

How Not to Give Directions



HELP!

- So, after 29 years of my life, I have never learned how to tie my shoes through the bunny ear method.

Your task is to teach me

Writing Technical Descriptions

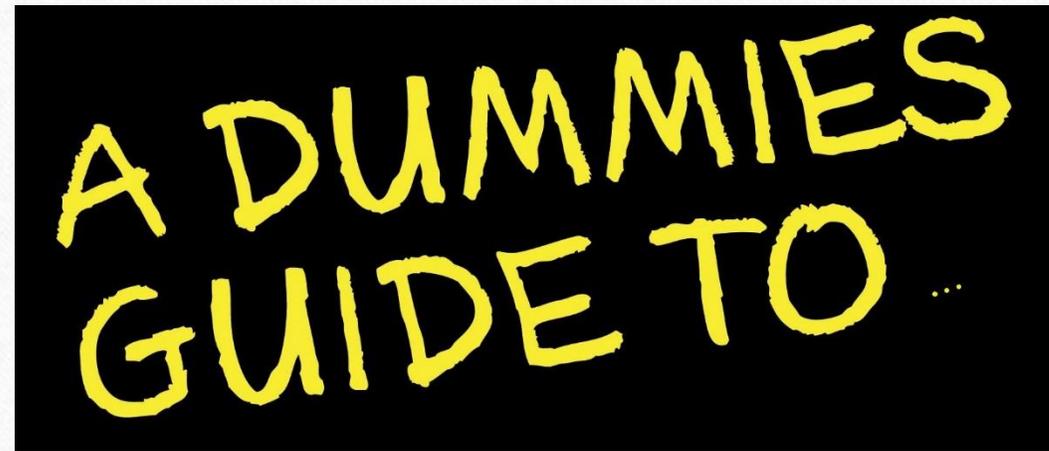
The Process

“Technical”

- *Teaching practical skills rather than ideas about literature, art, etc.*
- Technical writing is the delivery of technical information to readers in a manner that is adapted to their needs, level of understanding, and background.
 - Consider your audience!

Five Stages of Technical Writing

- Planning
- Writing
- Designing
- Revising
- Publishing



Planning

- What does my audience want to know?
- What information do I need to gather?
- How familiar is my audience with the topic?
- What could likely confuse my audience?

Writing

- What information does my audience need most?
- What is the purpose of this description?
- What tone is most suitable for the audience and the topic?
- Will words, graphics, and/or charts best convey the message to the audience?

Designing

- How can I present my description so that it's easy for an audience to understand and visualize?
- Should I include headings and subheadings?
- Do I need visual aids? If so where/how many?

Revising

- Is my description clear? Does it answer the audience's questions?
- Did I include all details my audience needs to build a mental picture?
- Could my words be more precise/accurate?
- Are visuals helpful and clear? Are they placed appropriately?
- If included, are headings and subheadings effective?

Publishing

- Is my technical description proofread and error free?
- Is the document inviting to the reader?
- Have I chosen the best format for my intended audience?

Tips

- Be concise!
- Be clear
 - NO confusing words or sentences
 - BE SPECIFIC! (avoid vague words like “near” or “some”)
- Be organized
- Be accurate (no errors!)

Ode to Spell Check

I have a spelling checker.
It came with my PC.
It plainly marks four my revue
Mistakes I cannot sea.
I've run this poem threw it.
I'm sure your pleased to no,
It's letter perfect in it's weigh
My checker tolled me so.