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Some of us have been technical writers for years; others have just started in the business; and then there is still a whole other group who are doing technical writing without even knowing it. ♦

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There is a lot happening in November. Maybe we have to keep busy so that we can forget that it's going to get cold. ♦

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Managers are always busy helping others, so it's only right that they take the time to help themselves. The first Management SIG meeting takes place over a relaxing meal. ♦

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One of our student members shares her list of benefits for becoming a student member of the STC. ♦

[Scholarships in Technical Communication](#)

Don't miss receiving some financial help with your schooling because

The Editor's Message

When I'm reviewing articles for the newsletter, I am forced to stop and look at all that is going on in the chapter. So, for awhile at least, I step out of my work and home life, and focus on the goals and achievements of the Southwestern Ontario chapter.

Assumptions

There is so much going on, and I take much of it for granted. I just assume that there will be meetings to attend, a workshop in February, a competition in the fall, and a Wine and Cheese in March. These things happen like clockwork, because the council members make everything look so easy, and, because things go so smoothly, it's easy to forget how much work each of these events takes to arrange.

Being Human

In addition to taking things for granted, my other problem is that sometimes I forget that everyone is human. No one lives to write for The Quill (although I like to believe that this is true!). Sometimes people are having the week from h***, as they state in their e-mails when they make their submissions, and I am like the icing on the cake when I say, "Are you still submitting that article to me?" I appreciate these same people going the extra mile to make their submissions, regardless of the type of week that they are having.

you didn't read this article about scholarships that are available. ♦

[The Search for an Employment Match](#)

The job bank is for both job seekers and employers. Both are needed to make the job bank a win-win situation. ♦

[Jobs or Lack Thereof](#)

The Director-Sponsor of Region 1 talks about the STC job bank and what it can and cannot do for you. ♦

[October's General Meeting: All About Coaching](#)

At the October general meeting, we learned about the difference between coaching and managing. Find out what you can do to encourage productivity and get results. ♦

[Minutes of October's Council Meeting](#)

Your council meets regularly to plan and organize what value that you can receive for your membership. ♦

[Telephone/Web Seminar: Cascading Style Sheets: Creating Layouts without Tables \(Part II\)](#)

In the second of a two-part telephone/Web seminar, attendees received more detailed information about using a cascading style sheet (CSS). ♦

[Networking Through Member Introductions](#)

Since our chapter covers Southwestern Ontario, it seemed only right that we start introducing members who cannot make it to our meetings. ♦

[Ask the Expert: Page Numbering in Framemaker](#)

If you have ever tried to consecutively number pages in a large Framemaker document, then this is the article for you. ♦

[Book Review: The Hidden Power of Social Networks](#)

Find out what our reviewer thought of the book, "The Hidden Power of Social Networks—Understanding How Work *Really* Gets Done in Organizations." It's an article you won't be able to put down. ♦

Being the Same but Different

Although we are all in the same field, and have many of the same personality traits (detail-oriented and analytical), we are all unique. Unfortunately, many of us never take the time to see all these differences, because we focus on work-related topics and don't focus on the actual people.

Maybe the reason we miss getting to know these people is because we are generally talking in venues that are work-related. Maybe this is why we start to talk to people AFTER the general meeting, because we are no longer locked into our "learning" modes.

Networking Meeting

This change in venue is what Opal Gamble is using to encourage members to get to know each other. When you think about it, we already have so much in common, it would be a shame to not take that extra step to get to know each other as people. Look in the [Upcoming Events](#) article for details about this networking opportunity. Don't pass it up!

Submissions

I am always looking for articles and story ideas. Send your articles, suggestions, and comments to me at quill@stc-soc.org.





About The Quill



by [Debbie Kerr](#), The Quill Editor

The Quill is the monthly newsletter of the Southwestern Ontario Chapter STC, which is a Canadian chapter in Region 1. Our chapter spans from Windsor to Mississauga and Georgian Bay to Lake Ontario. This area is home to the technology triangle, which is home to many high-tech industries.

The Quill History

In October 1989, the first edition of the The Goose was launched by editor Rick Martin, who immediately announced a contest for a new name. The winning entry was, of course, The Quill. Within two years, The Quill earned an Achievement Award for small chapter newsletters, followed by back-to-back Merit Awards in **1993** and **1994**. **1992** and **2001** saw Awards of Excellence. In **1996**, we were awarded not only the Distinguished Award, but the Best of Show for all chapter newsletters. In **2003**, our first year in an online format, we won a Merit Award.

Publication Policies and Frequency

The Quill is published monthly, with the exception of January, so there are nine issues published from September 2004 to June 2005.

The following is a summary of when articles must be submitted so that they can be included in a particular issue. To help the Quill Editor to plan the content of each issue, contributors are encouraged to submit their story ideas one week before submitting their articles.

Issue	Article Deadline
September	August 23
October	September 20
November	October 18
December	November 22
January	No Quill
February	January 18
March	February 14
April	March 21

May	April 18
June	May 23
July or August	No Quill

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When you submit an article, you give the editor and the newsletter staff the right to edit your article for clarity and to ensure that it adheres to the newsletter's style and standards. All articles are edited, copy edited, and proofed prior to publication.

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Reprint Policy

Articles contained in this newsletter may be reprinted if credit is given to The Quill and the author of the article. You must also submit an electronic copy of the article to The Quill Editor at quill@stc-soc.org OR mail two paper copies to the mailing address below.

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For a complete list of contacts, go to the site of the Southwestern Ontario Chapter STC at www.stc-soc.org.

STC Head Office

Mission Statement:

Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication

You can find out more about the STC using any of the following methods.

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President's Message: The English Degree Bites Back



by [Opal Gamble](#), President

During my final year in University, on a work term, one of my fellow co-op students walked past my desk shaking his head and muttering to himself.

He backed up, looked me square in the eye, and said, "you know you've been in English too long when you find yourself in the washroom wishing for a pen so you can correct the mis-spelled graffiti."

This statement, of course, made me laugh loud and long. However, deep down, I knew what he was getting at. It's that same editing behaviour that most technical writers squash in public. You know the instinct I'm talking about: mentally rewording signs in store windows to eliminate passive voice, pointing out typographical errors on menus to the staff in restaurants, or editing co-workers' e-mails.

That Editing Bug

As a group, technical communicators seem to really get a kick out of tweaking text or illustrations in all of their forms, even if the tweaking is just for our own, personal satisfaction. I propose, however, that this is only the first phase of having technical communications take over your life.

Now, don't take that the wrong way. I'm not calling anyone obsessive about his or her job: I just think that it's hard to turn off that need for clear, concise communication at the end of the day. Few, if any of us, can walk away from our desks at 5:02 p.m. and drop the editing process entirely.

The Inability to Turn It Off

Honestly, I don't think I'd want to be able to flip that communications and editing switch off, either.

Solo 2, also known as "AutoSlalom" or "Autocross", is a low-cost, grassroots motorsport discipline that allows almost anyone to enjoy the thrill of automotive competition in a safe, controlled, and legal environment.—[Solo Ontario](#)



Opal and the Insight

I discovered exactly how unable I was to let undefined terms and ambiguity go unaddressed when I started participating in Solo2 events during the summer. The sport is full of technical jargon, acronyms, and—worse!—differing opinions about what those terms mean.

Slaloms may be a fun thing to do with your Sunday, but it's definitely frustrating for a newbie that doesn't know the terminology. So, I opened my big mouth and volunteered to create a dictionary of terms (complete with diagrams!) as a reference point for the use of participants.

The Ray of Sunshine

As you've probably guessed, being a Technical Writer occasionally gets me into trouble. However, there is a bright side to this: there is a market for each of us to be a communicator within our own hobbies! I thought that was just one of those rumours other writers started to see how many people were gullible enough to believe them.

There are communicators in all sorts of industries, so why not make a niche for yourself by working with something that you know and enjoy?

In fact, I think I could argue that there are a number of people doing a wonderful job of technical communication *without even knowing it*.

Heresy!

No, I'm not advocating that anyone can be a technical communicator. What I am saying is that if people can write about things that interest them, technical communications can be fun and painless.

Do you want some proof? Here are some examples that relate to hobbies mentioned in *Quill* contributors' biographies. These Web sites—of varying quality, certainly, but they still make my point—are examples of technical communication:

- knitty.com: This group does an excellent job of explaining the technicalities of their self-made patterns. They do such a good job, in fact, that I've nearly been lured into trying a few of their patterns myself. Example: The [Hallowig](#).

- [Digital Photography Review](#): This site is a goldmine of camera reviews, terminology, buying hints, and photography tips. Example: How to do [Double Exposures with a Digicam](#).
- [Yoga Basics](#): With pictures and careful instructions for each position, this site looks like a great reference for beginners. Example: How to do a [low lunge](#).

The Point is Clear

I could keep going, but I think you get the point: technical communication is everywhere!

So, if you're looking for a challenge, why not stretch those communication muscles a little and do some writing for a hobbyist group? You never know when that hobby might turn into a job.

As for my Solo2 glossary, it's time for me to get cracking before the winter series starts. ♦

About Opal Gamble

Technical writer, web monkey, and general geek, Opal's wanted to be a tech writer since high school; she became a STC-SOC council member in 1997. A graduate of UW's co-op Rhetoric and Professional Writing program, Opal is a Technical Writer and (unofficial) Web designer at [Virtek](#). She also runs her own freelance business.

When she's not doing STC business, Opal participates in autocross events (with a hybrid car, no less!) and tries to cultivate a green thumb in her garden.

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Upcoming Chapter Events



by [Peter Szabo](#), Program Manager

Here I am entering my third month as Program Manager and I think I'm starting to get the hang of it. I hope I'm choosing a wide enough variety of general meeting and seminar topics to give you reasons to gather with your fellow technical communicators, and add some more skills and tools to your toolkit.

This month I hope to see our reasonably large contingent of Guelph STC members turn out for our general meeting at the University of Guelph. And I for one know nothing about technical writing for the sciences, so I expect to have my eyes opened to a whole new world in communication. Many thanks to Deb Maskens, by the way, for coordinating the speaker and meeting room. In the spring I hope to have another chapter road trip for a general meeting, but I'm still working on the details.

In the meantime, here's a list of confirmed events that are coming up this month, and a sneak peek at a December event. As usual, more details about any event can be found on our [chapter's calendar](#).

November 2, 2004 (General Meeting)

Science Writing: Making the Complex Understandable

While science writing is often *perceived* as being thick and gooey, it doesn't have to be that way. Applying tried and true journalistic techniques can help you sort it out, and make your writing clearer than ever. Join us for this special general meeting at the University of Guelph, where Owen Roberts will show you the "magical-paragraph approach," and answer your 5W's and H about science writing.

Time: Meeting begins at 7:00 p.m., but doors open for networking at 6:30 p.m.

Location: University of Guelph (U of G), University Centre, Room 442 [[Guelph map and directions](#)].

Cost: FREE

About the Speaker: Owen Roberts

Owen Roberts is the director of research communications for the University of Guelph, and teaches agricultural communications in the Ontario Agricultural College. He maintains an active journalistic career as a columnist for the Guelph Mercury and for various other agri-food publications.

November 10, 2004 (STC Remote Seminar) Introducing Windows 'Longhorn' Help

Host: Char James-Tanny

The next generation of the Microsoft Windows operating system, code-named "Longhorn", is due for release in 2006. Longhorn's dramatically new help environment uses a structured authoring model that is built around an XML format called MAML (Microsoft Assistance Markup Language), which is designed to address users' issues. This seminar will introduce you to this exciting and innovative new help system.

Time: 1:00-2:30 p.m. EDT (Doors open at 12:30 for networking)

Location: CheckFree i-Solutions, 455 Phillip Street, Waterloo (for both seminars) [[455 Phillip Street, Waterloo](#)].

Cost: FREE for members and \$35 for non-members.

November 10, 2004 (Networking Meeting)

Host: Opal Gamble

Here's a great opportunity to meet other technical communicators and just chat. It's an informal gathering, so there are no RSVPs. Just wander in and say hello.

Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Location: Duke of Wellington in Waterloo

November 16, 2004 (Council Meeting)

Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Location: CheckFree i-Solutions, 455 Phillip Street, Waterloo

All members are welcome. Help your chapter by becoming a volunteer!

RSVP to [Opal Gamble](#) by November 15, 2004.

SNEAK PEEK - December 7, 2004 (General Meeting)

Marketing Writing: Is it Real Technical Writing or is it Memorex?

If you have ever considered writing marketing materials or thought that writing for marketing isn't really technical writing, think again. We'll have a panel of technical writers to discuss whether marketing communications is indeed technical communication. You'll also have a chance to ask the panel about what it takes to

write in both worlds.

Location: University of Waterloo

More details will be available once the meeting gets closer.

For More Information

To get details and updates about meetings and other upcoming events, check the [calendar page](#) of our STC chapter Web site.

If you have any questions about upcoming chapter events, or if you have a suggestion for a meeting topic, feel free to e-mail [Peter Szabo](#) (Program Manager). ♦

About Peter Szabo

Peter has been a technical writer in one form or another for ten years. For the past five years, Peter has worked for CheckFree i-Solutions, a software firm in Waterloo, and is currently the Manager of Technical Publications. Born and raised in Toronto, Ontario, Peter moved to Guelph in 1997, where he currently lives with his wife, Irene, and six-year-old son, Taylor. He is working on his first feature-length screenplay.



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Munch and Learn: Management SIG Kickoff!



by [Margie Yundt](#), Management SIG Co-ordinator

Feeling all alone as a Team Lead or Documentation Group Manager? Want to get together with others in similar roles and share ideas? You are NOT alone—your local STC chapter has a Management Special Interest Group (SIG) to help you connect with others in our area so that you can network and share space for awhile. The idea is to meet in an informal setting, after hours, and chat amongst ourselves.

Possible Topics

Here are some ideas that we can discuss:

- Setting up an online discussion forum for "urgent" issues or feedback from other members
- Having "topic" nights where we focus on a particular topic that is of interest to all members of the group
- Providing input to the chapter program manager for general meeting topics or speakers

Time and Place

Come and join in the discussion (and dinner!) at our kickoff meeting on **November 15, 6:00 p.m.** at [Romero's Pasta & Seafood restaurant](#), 650 Woodlawn Road, in Guelph.

R.S.V.P

Reply to [Margie Yundt](#) if you are interested in attending or if you want more information! ♦

Margie Yundt

Margie is a senior member in our local STC chapter and has been kicking around the Kitchener-Waterloo/Guelph area since...well, forever it seems. She is a technical writer at heart and enjoys mentoring her kids in the Art of Plain English. She lives in Guelph with her family and enjoys a daily commute into Waterloo to join her many co-workers at Research In Motion.



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View From the Other Side... The Other Side of The Pond



by [Nancy Halverson](#), Feature Writer

There are times when the pond actually shrinks—momentary pauses in my brain circuitry when I forget how far I am from home and how long it would take to get home. News of an untimely death from my husband's old department at the University of Waterloo travelled around the world in a matter of hours this week. Emails raced around the time zones faster than you can imagine. It's a true measure of a man and his family—how quickly any kind of bad news travels.

Thinking About Home

I was watching the Record online for the announcement and thinking of all the people who would be affected. I usually only log onto the Globe and Mail site for Canadian updates, but I sometimes need to get more local colour. I still enjoy reading about all the politics and business of Canada, but I must admit that I get drawn into the strange headlines quite often as well.

I keep a photo of my [cottage lake](#) on my computer as wallpaper, and, at times, I can feel myself just sitting on the dock, watching the world go by.

Getting There is Half the Fun

The pond shrinks for a while, but then it expands massively again when I try to get my head around the idea of actually presenting myself in person anywhere. Walking around here, sometimes I find myself thinking that I'd like to visit particular friends or come out to the STC meeting, then I smack myself in the forehead. A weekend away (in Canada) would cost me about £250 per person right now (which is actually tempting!). Summer fares are double that though, so I'm sure we'll be spending our vacations in Europe for now.

Enough about my nostalgia for my old home. You want to hear about my current home—Sheffield. As I've said before, most North Americans (me included) don't know much about England outside London. I'll share a few of my perceptions (and photos).

The Country Side

I heard an interesting statistic last week—90% of England is '[countryside](#)' and only 10% is urban. This astounds me because the English don't build much above

10 storeys. So, the [houses](#) are tall and narrow, with small back yards (aka gardens) for the most part, and the apartment buildings (aka blocks of flats) are low-rise and packed in. Of course, all the roads are very narrow—there are many roads that reduce to barely two lanes (people still park their cars on both sides, so traffic's reduced to one lane). There are few boulevards around, and often sidewalks (aka pavements) are only on one side of the road.

Just to give you an idea of the squashed life, houses are rarely more than 20 feet wide; lots are often only 25 feet wide by 100 feet or so. Sheffield's very lucky to have [many ravines](#) and steep hills, which snake through the city dividing it up. Green swaths cut through the usual streetscape, giving the impression of lots of little districts rather than one unbroken city. It's also a very green city because of all the river valleys—and we live right on the edge of it, which gives us a lot of places where we can take Sunday walks.

The City Centre

I work in the city-centre, which has a mixture of old and new buildings. The centre of town has a public square, called the [Peace Gardens](#)—fountains and water features, and lots of places to sit and pass the time of day. Right across from the Peace Gardens are some of the [old buildings](#), which are now shops and businesses. I think they look very European. I work about a 5 minute walk away, in a [fairly new building](#)—luckily, it's totally devoted to our company. ZOO Digital Group (I work for the software arm, ZOOtech) moved in here in June 2004, just before I joined. ZOO seems to be continually expanding, which is fun, but, we've already outgrown the building, and ZOOtech's expecting to increase it's share of both revenue and floor space in the next few months. No problem—they've knocked a door through from the third floor of our building into the next door building, and we're taking over their third floor as well. It seems that having crowded cities has some advantages.

The Lack of Forests

So, cities are squashed and crowded, and the 'countryside' is protected. Most of the English ideal of countryside is devoted to grazing sheep and grassy pastures for horses and cattle. Here in Yorkshire, the [hilly geography](#) means that farms are small and seemingly always devoted to either grain or sheep. The flatter areas of the country have more diverse farming of course, but what I miss the most is the forest. To me, country means forest—rocks and trees that hold wildlife and interesting sights. We're very lucky to live near a forested area, which covers some rather steep hills (cliffs really). My impression is that, historically, any land that wasn't practical for farming has remained in a fairly natural state.

The Industry

However, the city was founded by metal works; there were small mills dotting the rivers throughout Sheffield, which is where cutlery, iron, and steel were made. One of the local football (aka soccer) teams is known as the 'Blades' because, even today, surgical instruments and many of the blades for figure skates are made here. In some of the river valleys, there are very few signs of the ancient mills anymore; there are just a few bricks from dams or some culverts that move the water around. There are no buildings, just [monuments marking](#) the places where the mills may have stood.

The Moors

We like to wander around the [moors](#) as well as the forests, and this is truly an English taste. Moors are hills covered in low scrub—[heather and ferns](#). At certain times of the year, it's just a mass of purple, when the heather's in flower. Most of the time, it's just various shades of green—brownish-green to full on English garden green.

This is a very, very green country. There's always something growing. It only takes 4 days without rain to qualify as a drought—trees start to wilt a little and flowers (plants) lose their vigour. But, being England, there's rarely any dry spells.

Vacation Time

We've got a vacation coming up—thankfully. We'll be doing the great English voyage—to Spain. Luckily, we have friends who live on the Costa Blanca, so we'll be well away from the usual vacationing hordes—bright pink people with too much liquor and sunshine. And, since it'll be November, there won't be that many people there anyway. Schools are out next week here—it's called the 'half-term break'. Prices are very high for vacations at that time, so we're waiting a week and going after half-term. The schools can fine parents for pulling their kids out of school for a holiday, but our principal (aka head teacher) doesn't mind us doing it, since the travel is one of the main ways we teach our kids about the world. I'm really looking forward to a week of sunshine and friends. I'll of course, I'll let you all know how it goes! ♦



About Nancy Halverson

Nancy grew up in Toronto, but has lived in Ottawa, Melbourne, Waterloo, and now Sheffield. She has travelled through the South Pacific, Australia and Indonesia, which is where she met her husband, Ryan Wilson (another Canadian), along the way. A career switch introduced her to the STC in 1997. Her writing experience has included several contract positions and a position at Insciber for several years. She has two daughters and has been living in England for two years.

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Improving the Readability of Your Docs



by [Patrick Hofmann](#), Feature Writer

Growing up on a hog farm, one of my memorable encounters with user manuals and technical documentation was with, of all things, herbicide instructions. To ensure my family applied these herbicides responsibly—and didn't harm ourselves, neighbouring crops, and the environment—the instructions we read were spotted with countless cautions and warnings.

Furthermore, the instructions were extensive and complicated, as the mixing, spraying, and storing instructions had to accommodate numerous conditions like air temperature, humidity, wind, soil moisture, accompanying chemical mixtures, and the growth stage or timing of the crops and weeds, to name a few.

More than just the herbicide is a killer

Obviously, these factors still exist in herbicide instructions today. But surprisingly, little has changed in the way these instructions are written and formatted. While our software and hardware manuals have evolved by leaps and bounds, the good ol' herbicide guide has not. After all, these guides begin as regulatory documents that are sent to various government agencies—such as health, environment, and rural affairs—who review these documents before approving and registering the herbicide to be sold and used. For some reason, after the product is approved, these regulatory documents often undergo few changes before they are distributed to retailers and farmers as an end-user guide. Since these documents aren't written nor organized with the ultimate end-user in mind, they are incredibly hard to use.

But all is not lost. Even by applying a few basic rules of effective document layout, we can dramatically increase the readability and usability of such instructions.

Chunk the Information


I extracted the following paragraph from a herbicide manual (and changed the product name to protect the innocent). It contains three different scenarios on when to add water after applying a herbicide. Naturally, it should be chunked into three separate paragraphs.

BEFORE

MOISTURE REQUIREMENTS

As with most soil-applied herbicides, pre-emergent applications of ACME herbicide require moisture for activation. Soil-applied ACME herbicide requires sufficient water within 7 days of application to moisten the soil to a depth of 5 cm for activation. If adequate moisture is not received within 7 to 10 days of application, perform a shallow inter-row cultivation 5-8 cm deep using a roller or S-tine cultivator to control escaped weeds until the field receives adequate moisture. For early pre-plant applications (soybeans only), more than 7-10 days may elapse before the receipt of adequate precipitation to activate the herbicide and reduce the risk of weed escapes. Growers preferring surface applications of herbicides may choose this type of application of ACME herbicide

AFTER

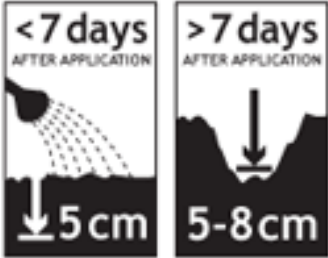


Moisture requirements

As with most soil-applied herbicides, pre-emergent applications of ACME herbicide require moisture for activation. **Soil-applied ACME herbicide requires sufficient water within 7 days of application to moisten the soil to a depth of 5 cm for activation.**

! If adequate moisture is not received within 7 to 10 days of application: perform a shallow inter-row cultivation 5-8 cm deep using a roller or S-tine cultivator to control escaped weeds until the field receives adequate moisture.

! For early pre-plant applications (soybeans only): More than 7-10 days may elapse before the receipt of adequate precipitation to activate the herbicide and reduce the risk of weed escapes. Growers preferring surface applications of herbicides may choose this type of application of ACME herbicide.



To amplify the chunking, apply bolding to the key "if" statements or conditions, so that readers can identify the relevant "chunks" more effectively as they are scanning through the section.

Add Visual Cues

In the example above, since the two "if" conditions have particularly different instructions than the "default" or introductory instruction, add an exclamatory visual cue to draw readers to them. If the document contains many such exceptions or conditional instructions, it may be helpful to visualize these distinctions in a "thumbnail" instruction, as shown in the top right.

Likewise, to help readers can through many chapters or sections whose content appears similar, apply a visual cue to the chapter or section heading. In the example above, I added a water-drop symbol to the Moisture Requirements heading, to distinguish it from the neighbouring tank mix, storage, and application requirements sections, and make it easier for readers to scan through the document.

Enhance the Typography

You'll notice quite a few typographical enhancements in the above "After" example to make the instructions easier to read:

- Remove the full justification and simply left-justify
- Apply an easier-to-read font. In the example above, I used Trebuchet MS - now readily available by default on both Windows and Mac.
- Increase the line spacing (the distance from one of line of text to the next) by an extra 1 or 2 points above the default line spacing. In the 10-pt. text above, I used 14-pt. line spacing instead of 12-pt.

Clean up the Tables

In the following table, farmers want to know what other herbicides they can mix with their current ACME herbicide, and at which growth stage of the crop they can apply it. If they are looking first for a particular herbicide, they have to find it in a list that is not in alphabetical order. If they are looking first for a particular growth stage, they have to read the column headings, move down to the cryptic Xs then move left to the applicable herbicide names.

BEFORE

Tank Mix Option	Application Timing			
	Early Pre-plant	Pre-plant Incorporated	Pre-emergent	Early and Late Post-emergent
Gramoxone®	X ¹			
Roundup®	X ¹			X ^{1,2}
Roundup + FirstRate®	X ²			
Sencor® /Lexone®		X ^{1,2}	X ¹	
Treflan®/Rival®/Trifluralin® or Edge®		X ¹		
Lorox®/Afolan®/Linuron®			X ¹	
Basagran®				X ^{1,2}
Basagran® Forte				X ^{1,2}

¹ Refer to the label of the specific tank mix product for information regarding rates, recommendations, precautions and restrictions.
² Refer to Tank Mix Options under the appropriate Application Timing in this label.
³ Glyphosate Tolerant Soybeans only (i.e., varieties with the Roundup Ready® gene). Refer to CROP: GLYPHOSATE TOLERANT SOYBEANS section.

AFTER



ACME Tank Mixes: Soybeans

Early pre-plant	Pre-plant incorporated	Pre-emergent	Early and late emergent
Gramoxone [®] ①	Sencor [®] / Lexone [®] ①②	Sencor [®] / Lexone [®] ①	Roundup [®] ①③
Roundup [®] ①	Treflan [®] / Rival [®] / Trifluralin [®]	Lorox [®] / Afolan [®] / Linuron [®] ①	Basagran [®] ①②
Roundup [®] + FirstRate [®] ②	OR Edge [®] ①		Basagran [®] Forte ①②



① Refer to the label of the tank mix product for details regarding rates, recommendations, precautions, and restrictions.

② Refer to Tank Mix Options under the appropriate Application Timing in this label.

③ Glyphosate Tolerant Soybeans only -- that is, varieties with the Roundup Ready[®] gene.
See "Crop: Glyphosate Tolerant Soybeans" on page 12.

In the improved version, I have dramatically reformatted the table by removing the entire "X" concept, and merely organizing the applicable tank mixes according to growth stage. Although this may force some farmers who are looking first for a particular tank mix to read through the whole table, they'll be able to do so more quickly in this table.

To make the important footnotes and corresponding numbers easier to read, I applied enlarged and encircled footnote numbers directly to the tank mix names. This dramatically reduces the amount of eye-wandering caused by the Xs in the "Before" table.

To reduce the table's "visual traffic", I've canned most of the line segments that separate the table cells and agitate the eyes. Since each column is treated as a list of tank mixes, I've included merely a column separator, some shading in the table headings, and a bottom line to separate the table from the footnotes.

But what about the writing?

As you can see in the examples above, I haven't edited the writing in any of them! I've only chunked the information, added visual cues, enhanced the typography, and cleaned up the tables. Although editing and downsizing the wordy text will undoubtedly improve the usability by magnitudes further, the visual enhancements are a good start to eradicating many problems—just like the herbicides that are being documented! ♦



About Patrick Hofmann

Patrick is an Interaction Designer at Quarry Integrated Communications in Waterloo. Although he's a rather vibrant speaker, his specialty is using illustration and visual language to communicate. When he's not trotting around the globe teaching the virtues of visual instruction and design, he conducts a 15-piece Swiss polka band in rural Milverton, Ontario. Who says tech-comm and trumpets don't mix?

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Board Amends Student Member Category



The following is from the October issue of Tieline, The Society Leaders' Newsletter.

At its September 2004 meeting in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, the STC board of directors voted to amend the new student member category to provide more benefits to students.

Benefits of Student Membership

The student membership now entitles students to join one student chapter, one professional chapter, and an unlimited number of STC special interest groups. Student membership dues are \$50; students can join additional chapters at a cost of \$10 per chapter.

Definition of Student

The board also adopted a more stringent definition of student membership. To be eligible for student membership, a member must now be a full-time student. Previously, professional technical communicators enrolled in part-time continuing education classes could qualify for student membership. The new definition ensures that the benefits of student membership are available, as intended, only to students.

The new definition amends Article III, Section 2B of the *STC Bylaws* and reads as follows:

Student Member. To be eligible for student membership, an applicant must be (1) enrolled in an accredited university, college, community college, or technical school; and (2) be considered a full-time student according to the criteria of the school he or she is attending; and (3) preparing for a career in technical communication. ♦

Editor's Note:

One of our student members also has feedback about what she thinks are the [benefits](#) of being a student member.

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How Do I Love a Student Membership...Let Me Count the Ways



by [Sarah-Beth Doner](#), Membership Manager

As a student at the University of Waterloo, I want to tell you that a student membership truly has its rewards.

Here are a dozen rewards (to name a few) that a student member can enjoy:

1. Learn which industries hire technical writers.
2. Meet people from all different companies.
3. Receive STC publications (for example, The Quill, Intercom, Technical Communication).
4. Read the publications to learn about the challenges of different industries.
5. Find a co-op job or find a "real" job (part-time or after graduation).
6. Find a mentor.
7. Meet other students from other schools.
8. Add your membership to your resume or university/college application. If all things are created equal, your STC membership could make the difference.
9. For co-op students, who are encouraged to join a professional society, the STC is a professional society.
10. Have a source of useful information for projects/research.
I was able to share the public speaking advice that I found in one of my STC publications with my Speech Communications class.
11. Open doors to scholarships at a national and chapter level.
12. Compete in contests for college and university students (Heidi Thiessen Student Award and Fanshawe College). ♦

About Sarah-Beth Doner

Sarah-Beth is a student at the University of Waterloo where she is studying English Rhetoric and Professional Writing, and participating in the Applied Studies Co-op Program. Two of her co-op terms have involved technical writing at iAnywhere Solutions in Waterloo.



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Scholarships in Technical Communication



by [Scott Deloach](#), Student Scholarships (Head Office)

The following is an excerpt from a communication that I received from the STC Head Office.

Eligibility

- Applicants must have completed at least one year of post-secondary education.
- Applicants must be full-time students. They may be either graduate students working toward a Master's or Doctor's degree, or undergraduate students working toward a Bachelor's degree.
- Students should have at least one full year of academic work remaining to complete their degree programs, although under exceptional circumstances an award may be granted to a student for the final half year.
- They should be studying communication of information about technical subjects. Other majors, such as general journalism, electronic communication engineering, computer programming, creative writing, or entertainment, are not eligible.

Awards

Four awards of \$1,000 each will be granted toward school tuition and expenses. Two awards are granted to graduate students, and two to undergraduates. Awards are for the academic year (September to June).

Schedule

Applications must be received by **February 15** of the year for which the scholarship is needed.

Graduate students must have notified the committee of acceptance in a graduate program by March 20. (Students enrolling in a graduate program may not know their status by February 15. They will be evaluated like accepted students, but their eligibility is contingent upon acceptance and notification by March 20.) Applicants will be notified by mail of committee decisions by April 15.

Forms and More Details

If you want more details, including an application form, go to:

http://www.stc.org/scholarshipInfo_national.asp. ♦

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The Search for an Employment Match



by [Ursula McCloy](#), Employment Manager

Without giving you all the details of the job bank on our Web site, I thought I would give you some tidbits to encourage you to use our site. When I say "you" I am referring to both those people who are looking for work, as well as those people who are looking for workers.

Our job bank needs both job seekers and employers to create a win-win situation. Without job postings, there is nothing to draw people to our job bank, but if there are no responses to those ads, then employers will stop posting ads on our site. If you are in a management position or your employer is looking to hire a technical communicator, then present the idea of posting on our Web site. If you are looking for work, don't forget to check out the job bank, and then apply for those jobs that interest you.

For Employers

The process for posting a job has been automated for employers. So if you are an employer and you are looking for a technical communicator, think about posting on our Web site. What better place could you post a job for free and get so much exposure?

For Job Seekers

Our Web site has been updated to make it easy for you to tell if a new job has been posted since the last time that you checked. Look no further than the Home page of our Web site; here you will find the date when the job postings were last updated. The following is part of an ad that is currently on our Web site.

Technical Writer/Illustrator (October 25 posting)

A comprehensive user's manual is required for a family of projectors currently in development and scheduled for release in late Fall 2004.

1. This printed manual must:
 - o Document and illustrate installation, setup and operational features of a family of projectors, including mechanical adjustments as well as software control.
 - o Clearly describe model differences in specifications and/or use
 - o Include all necessary maintenance and service instructions for consumables (such lamp and filter replacement, etc.)

2. Service documentation for the same family of projectors is also required shortly after release of the product.

For details about this job, go to our job bank at www.stc-soc.org.

STC Head Office Job Bank

In addition to our job bank, if you are a member of the STC, you also have access to an international job bank on the [STC Head Office Web site](#). Only members who log in will be able to access the job bank by selecting **STC Members-->Job Related Info-->Jobs Database**. There are currently about eight October job postings for Ontario (for places like, Toronto, Belleville, and Ottawa). Check them out. Your perfect job may be just a click away. ♦

About Ursula McCloy

As a literature grad and a bit of a software Luddite, Ursula wasn't sure how she'd like the world of technical writing. It's been eight years since a friend offered her a contract to copy-edit some software guides, and she hasn't looked back. She is currently employed with The PEER Group Inc., where she has tried her hand at just about everything—end user and developer level software docs, QA, UI design, marcom, and internal communications. Outside of work Ursula enjoys gardening, cooking, bicycling, beaching, and being a mother to a three year old.

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Jobs or Lack Thereof



by [Jonathan W. Baker](#), Director-Sponsor Region 1

Over the years, I've asked and been asked, "Why doesn't STC do more for its members who need jobs?" To which the usual answer has been, "Well, we have chapter and Society job banks, plus chapters often put on resume writing programs, job search programs, and so on." And these are all true. STC provides, through the chapters and SIGs, places to network and to develop leadership skills. And people really do find jobs through STC. I'm certainly one who has.

But I think that this answer misses the point. So try this, "STC is an educational/professional organization. STC is not in the placement business." Still, that doesn't really answer the question either. I think that the real question is, "Can you help me find companies that will buy my services?" And the answer to that question is, probably not. But I am not sure I understand why not.

How do recruiters find jobs to post?

I talked at length with a recruiter once, when times were good, asking about how they found technical communications positions. In those days, it was easy. The jobs found them, like the jobs found many of us. After further poking and questioning, I did come to understand that most of the placement people had people on staff who did nothing but call into the companies asking if the company had any opening. Basic cold calling stuff. Over time, the placement firms would develop contacts inside companies, who could provide them with meaningful information about any openings.

Why can't the STC do the same thing as recruiters?

I was also informed that, because companies come and go so quickly in high tech, that the contact information gets stale quite quickly. In fact, the contact information could go stale in as little as three months. And remember that most placement firms are local, not national or international. If the local placement companies couldn't keep up even with full-time staff, imagine the difficulty of trying to do this at a national level.

Now, mix in the bad times and the downsizing of most HR departments. All those contacts disappear into the woodwork. People who could be counted on for good information about a company's hiring plans are gone and the company doesn't want to let on that it won't be hiring anyone in the foreseeable future. This scenario makes finding work doubly difficult.

What can the STC do for you?

So, now that I have framed the pain, let me ask, because I am trying to help, how can STC support you in your job searches? Do you need lists of local companies who might be potential customers? Would access to online business directories through STC's web site be of value? Do you need training that STC could provide, beyond the type a chapter might provide? Would skills development, like marketing and selling skills, help? Do you see some other ways in which STC can add value? Please let me, or any of the other Director-Sponsors, know what we can do in this area that would add value. ♦

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October's General Meeting: All About Coaching



by [John Morland](#), Quill Contributor

"A high performance team can hum like a Ferrari!" says Debra Bannister. Debra and Lois Raats, trainers with Meta Team Solutions, presented a workshop on *Developing a Coaching Style of Management* on October 5. Both Lois and Debra are committed to working with teams, and they believe that effective coaching is the key to team success.

They started by providing us with a snapshot of what coaching is and how it can deal with the people side of the workplace. Even if you are not a manager, these coaching skills can make you a more effective team member.

What Is Coaching?

Effective coaching means finding an open space, or an opportunity, so that the right change can emerge. Coaching concentrates on knowing people's strengths and matching those strengths to opportunities. Coaching is a non-traditional approach that:

- Enables you to work smarter
- Produces synergy
- Develops resilience
- Prevents crises
- Uses people's skills
- Produces results

What Are the Goals of Coaching?

Coaching has three goals: alignment, engagement, and learning.

1. **Alignment**

Team members should be in tune with the organization's vision and mission. The symptoms of non-alignment can vary from lack of respect for individual differences to work performance problems. These symptoms can ultimately result in revenue losses for the organization.

2. **Engagement**

Marcus Buckingham, author of *First Break All the Rules*, interviewed

thousands of employees and managers over the years to determine what makes a good workplace. Buckingham found that managers are the most important factor and that good managers keep employees engaged. The following statistics show the status of engagement within the workplaces of North America:

Unengaged – 55 percent

- Go to work, do their job, and go home.
- Hate their jobs.

Engaged – 26 percent

- Are passionate about their work.
- Know why they are there.

Disengaged – 19 percent

- Actively work against the workplace.
- May be angry because they have been mistreated or ignored.
- Can be very talented.
- May exhibit negative behaviours, or leave the workplace.

The unengaged and the disengaged don't have the skills to deal with workplace problems, and this is where coaching becomes critical.

3. **Learning**

Because the learning segment was too long for a short workshop, Debra and Lois gave us a coaching self-assessment to complete as an example of a learning exercise. You can download this assessment at www.metateamsolutions.com, under *RESOURCES*. Use the self-assessment to find your own coaching strengths and challenges. Then you can work on your lower-score areas.

How Can Coaching Generate Engagement?

The process of coaching to produce engagement consists of 3 Rs: relationship, resolution and response. There are strategies for each of the 3 "Rs" as shown below in Figure 1.

Figure 1

3Rs	Feature	Strategies
-----	---------	------------

Relationship - The "Mom" factor	Stresses connections to people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use ice breakers • Try participation techniques • Coach
Resolution - The "Dad" factor	Focuses on the "job at hand"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name problem • Generate common vision • Define mission and objectives
Response - the "Community" factor	Emphasizes the ability to respond proactively to issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop team covenant • Coach

What are your roles as a coach?

You can encourage RESPONSE-ability in your team through learning and practicing the four roles of a team coach:

1. Support
2. Facilitate
3. Teach
4. Lead

Conclusion

Lois and Debra stated that they want to create a new learning community that is based on coaching and teams, and that they believe "the sky is the limit."

If you have any questions about the workshop, visit the Meta Team Solutions Web site at www.metateamsolutions.com for answers as well as links and resource materials. ♦



About John Morland

John recently graduated with honours from the Fanshawe technical writing program. John is currently looking for employment as a technical writer in the London and Kitchener-Waterloo areas.

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Minutes of October's Council Meeting



by [emily layng](#), Secretary/Recorder

Hi there, time again for the monthly update of the council meeting. It was my birthday too, such dedication!

Location, Location, Location

Once again Opal supplied an excellent repast. The meeting was held at CheckFree i-Solutions in Waterloo, and I was completely in awe of the surroundings. I work in a manufacturing environment, which is worlds apart from the software environment.

The cafeteria (our meeting room) at CheckFree is complete with leather sofas, pool and foosball tables, as many different types of coffee as you can imagine, and free beverages (YES, BEER!). Before the stampede begins, CheckFree is not accepting resumés this month—and STC folk don't get to drink the beer.

Enough rhapsodizing, down to business

It was a short meeting, but we covered a lot of ground.

Networking Night

Opal opened the meeting with a recap of networking night. The turnout was a little disappointing, five council members and one spouse, but it's in its early days and, with more advertising, it may improve. The norm is that the networking night is a week after the general meeting.

Therefore, the next networking meeting will be November 10th at the Duke of Wellington in Waterloo.

Possible venues future venues include Café Aquarius in Guelph.

Competition

In competition news, we have 30 judges recruited and we have 30 entries too. Minnesota has what they report as "similar numbers" so we're good to go, it seems.

Education Day

February 17th and 18th are the scheduled education days and we are booked at the Hilton Gardens on Hwy 24 in Cambridge, nicely located near the 401. Kim has booked Bernard to do a half-day follow up to his previous seminar and she is in negotiations with several other speakers.

Student Awards

We also debated whether or not to expand the Student Awards to include Guelph, and we unanimously voted to do so, pending the approval of Christy, who wasn't able to attend the meeting (aren't we sneaky?).

Anyone wishing to apply for an award, the criteria is: two examples, a cover letter, and a transcript of marks. The criteria is also posted on the [Web site](#).

Program

Last, but not least, we had an interesting brainstorming session with Peter—he bounded up to the whiteboard with great alacrity.

We discussed possible venues for the wine and cheese soiree in March. Keep reading for updates; the possibilities are endless!

Wrap Up

We signed off at 7:48 and I went out to celebrate my 21st birthday. It was a wonderful affair, but, considering how many times I have celebrated my 21st birthday, it's no wonder! ♦

About emily layng

emily is currently working at ATS, in Cambridge, and has recently been promoted to Team Leader of Systems 1. As part of a busy group, long days and short weekends are the norm. She has been a technical writer since 1996, and has created documentation for both hardware and software companies. Outside of ATS, she is involved with a local Astrology group that is putting together correspondence courses for learning Astrology.

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Cascading Style Sheets: Creating Layouts without Tables (Part II)



by Wendy Stubley, Quill Contributor

Speaker: Char James-Tanny, President, JTF Associates, Inc. in Lynn, Massachusetts

Telephone/Web Seminar hosted by: Peter Szabo at CheckFree i-Solutions

Char James-Tanny returned for Part II of her Cascading Style Sheets seminar. In Part I, we learned about the advantages of a Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) over plain HTML. Part II covered semantics, layouts, and a new way to create navigation buttons using a CSS.

Paradigm Shift from Design to Functionality

The switch from HTML to CSS requires a shift from thinking in terms of design to considering the functionality of Web pages. Since every area on a Web page has a purpose, arrange pages for functionality. This makes it easier for users to access information and provides a clear, logical layout for each Web page. Techniques of designing for functionality include: positioning the page header at the top, keeping the navigation on the left side of each page, and devoting the bottom of each page to contact information.

Think "Purpose" During CSS Authoring

The functionality paradigm of CSS carries through from page layout down to the level of code writing. In CSS authoring, the name of each element must reflect its purpose. Some examples of purpose-oriented semantic authoring include:

- *cite* for citations
- *code* for sections of computer code
- *em* for emphasis (a screen reader places emphasis on these words when they are read aloud)

Element labels that don't describe a purpose include:

- *top* shows placement, not purpose
- *red* defines the look of an element, but not its use
- *italic* describes font, but doesn't show purpose

Change From Tables to Blocks

To organize information, a CSS uses blocks instead of tables. Blocks are collections of related information that can be positioned anywhere on a Web page. A *block* might be a set of navigation buttons, a header with contact information, or even a paragraph in the body of the text. Blocks are discrete units so that you can change the formatting within a block to override the formatting on the rest of the page. You can also place blocks within blocks, so the interior block is positioned in relation to the exterior block. Using blocks gives you control over how your page is displayed in different browsers. Here are some different ways to position blocks on a page:

- *Absolute Positioning* gives you full control of the position of the block. The block stays in a specific place on the screen and is outside the normal flow of the document. Blocks that are positioned this way do not resize to fit the browser and may overlap on a small viewer.
- *Relative Positioning* defines block size as a percent of screen size. Blocks are contained within the normal flow of the document and change size when the size of the viewer changes.
- *Static Positioning* is the default that a block assumes if there are no other positioning instructions. The Web designer has no control over the block position.
- *Fixed Positioning* keeps the block on the screen, even when other blocks flow over it. Background pages are sometimes created from fixed-position blocks. This type of positioning is not widely used because it requires a hack to work properly in Internet Explorer.

Ms. James-Tanny showed us some Web page examples of two column layouts in which one or both of the columns were positioned using relative positioning. The pages resized beautifully and could accommodate different viewer sizes. As a rule of thumb, Ms. James-Tanny tries to manipulate the positioning of blocks so that all of her web pages are scrollbar-free at 800 x 600 resolution.

Using the (list) Tag in a New Way

In CSS, you can use lists to create custom buttons and navigation on your Web pages. A block that contains a *list* can easily be formatted to look like a column of coloured buttons that are links and that even respond to mouse rollovers. Extra space can be added between the list elements to position the buttons attractively. Because they are a block, the group of buttons can be anchored to the side of the Web page.

At the end of her seminar, Ms. James-Tanny supplied us with lists of Web sites and books to help us learn more about the tools, tips, and techniques of creating Web sites using a CSS (as follows). She also told us that her favourite CSS editor is TopStyle and that two great CSS Web design authors are Jeffrey Zeldman and Eric Meyer.

Resources from Char James-Tanny's Seminar Slides

Tools:

- Homesite - <http://www.macromedia.com/software/homesite/>
- CSE HTML Validator - <http://www.htmlvalidator.com/>
- TopStyle Pro - <http://www.bradsoft.com/index.asp>
- SnagIt - <http://www.techsmith.com/products/snagit/default.asp>
- Accessibility Toolbar - <http://www.nils.org.au/ais/web/resources/toolbar>

A List Apart

- <http://www.alistapart.com>
- CSS Discuss (Wiki and email archives) - <http://www.css-discuss.org>
- css/edge - <http://www.meyerweb.com/eric/css/edge/>
- W3C CSS home page - <http://www.w3.org/Style/CSS/>
- W3C HTML Validator - <http://validator.w3.org/>
- W3C CSS Validator - <http://www.w3.org>
- <http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/>

Books:

- Anything by Jeffrey Zeldman
- Anything by Eric Meyer (new books coming out this year)
- Web Design on a Shoestring by Carrie Bickner - <http://www.roguelibrarian.com/shoestring/index.html>

Structured Authoring:

- Structured Authoring and XML - <http://www.scriptorium.com/structure.pdf>
- A Structured Authoring Environment for the World-Wide Web - http://cap-studio.de/index/themen/framemaker/why_xml.html
- What is Better: Wielding Stick or XML? - <http://cap->

Future Reading:

CSS and HTML Validation - <http://www.w3.org>

- Collapsible margins
- Various hacks
- Z-order (stacking)
- CSS "shortcuts" border: 1px solid #000
- Background graphics on body ♦

About Wendy Stuble

Wendy is a freelance technical writer and a senior member of the STC. She lives in Waterloo with her husband and two children. In her spare time, Wendy enjoys sculpting, photography, and hiking.



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Networking Through Member Introductions



by [Sarah-Beth Doner](#), Membership Manager

Transfers to Our Chapter

Mark Ladouceur

Kim Honeyford

New Members

Annette M Bater

Darlene A. Wood

Karima Kanji-Tajdin

Cristan Carson

As our President, Opal Gamble, pointed out in her message last month, when you ask for more networking opportunities, we try to deliver. Our newest undertaking is to provide a forum in The Quill where members can introduce themselves.

Similar to the introductory profiles that our new members provide when they join the chapter, this forum will provide you with the opportunity to tell your fellow members about yourself, your experiences in the field, and generate communication between members with similar interests and goals.

Our Goal

Initially, we hope to provide an outlet for those members who cannot attend the monthly General meetings and other STC networking opportunities. It will be a way to reacquaint yourself with old friends and make new ones. This forum is open to all members.

Over the long-term, we hope that this forum will grow into a resource that you can look to when you want to get in touch with your colleagues in the field.

Our First Introduction

Let's begin by meeting Michael Jager.

Michael joined the STC last year, and has been using it as a learning resource. In the near future, he would like to make the move into the technical writing field.

Michael is currently employed at a small company in London, Ontario. His employer provides IT support for companies that have no dedicated IT staff. They also perform some web design duties. Michael's current position has him building workstations and performing IT for clients.

With his passion for software, computing, and all things technological, Michael knows he's on the right path!

If you are interested in contributing a profile of yourself, please contact Sarah-Beth Doner, Membership Manager at membership@stc-soc.org. ♦

About Sarah-Beth Doner

Sarah-Beth is a student at the University of Waterloo where she is studying English Rhetoric and Professional Writing, and participating in the Applied Studies Co-op Program. Two of her co-op terms have involved technical writing at iAnywhere Solutions in Waterloo.



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Ask the Expert: Page Numbering in Framemaker



by [emily layng](#), Recorder

Question

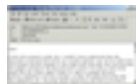
In Framemaker, how do I insert a running page total in the footers of an entire book? For example, page 2 of 250.

Answer

Although Framemaker allows you to do this within a chapter, it does not allow you to do this across a book. This is strange because, the Table of Contents that is generated is able to keep track of how many pages are in the book, but there is no easy way to insert this information into the footer.

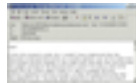
After struggling with this for quite some time, we eventually contacted Adobe and this is their solution:

1. Open the book file.



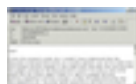
Enlarge

2. Open the last chapter in the book.
3. From the **View Menu**, select **Master Pages**.
4. Scroll to the left master page.



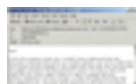
Enlarge

5. Insert the **Page Count** variable any where in the footer.
6. Highlight the number, and open the **Paragraph Designer**.



Enlarge

7. Create a new paragraph tag, and call it something you can easily remember, for example "running count" or some other name you won't ever use for anything else.
8. Ensure that the color for the new tag is white.



Enlarge

9. Apply this paragraph tag to the variable, and it should disappear.

10. Open the first chapter of the book, and, in the left and right master pages, insert the current page variable, followed by the word "of" followed by a cross reference to the tag you created in the last chapter of the book.
11. Copy and paste this into the left and right master pages in every chapter of the book.
12. Save all chapters.
13. Update the book.
14. Open each chapter and you should see the page numbering X of however many pages are in the book. ♦



About emily layng

emily is currently working at ATS, in Cambridge, and has recently been promoted to Team Leader of Systems 1. As part of a busy group, long days and short weekends are the norm. She has been a technical writer since 1996, and has created documentation for both hardware and software companies. Outside of ATS, she is involved with a local Astrology group that is putting together correspondence courses for learning Astrology.

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Book Review: The Hidden Power of Social Networks



by Carrie Spira, Quill Contributor

The Hidden Power of Social Networks—Understanding How Work *Really* Gets Done in Organizations

Written by Rob Cross and Andrew Parker

As technical communicators, we analyze the needs of our audience and gather knowledge from subject matter experts to thoroughly understand a concept or product. Cross and Parker's book, *The Hidden Power of Social Networks*, introduced me to a new way of revealing the not-so-obvious subject matter experts in my organization.

The Org Chart

Does your organization publish an organizational hierarchy chart?

If yes, have you seen it? Are your communications with others defined by the structure of that chart? Are the communications of others defined by that chart?

If no, could you rough out a hierarchical organizational chart based on known communications between employees?

Many of us can agree that the connections drawn on our company's organizational chart do not accurately describe the way work gets done. Informal social networks exist in all organizations; these networks are largely responsible for the coordination of, and completion of, work. Such networks also influence how an organization performs, how it strategizes, and how it innovates. We collaborate with our colleagues within and across functional, geographical, and hierarchical boundaries through informal, social networks to increase personal productivity and learning.

Managers and leaders don't necessarily understand how social networks affect productivity. The book offers approaches to identifying and supporting the social networks that are at work in your organization. Part one of the book describes how work really gets done through informal networks of people and includes ways to observe active information flow between employees.

Effect of Energy

Both the energized and de-energized people and projects in your organization

substantially affect the productivity of those around them and those they may not know. Organizations tend to support energized employees because energizers are good at creating energy and exciting others to act on good ideas. De-energizers are people "who have the uncanny ability to drain the life out of a group...we avoid them, often at the expense of not capitalizing on their expertise...the interaction itself is usually unproductive and disheartening. And afterward, we often feel deflated and seek out colleagues with whom we can vent our frustration." (p. 50)

The energizers in an organization tend to be achievers, mobile in their careers, attract other high performers, and project five key characteristics that people naturally gravitate to, including:

- *Compelling vision* - "people want to be part of building something" (p. 59).
- *Meaningful contribution* - "efforts make a difference" (p. 59).
- *Full engagement* - "participants are fully present in the conversation" (p. 60).
- *Sense of progress* - "energizing interactions feel as if they are leading somewhere" (p. 60).
- *Belief in the goal* - "people become energized when they let themselves get excited about the possibilities and stop looking for all the things that can go wrong" (p. 62).

Part two of the book provides practical applications for leaders to promote healthy networks.

People in the Network

Five types of people appear in most networks. Using network analysis, management can tailor their improvement efforts for specific individuals, characterized as:

1. *Central Connectors* (a.k.a. Unsung heroes) — Employees who go above and beyond their job description to support the group. Often unrecognized for their efforts. Managers can maximize the rewards of informal networks by recognizing, encouraging, and rewarding these contributions.
2. *Bottlenecks* — Employees so central that they hold the group back. Some bottlenecks maintain an information or power advantage; others find their jobs grow too big for them to respond quickly and efficiently. Executives can often find themselves in this role. Managers can intervene with reallocation techniques.
3. *Boundary Spanners* — Main conduits of information between two groups of

people defined by function, location, or hierarchical level. These rare employees can play important roles in large-scale organizational change efforts because they promote connectivity within the network.

4. *Information Brokers* — Employees who hold together entire groups in the network or find themselves the shortest path between many other people. Management can use information brokers to efficiently disseminate information and promote connectivity throughout the organization.
5. *Peripherals* — Outsiders who operate on the edge of an informal network who can represent under-utilized resources. Managers must identify these employees and determine why they are on the periphery in order to effectively apply their skills and knowledge.

Influence of Trust and Space

The existence or absence of both trust and physical space influences how effectively people share with and learn from each other in organizations.

Whether or not we trust someone influences our behaviours around that person. When we trust a person's competence, we listen and believe what that person says. When we trust a person's benevolence, we feel safe to expose our lack of knowledge and ask questions of that person. Members of a social network who maintain high levels of trust between each other share similar behaviours, including: keeping confidences; doing what they say they will do; communicating clearly and frequently; clarifying what they do not know; and giving without expecting something in return. Trustworthy people become known as competent and dependable people.

Physical space affects who interacts with whom. The more barriers or physical distance between two people, the less likely they are to collaborate. The emergence of technology, such as intranets, email, and instant messaging, can help to increase collaboration across distances. Technological tools can also detract an employee's focus from the work. Usage guidelines can help to establish order.

The Appendices

Cross and Parker include two appendices to put the book's theories into practice, including a guide for conducting social network analysis, and exercises for promoting and sustaining healthy networks in organizations. ♦

About Carrie Spira

Carrie has a BA in Rhetoric and Professional Writing from the University of Waterloo. She lives in Kitchener with her family and works as a Technical Writer in Waterloo. Carrie enjoys puttering in her gardens, experimenting with digital photography, and makes time for cardio and weight training activities at the YMCA most days after work.

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