it *works*. You might test a form, for example, by having a group of potential users try to fill it out, observing the time it takes them, counting the number of errors they make, and looking at the questions that cause problems. Similar practical tests can be conducted with reference documents.

Constraints on time and budget may severely limit what you can do, but even if you cannot perform a formal evaluation, just having a few people read the document and tell you what they think each paragraph means can show you where misunderstandings may arise.

Finally, remember that document design is a *recursive process*. Review and evaluation should send you back into the design phase for redrafting in response to any problems that you uncover. Discovering flaws in your document can also send you back to the pre-design phase, where you may need to re-think some of the judgments you made earlier about your scope, purpose, audience, task, and constraints. Rewriting should be seen as a positive step, not a negative one. Multiple drafts will probably result in a better document.

Designing Official Information

Information Design Journal is an international multidisciplinary journal with the aim of creating links between researchers and professional communicators—including editors, designers, and technical writers. A special issue of *IDJ* devoted to topics in document design will appear this fall.

Half of this special 72-page issue will be contributed by researchers and half by communications designers. It is introduced by a keynote paper from Patricia Wright of the Applied Psychology Unit in Cambridge. To order, send \$7 to *Information Design Journal*, PO Box 185, Milton Keynes, MK7 6BL, England. Add \$3 for airmail. (The \$7 is redeemable against the price of a full 1981 subscription if you later decide to subscribe.)

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT Mr. RICHARD M. ROBINSON, C26-05
GRUMMAN AEROSPACE CORPORATION
Bethpage, New York 11714

Be An Editor—IV

Here is our old friend the bookman at his most garrulous. This letter sounds as if he had put his pen or typewriter in Drive and let his mind go on vacation. If you can recognize the wordiness in his writing, you will be better able to avoid it in yours..

To a prospective customer:

In answer to your letter of Jan. 25th, I wish to say that we have made note of your interest in all the titles in which you expressed an interest in your letter and across the future as these titles come to our attention they'll be quoted to you.

If on any occasion as certain of these books that you'd like to locate more quickly than just being on our want list, we are able at any time to advertise in the NY trade journal at a cost to you of just 50 per line. As a rule the average line of adv will take 5 or 6 words.

Such an adv does not obligate you to take the book if the price is too high. It's merely a way to speed up the process of locating books, rather than waiting indefinitely until they might come to stock.

This system of advertising works in this manner: if we secure any results at all, you will be so notified; if we do not, the cards will be pulled within 3 months and pass into our permanent list files.

We'll be pleased to help in every way we can in securing the books you need.

Be An Editor—V

Our friendly bookman can't write two sentences without being awkwardly wordy.

To an artist who wants to have some prints published:

Your circular describing your wild-fowl print brochure has been turned over to the lady who handles our print department for possible consideration. We're not doing a great deal of stocking of new books at present and will be happy to keep this series in mind.

Be An Editor—VI

The garrulous bookman appraises part of an estate (more wordy, out-of-order sentences).

To a legatee:

Enclosed you will find 2 copies of my appraisal of the group of books from your father's library left with me today.

You will note that I have given you two columns of figures which represent the retail values of the books on today's market as well as the wholesale or average dealer's offer on the items in question. Usually dealers will pay about one-third of their expected retail price on good merchandise. On slower uncertain items, they cut down further.

My appraisal fee on this is 5% of the total of \$833 or \$42. This has been charged to your account as you requested. If you should decide to sell the collection to us directly, we would pay you the sum of \$271 for them over a 4-month period.

If you wished to sell them through us on a commission of 40% over a time period of from 6 months to one year you of course would receive in the end much more money. We could not guarantee of course to move them all at these prices within that length of time.

If you and your father should decide to donate these books to some public institution, you could take the retail values here given as the amount of the deduction permitted under the law.

If you should decide to sell the books through us in either of the ways suggested, I will of course immediately cancel my appraisal fee charged to you.

Noun-Strings

One PC-er has responded nobly to the noun-string challenge introduced in our last Newsletter (April 1981): Albert Tebo, Associate Editor of EOSD (Electro-Optical Systems Design), the Engineering Magazine of Electro-Optical and Laser Technology.

"I have collected these monstrosities for some time," Albert writes, "just waiting for an opportunity to display them.... Even if they are not useful for anything, they might give you a chuckle."

Here are Albert's noun-strings; editorial comment follows separately:

1. "Orderly time-phased priority-based civil engineering work planning and design budgeting supply and procurement center support was not maintained." --quoted in U.S. Air Force Effective Writing Course and reguoted in The Editorial Eye (Nov. 1980)
2. "an ultra high vacuum grazing incidence spectrograph-monochromator-polychromator" --from a news release on a new product of Minuteman Laboratories, Inc., Acton, Mass., July 1980.
3. "single-longitudinal-mode synchronizable Q-switched ND:YAG oscillator (QSO)" --from a news item sent by an Australian correspondent to Electro-Optical Systems Design magazine, June 15, 1980.

4. "Single-longitudinal-mode metalorganic chemical-vapor-deposition self-aligned GaAlAs-GaAs double-heterostructure lasers" --title of an article in Applied Physics Letters, 1 Aug 1980.
5. "---packaged in a TO-18 hermetically sealed, gold flashed, glass lensed metal package." --from the Carroll Handbook on Touch Technology, 1979.
6. "Charge-coupled device-driven liquid-crystal light modulator" --title of a paper presented at CLEO '81, by J. Grinberg, et al., Hughes Research Laboratories, Washington, DC, June 10-12, 1981.
7. "A multiple-mode, air-borne laser precision ranging and mapping profiler" --from a news release on a new product of Associated Controls and Communications, Inc., Salem, Mass., May 1981.
8. "real time, two dimensional, data reducing, image density analysis" --from a news release on a new product of Image Technology Methods Corp., Waltham, Mass., June 1981.

Noun-Strings Revisited

What can be done--or what could have been done--to shorten the noun-strings in Albert Tebo's collection (see separate article)? Shall we laugh or cry or shrug our shoulders; or shall we make editorial analyses?

In Item 1, something was not maintained--some kind of support, presumably. Or, were two other things also not maintained--work planning and design budgeting? And was support lacking to or from the supply and procurement center? Much fog here.

Item 2, with the aid of hyphens and omissions, might become "an ultra-high-vacuum spectrographic chromator" with grazing incidence, mono-, and poly- deployed tastefully in a dependent clause, a phrase, or a sentence.

Item 3 seems to refer to an Nd:YAG oscillator that is q-switched, can be synchronized [with what?], and operates [somewhat] longitudinally. To know what Nd:YAG means is not necessary but if the apparatus is to be called a QSO, it might be referred to more clearly as a Q-Switched (capital S) Oscillator. The words added above in brackets suggest the confusion that can lurk in long-drawn-out designations.

The triple adjective, single-longitudinal-mode, appears again in Item 4--a bit of jargon that may be impressive and "accepted" but is certainly long-winded. The descriptor metalorganic sounds like a contradiction and probably should be hyphenated. But consider that procession of six compound adjectives! It exhausts the

reader's mind, eyeballs, and patience. Could not the title have been re-cast, to omit most of those end-on-end characteristics?

As it stands, Item 5 is fairly clear, but it might be more clear with three more additional hyphens. On the other hand, "packaged in a...package" is hardly graceful, "metal package" is somehow contradictory, TO-18 is obfuscation, gold-flashed and glass-lensed are twaddle.

Does Item 6 refer to a device that weighs but little or to a device that affects perceived illumination? A hyphen might help, although the trouble here is caused by the English language itself, rather than by its users. But are three double adjectives necessary?

Item 7 seems to refer to map-making with lasers, but does not do so very directly; and the subject of Item 8, stripping off puffery and jargon, is "analysis of image density."

Other more cogent remarks might be made about these Items. What do you think, PC-ers? More comments? More noun-strings? More knowledgeable and concrete suggestions about how to write shorter, more readable noun-strings--and what to do with all the extra descriptors?

How To Manage Meetings

Ian Stewart of B. C. Hydro and Power Authority, thinks that meetings should not be held to set goals, sell ideas, explain plans and programs, or build morale.

"The only reason to have a meeting," he says, "is to decide something, to get action. If it's morale you're after, don't hold a meeting--cancel one, and watch everyone's face light up."

Stewart's Checklist for Meetings runs somewhat like this:

1. Avoidance

- Hold a meeting only when group action is needed.
- Try to eliminate meetings by some combination of personal visits, telephone calls, paperwork.
- Remember that a meeting's potential for disaster is proportional to the number of people present.

2. Preparation

- Select attendees carefully.
- Keep attendance at a minimum.
- Be sure that every attendee can make authoritative decisions.

- Brief attendees by telephone before the meeting.
- Follow the phone calls with a written agenda that gives names of attendees and the time, day, date, and place of the meeting.

- Spell all names correctly.

State the topics that will be discussed; include copies of background information.

- Brief yourself. Find out all you can about the attendees; consider the topics from their points of view. Collect pertinent correspondence, drawings, etc., and take them to the meeting.

3. The Meeting

- Chair it and write the minutes yourself.
- Have each attendee write his or her name and organization on a sheet of paper. Keep the paper.
- Introduce each person, or have people introduce themselves.
- State the purpose of the meeting.
- Ask if anyone has questions at this point.
- Read the minutes of past meetings--if any.
- Keep track of late arrivals--and early departures.
- Take notes on major new information and decisions.
- At the end of the meeting, read the notes out loud and get agreement.
- Announce the date and agenda of the next meeting (if necessary).

4. Follow-through.

- Send out summaries of the meeting to all attendees as soon as possible.
- Keep this communication to one page. The minutes should be not a record of everything that went on, but merely a summation of important facts and decision. If no decisions were reached, you did not have a meeting.
- Make sure that if action is needed, you have said by whom and by when it should be taken.
- Avoid emotional language.
- Sign the summary.

--Adapted from FACTS (February 1981), Baltimore Gas and Electric Company.

Being Your Own Boss

How do you go about running your own business? Richard F. Creedy gave important insights into this activity at the November 1980 meeting of members of the Industrial Communication Council in the New York area.

Creedy heads Richard F. Creedy Associates, special marketing communications. He is author of the recently published book, "Time is Money," a step-by-step-guide to selling, pricing, managing, and becoming your own boss. E. P. Dutton is publisher of the book, which sells for \$11.95.

Creedy told listeners to ask themselves four questions:

1. What do I offer? What knowledge and ability do I possess?
2. Who will buy it? (Be specific and target your market.)
3. What does it cost to go on my own? (Compare costs of at-home and away-from-home offices.)
4. How much can I earn? (Find out how to price yourself. Keep records to show overhead costs, time, and expenses.)

Creedy also offered do's:

1. Do plan carefully by pinpointing your market and reaching it with your story.
2. Do make clear to prospects what you can do for them.
3. Do ask what the service will mean to prospects. You may not try to sell it at this point, only build for the future.
4. Do establish a proper hourly rate for yourself.

And don'ts;

1. Don't be casual about money. Keep records and know if you are making or losing money.
2. Don't try to be all things to all people. Again, target a specific market and don't be afraid to turn down work.
3. Don't start with lavish overhead costs.
4. Don't fake knowledge you don't possess.

Creedy offered further suggestions: Go directly to the level that can buy, and find quick ways to get information on import subjects.

--Adapted from ICC Newsletter, December, 1980

The men who make history have not the time to write it. --Metternich

Checklist for a Document

Evaluate your own reports and those of others against the questions listed below. For any document, ask

1. Is it structurally sound?
 - Is the principle thought logically developed?
 - Do headings and paragraphs clearly represent the development?
 - Are there any constructions that don't make sense?
 - Are there connecting phrases to show relationships between ideas?
2. Does it answer all the questions it raises?
3. Is it concise?
 - Does it say all it needs to say but no more?
 - Have all unnecessary words and phrases been deleted?
4. Are its tone and language appropriate?
 - Is the tone "right" for the intended audience?
 - Is the writing free of words and phrases that might be offensive?
 - Will the language and vocabulary be understood by the intended audience?
 - Are all technical terms and abbreviations clearly explained?
5. Are there errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation?
6. Will the document fulfill its purpose effectively?

--Adapted from Supervisory Management via BG&E FACTS (Jan. 1981)

Human Relations

Do your colleagues, supervisors, assistants, family, and friends find any of the following human traits in you? Do they make statements like these about you?

Honesty--I know I can get a straight answer from him.

Self-awareness--She knows what she wants to do and where she is going in life.

Generosity--She shares ideas and knowledge freely.

Realism--He brings you back to earth.

Patience--He listens to what you say and pays attention.

Wisdom--She sees potential in people when they don't see it in themselves.

Resourcefulness--He knows where answers can be found.

Self-restraint--She keeps her advice to a minimum and insists that people make their own decisions.

Prevention

An ounce of prevention, says the proverb, is worth a pound of cure. How can we keep "things" from "going wrong"? Try the following:

1. Follow through--Attend to projects continuously, rather than just waiting for them to work out.
2. Be willing to compromise--Don't be afraid that a slight alteration will ruin your idea.
3. Concentrate your energies--Deal with one problem at a time.
4. Keep quiet--Don't magnify your problems by broadcasting them.
5. Keep cool--Prepare to meet frustration, criticism, argument, and resistance.

--Adapted from Industrial Supervisor via BG&E FACTS (Jan. 1981).

Simple English Needs Help

Attendees at a recent American Management Associations conference heard that the average speaking adult is familiar with over 600,000 different words. Two thousand of those words are used on a day-to-day basis, and 500 words have over 14,000 different dictionary definitions. No wonder people have so much trouble communicating with each other.

Consultant William Zacharias reported that the average adult speaks at the rate of 125 words per minute and hears at the rate of 500 words per minute. Thus listeners have plenty of time to ponder what's really being said, and to go through an abundance of definitions until they find one that fits their perception and prejudices.

For communicators, Zacharias is making the point that "Simple" English is not so simple. People need body language, visual aids, and any other communication tool they have available, to make sure that they and their audiences will use the same language.

--From the Newsletter (August 1980) of the Industrial Communication Council.

Junk Communication

Gerald M. Goldhaber, in NEXT (Nov./Dec. '80) says, "If we hole up with machines, we'll only exchange facts We'll suffer from junk communication, which, like junk food, provides substance but not nourishment."

Take advantage of the fact, Goldhaber urges, that human contact allows us to expand our messages by nonverbal input--vocal inflections and modulations, bodily movement, and arrangement of surroundings. He calls the use of CB radio "superficial fantasy communication" and thinks that video conferencing is a poor substitute for face-to-face interaction.

What Is Your Business?

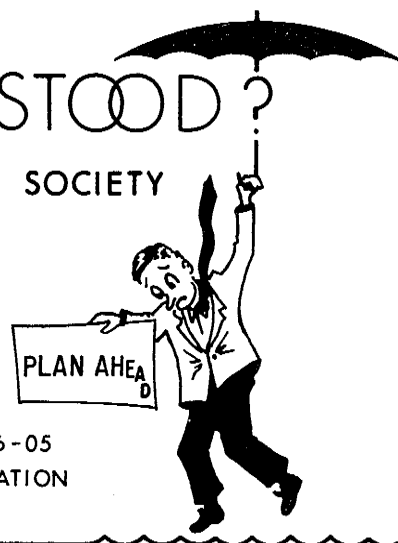
The bartender's business is on the rocks.
The tailor's business is just sew-sew.
The veterinarian's business has gone to the dogs.
The legislator's business is taxing.
The electrician's business is delightful.
The recording artist's business is groovy.
The beekeeper's business is in clover.
The chef's business is all gravy.
The gardener's business is coming up roses.
The psychiatrist's business is shrinking.
The author's business is write on!

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