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Chapter 1 : The Small Print: Writing User Interface Instructions

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What would happen if that employee quit without providing notice? Key individuals can be found in any company, but it is vital that you not become dependent on a particular person to operate your business. Not only does an operations manual save you from relying too much on individual employees, it also serves to guide and reinforce the training of new employees and allows for the self-taught, cross training of existing employees. In this Quick-Read you will find: Tips on a functional layout for your operations manual. What elements to include. If written correctly, it should guide someone unfamiliar with your company through the day-to-day procedures for operating your business. This should not be confused with an employee handbook, a much smaller document addressing conditions of employment, corporate culture and acceptable behavior policies. Divide your manual into sections that coincide with the departmental organization of your company. This will facilitate employee contributions during the writing process and allow easy access to information once the manual is in circulation. Include a table of contents that lists subsections. Have authors create the document using the same word-processing software. Common software will not only make it easier to construct the manual now but it should also ensure the document can be easily modified in the future. Always have a hard copy of all the versions at a safe location. Number the sections and then the pages within sections. For example, page 4 of section 10 would be numbered " The popular word-processing programs provide this page numbering option. On each page, add a footer indicating when the page was last modified. Photocopied pages frequently lie around, and an outdated one could do much damage. You can also include an appendix for interim additions or changes, so that you will not have to edit and reprint the manual to include periodic alterations. Content Operations manuals typically include four types of information: Locations of items, e. In most cases, you can obtain detailed emergency procedures from your landlord or from community groups. You will have to personalize some of the text, such as a gathering point in the event of a fire, but most of the information will already be prepared for you. Make two additional copies of your emergency procedures section to keep at reception and in the staff room for easy access. Document how to re-establish your business following a fire, theft or earthquake. Having a plan prepared in advance will help you restore normal operations quickly and thus prevent significant revenue loss. The manual needs to state just what a substitute or replacement worker might need " not the obvious procedural details. A sure way to devalue the manual is to trivialize it with too much detail. Your phone system, for example, probably already comes with a user guide. Reference the phone system guide in your operations manual, including the title and the version number, for replacement purposes only. Project Manager The office manager, operations manager, or communications manager is typically responsible for writing the operations manual. Regardless of who is assigned the task, be sure the writer has good writing skills, is organized and is attentive to details. The writer must be able to present the processes in a manner that allows someone unfamiliar with your business to perform the task. If you do not already employ such a person, consider outsourcing the project. If you outsource, there is no need to hire a professional: Regardless of who writes the manual, understand that it is not a one-person project. You are creating a company-wide document and will need input from all departments. The project manager should create a list of general how-to questions. Then, whichever employee is currently responsible for a given task should record how to do it. Then the project manager or writer can formalize it. Testing Once your operations manual is complete, try it out. Have an employee or the project manager follow the steps for a particular activity in another department. Testing will help you ascertain the accuracy and ease of use of the manual before you need it. Its value has little to do with the size of the company. It took eight months to complete the manual, including drafting and testing the written procedures. They saw it as extra work. She realized that, because the project had not been adequately explained to the

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other managers, they had not relayed its importance to their department staffs. I would definitely recommend that any company taking on an operations manual project make it known to the staff how important the document is, and ask for their full cooperation. Discuss with your staff the importance of an operations manual. Staff may feel threatened if asked to document everything they do. Explain the benefits of an operations manual: New staff will become productive more quickly. Staff can learn how to do the work required of other positions if interested. Begin by writing job descriptions. Ideally, have the employees write the descriptions and then review them with their respective managers. For each department, list a series of tasks to be documented and assign them to individuals based on the job descriptions. Tell staff to add to the list if a procedure has been overlooked. Have the project manager perform the task according to the written procedures. It is better to test the documentation immediately, rather than wait until it is needed. Update the operations manual every two months or so, depending on how quickly job activities change in your company. Interim additions can be placed in an appendix. Kent Bowen and Marilyn E. Matis Harvard Business School Publishing, This case describes how the five founders built their business from operations earnings and how they established "best practices" operational processes to run their firm successfully. Useful ideas for accounting and auditing department procedure manuals. Consider starting the procedure-manual project with accounting procedures to get a good complete model in place for other departments to follow.

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Books Advanced Search Best Sellers Top New Releases Deals in Books School Books Textbooks Books Outlet Children's Books Calendars & Diaries Advanced Search Best Sellers Top New.

By Alyssa Gregory 7 Tips for Writing an Effective Instruction Manual In your day-to-day work, you might find that there are times when you need to provide a client with documentation that walks them through a process or teaches them how to do something they may be unfamiliar with. Here are seven tips to help you create a comprehensive yet coherent instruction manual. Get out of your own head: When you begin to prepare instructions for processes you know inside and out, you will need to consciously take a step back and approach the material from a new angle. Start at square one by assuming the audience will have zero knowledge of the subject matter. Make sure you know exactly what your manual needs to cover in order to avoid information overload or confusion that can come from too many details. This is especially important when the process is complex or has a lot of different parts. Before jumping in and creating steps, create a high-level outline of what the document will cover, including main and subsections. This will help you make sure your process makes sense and that each section of the manual is consistently structured. Make it easy to understand: Lists are a great way to outline steps for doing something because they can help people move item by item in the way you intend. Focus on using only as many words as necessary to get your point across. Screenshots, diagrams and even videos are a great way to beef up your manual and make it easier to understand. Keep the formatting of these supporting materials consistent and to the point to avoid overwhelming the reader. Give it a test drive: Or better yet, have someone else who has never seen the material before run through the instructions. Take their feedback and use it to fine tune your manual. Plus, with some material, it may also make sense to offer the client a hands-on walk through to ensure your instructions accomplish what they need to accomplish. And keep in mind that learning styles vary, so one client may be able to run with the same instructions that confuse a different client. Being flexible in your format and delivery can help make sure the instructions work for the recipient. Do you ever provide clients with written instructions? What advice do you have?

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Chapter 3 : How to Write User Manuals (with Pictures) - wikiHow

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Scientific writing can be in the form of a laboratory report, a thesis, a journal article, or some other written communication used to disseminate the results of scientific research. The exact.

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Sentence Variety - This resource presents methods for adding sentence variety and complexity to writing that may sound repetitive or boring. Sections are divided into general tips for varying structure, a discussion of sentence types, and specific parts of speech which can aid in sentence variety. Using Appropriate Language - This section covers some of the major issues with appropriate language use: Punctuation - This resource will help clarify when and how to use various marks of punctuation. When speaking, we can pause or change the tone of our voices to indicate emphasis. When writing, we must use punctuation to indicate these places of emphasis. Proofreading Your Writing - This section provides information on proofreading, finding and fixing common errors. Commas - This resource offers a number of pages about comma use. Citation Annotated Bibliography - This resource provides information about annotated bibliographies. MLA Modern Language Association style is most commonly used to write papers and cite sources within the liberal arts and humanities. APA American Psychological Association is most commonly used to cite sources within the social sciences.

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Chapter 5 : Online Technical Writing: Instructions

*Advanced Microcomputer Applications: Instructor's Manual with Otms and Test Bank [Robert T. Grauer] on blog.quintoapp.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. This is the instructor's manual (with OTMs and a text bank) to accompany the book Advanced Microcomputer Applications.*

Inherent in many web page designs, therefore, is information to help a user perform an action. For example, if you design a button that must be clicked to reach a desired goal, such as placing an item in a shopping cart, then shadowing the button so it appears to be raised will help your audience understand that the shape is a clickable object. In addition to these types of visual cues, we often write instructions to assist users in knowing what to do next. These instructions guide the eyes and minds of the individual to look at the appropriate place and to take the appropriate action. Mental Models Designing and writing the instructions that are part of the user interface design is both an art and science, involving copywriting and design skills as well as an understanding of how people use mental models. Mental models are a generalized idea of how things work. They are an efficient and speedy cognitive mechanism. This means people will apply their stereotype or mental model of similar websites to how your website works. If Things Go Wrong This is one of the main reasons user interface instructions are so important. People have an unpleasant experience when their mental models are inaccurate or incorrect. It causes frustration, user errors and a failure to accomplish a goal. Writing easy to understand instructions and presenting them aesthetically can ward off these types of problems. Good instructions will guide website visitors, even if their mental models are imprecise or erroneous. Text and type are so finely integrated into website design, that it seemed appropriate to include this topic on a site that focuses on understanding graphics. On the other hand, you have nothing without an audience, so site visitors are of primary importance. When you know the characteristics of your audience, you can imagine them and direct your words to them. Notice the example above. Balance brevity with getting the point across Finding balance is always an issue. When writing user interface instructions, include enough detail so users know exactly what to do, but not so much detail that it becomes difficult to process the information. People can only process small amounts of information at one time. You can help the situation by writing instructions in plain and simple language, which should help visitors accomplish their tasks efficiently and quickly. Try to use short sentences when possible. For example, this sentence could easily be broken into two: Remove irrelevant information This guideline goes along with the brevity advice above, but is often best to do at the end of the writing process. At the end, you look at your writing from a different perspective. Deleting extraneous and superfluous details will tighten up the final copy. Some might think the instructions above include irrelevant information. Are there some words or phrases that could be removed? Select the most effective and accurate words The task of writing accurately involves a subtle discrimination between words with similar meanings. Usability research shows that people scan a web page rather than read it. Thus, your wording should communicate effectively while someone is on the fly and barely paying attention. Use words that promote clarity. Speaking of precision in word choice, when you look at this menu on the right, do you understand the difference between Explore and Browse? Write in the active voice The active voice is crisp and clean and will move people to take action. The passive voice makes readers yawn. Compare this sentence in both voices: Place the instructions aesthetically Designing user interface instructions can be a challenge. You must determine where they belong in the visual and information hierarchy. Plan for text during the initial phases of design. The leading or vertical spacing between related sentences should be large enough to enable legibility yet close enough to show the sentences are associated. When there are several steps, keep each step separate by increasing the line spacing. Number the instructions if they are complex or will be perceived as such. Select a typeface that enhances legibility Think hard about the type as a design element. Use a typeface and style coherent with the rest of the site design. Consider the size of the font. Avoid bit-mapped text whenever possible, so that users can enlarge the text if necessary. Use graphics if they will help you communicate Yep.

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Chapter 6 : 7 Tips for Writing an Effective Instruction Manual – SitePoint

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Chapter 7 : R.S. Technologies Police Report Writing Software

Keep in mind that you may need to review and update the manual periodically, especially if it's something that focuses on a third-party application or other system you do not control.

Chapter 8 : The Best Way to Write a Macro in Excel - wikiHow

When writing user interface instructions, include enough detail so users know exactly what to do, but not so much detail that it becomes difficult to process the information. People can only process small amounts of information at one time.

Chapter 9 : Welcome to the companion site for Business Communication: Concepts, Cases, and Applications

Instructors' workshops on training fundamentals In an ideal scenario this manual on training fundamentals (TOT manual) would be supplemented with a workshop on training fundamentals.