Technical Writing for Impact

August 2025

Session Objectives

- Define technical writing
- Describe what makes good technical writing
- Establish an understanding of effective documentation
- Explore tips on effective writing
- Reflect on FEF-OSC partners' writing practices and way forward

What is technical writing?

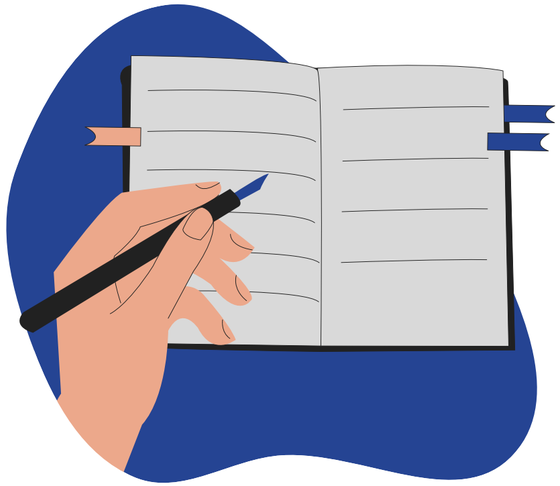
- Technical writing is the art of breaking down complex information or jargon into easily digestible formats and understandable content for an intended audience

- A technical writer communicates in a way that presents technical information in such a manner that the reader can use the information for an intended purpose. A development practitioner should be able to communicate appropriately with different stakeholders and populations.

What makes good technical writing?

- The ability to write in a way that people can understand is effective communication. If you can't explain it to a six year old, you don't understand it yourself - Albert Einstein

- A good report is easy to recognise. It’s title is precise and informative and its format logical to the reader, with headings to indicate the content of each section. Diagrams are well-presented and clearly labelled.



Why Technical Reporting Matters

- **Demonstrates Impact:** A well-crafted report shows how donor funds have been used effectively and the outcomes achieved.
- **Ensures Accountability:** Donors and stakeholders want clear evidence that funds are being used wisely.
- **Tells the Story of the Project:** A good technical report conveys not only what has been done but also what has been learned.

Using Stories to Showcase Impact

Sharing stories of beneficiaries or community members who have been impacted by the project is beneficial in technical reporting as it paints a clear and relatable picture to readers. Some key tips to keep in mind include:

- **Personal Testimonies:** Share a brief quote from a beneficiary or community leader. Example: “Before the project, I had to walk 5 miles for clean water. Now, it’s just a 5-minute walk, and my children are healthier.”
- **Connect Stories with Data:** Blend qualitative stories with quantitative data to reinforce the project’s impact. Example: "Out of 300 participants, 85% reported an improvement in water access."

Purpose of Technical Reporting

Inform

- **Who?** Program managers,decision makers, funders, general public
- **What?** Program Imorovement/ Planning; decisions that would influence
- project sucess.

Guide

- Step by step approaches, handover notes, lesson learned
- Learning lab

Persuade

- Sell an idea/product. e.g Making a case for investing in Girls futures
- Change the way peoplle think about a subject

Recommend

- We've been there , we've done it , we know what works, if you want to succeed, do it this way

Writing a Technical Report – STEP 1

Step 1: **PLAN**

- Know your audience
- Segment your audience
- Know your purpose
- Define your objectives

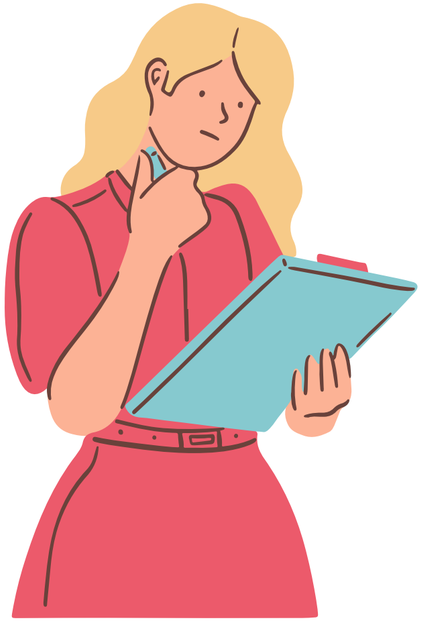
Writing a Technical Report – STEP 2

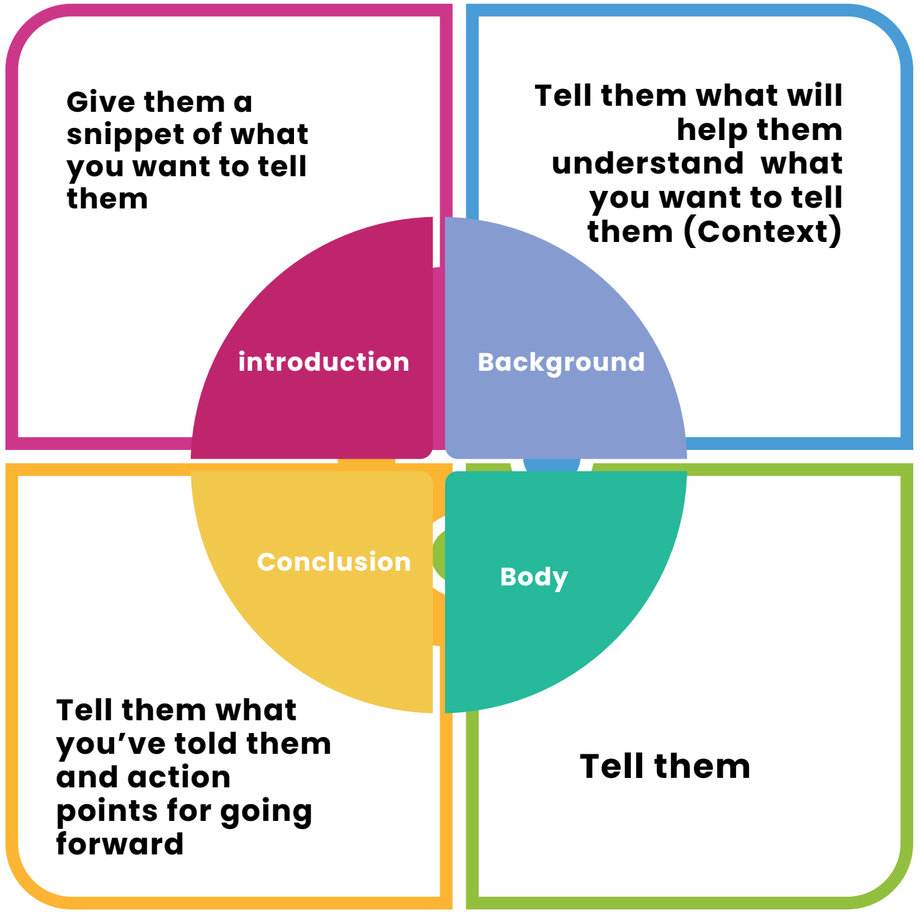
Step 2: **EXECUTE**

- Identify your sources
- Gather your facts and data
- Identify your resources (human)
- Structure your document
- Determine your outline
- WRITE - Proceed in an orderly, logical manner

Writing a Technical Report – STEP 2....

Step 2: **EXECUTE**





Writing a Technical Report – STEP 3

Step 3: **TEST**

- Proof read and edit: spelling and grammar errors, data/fact errors
- Check the logical flow/sequence
- Check for meaning and if purpose has been achieved
- Check appearance (fonts styles, headings, graphics)
- Avoid abbreviations without first sharing the full meaning

Types of Technical writing

- White Papers
- Technical reports (quarterly, annual)
- Technical briefs
- Case studies
- Lessons learnt
- Success stories
- Program updates
- Reflective reports
- Newsletters
- Blog posts
- Articles
- Social Media content
- Press releases
- Communiques
- FAQs
- How-To-Guides

Utilizing the 5 W's & H

The term 5 W's and H refers to the six basic questions to ask when gathering information. The answers can provide clarity to help solve key problems.

- Who is the piece about? Describe their occupation, age, background
- What happened?
- When did it occur?
- Where did it occur?
- Why is this significant ?
- What might be the impact?
- How did the change take place?

***Include direct quotes if available

Key Sections of a Technical Report

Depending on what your identified objectives are, here are examples of key sections of a technical report:

1. **Executive Summary:** Short, high-level overview of the project.
2. **Introduction:** Context, goals, and significance of the project.
3. **Methodology:** Tools, approaches, and techniques used.
4. **Key Activities & Results:** Major actions taken and corresponding outcomes.
5. **Data Analysis:** How to present and interpret data effectively.
6. **Lessons Learned:** Challenges and solutions implemented.
7. **Next Steps:** Future actions or recommendations.

On behalf of your organisation, write/list out the following under **Step 1** & **Step 2** (discussed earlier and summarised here) to prepare any technical report of your choice on your FEF funded project

1. Write out the type of technical wiritng as the heading
2. Who is your audience?
3. What are the objectives of this document?
4. List the sources you will use or refer
5. Write a list of possible headings you will use

REMEMBER

Step 1:

Know your audience; Segment your audience; Know your purpose (refer to - why do we document?) & Define your objectives

Step 2:

Identify your sources; Gather your facts and data; Identify your resources (human); Structure your document & Determine your outline

Thank you!

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