

IMPORTANCE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Technical communication is a central factor in the emerging technical society and business organization. It is designed to inform and instruct the audience with a specific purpose. The success of any business organization largely depends on the technical communication. The functional purpose of technical communication cannot be over emphasized, the purpose is not to entertain but to inform. It facilitates the growth and development of technology and makes consumer goods more convenient. It is an extension of interpersonal skills. Technocrats need to have a sound technical communication skill in today's scenario. Research studies have concluded that excellent communication skills is extremely important for engineers and technocrats.

KEY WORDS

Technical society, functional purpose, business organization, consumer goods, technology, technical communication skills, interpersonal skills, technocrats, communication skills.

INTRODUCTION

“It is rightly said that, your knowledge is only as good and valuable, as your ability to communicate it to someone else”. This is so because the best ideas in the world are useless, unless they can be communicated to others. Communication does not only means ‘reception’ but also understanding of the information conveyed.

Here it is relevant to quote, IAN M. Ross, President, AT & T Bell laboratories, Holmdel, New Jersey, who states that “ The ability to speak and write clearly is not only important to the communication of technical concepts, it is an essential part of the innovation process itself. Translating an idea into the written word is one of the better ways of validating the soundness of one’s thinking.”

WHAT IS TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION AND WHAT MAKES IT UNIQUE :

Technical communication is a broad expansive field and technical writing is diverse, it includes many different types of correspondence made by different people for different reasons. Technical communication is a part of almost every job. Technical communication uses a number of platforms to transmit information to an audience.

It may be defined as ‘Technical communication is the process of transmitting facts and information to a defined audience for a specific purpose’. One more way of defining technical communication is by differentiating it with other forms of writing.

If we compare Technical Writing with other forms of writing like the expressive writing, journalistic writing or creative literature, we observe that in all these type of writing, the audience is expected to read this kinds of writing however the writer and readers are often detached and disconnected either by time or location. They are not involved in a dialogue. However technical writing is different. Its purpose is not to entertain. It is designed to instruct or inform an audience with a specific goal in mind. It requires a follow-up action.

For instance if you write a memo, you expect a response, you write a letter , you expect an answer to your enquiry or so to say that you write a user manual, you know that someone will follow the instructions. In Technical communication the detachment between the writer and reader does not exist, on the contrary the purpose is to link you and your boss, your clients, your co-workers, your vendors etc.

THE HISTORY OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Technical communication is not a recent activity, it dates back to the earliest recorded language. We know that our ancient civilization used to draw pictures and carvings on the walls of the caves to depict their ways of hunting and other activities. Through them we came to learn about their civilization and history to an extent. This may be taken as the earliest form of technical communication.

PURPOSE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Today, We are surrounded by technical information. Right from two lines instruction on the frozen-food carton, instructions on a soft drink can to the lengthy user and instruction manuals, reports, proposals, all are a part of Technical communication.

The basic purpose of Technical Communication is to make information more clear and understandable so as to make the business more productive and consumer goods more convenient. The purpose also is to help to enhance the economy by facilitating research and development by Safe guarding designs and manufacturing, protecting consumers through accurate and informative documents etc.

The purpose of Technical Communication may be to describe, persuade, explain, inform or record the action or information. At times it may have multiple purpose . The purpose of Technical Writing is often determined by the audience which in turn effects the tone of the technical communication. In fact understanding the inter relationship among purpose, audience and tone is essential to effective technical writing. The audience in any type of technical correspondence is the intended or the potential reader or readers. In effective technical communication, audience recognition is one of the most important concerns of the writer to plan, write and review a document. Technical writers mould their writings to meet the needs, background and interest of their prospective readers. The audience in technical communication comprises of managers, bosses, colleagues, coworkers, customers and clients i.e. the general public who are the end user of the products.

Let us assume that, you are an employee and you have to write monthly sales report to your immediate boss. You do this every month and your report goes to the same person every time, who reads it and put the record in file for future reference. With this ongoing activity, you know that the purpose of your report is to document and your goal is to furnish data and nothing else. You also know that your audience that is your boss is technically fluent. With the purpose and the audience you write an objective report which is dry and impersonal in tone. Thus the knowledge of your purpose and audience decides the tone of your communications.

IMPORTANCE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

The importance of Technical communication in the current global scenario cannot be over emphasized. It has become integral to the development and enhancement of business and technology.

TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION CONDUCTS BUSINESS :

Technical communication is a major work component in today's environment. The survival of organizations to a large extent depends on the formal and technical correspondence done on a routine basis with the customers, suppliers, bankers, lawyers, vendors and government agencies. This

correspondence also facilitates to create the image and brand of the company or the organizations. The success or failure of an organization depends on its formal correspondence and technical writing as well. The technical communication helps the organization to plan, manage and organize business activities. It helps to promote sales and enhance the business. Through effective technical communication, you maintain good customer client relationship, directive memos, letters, ensure that a work is completed on time. Reports provide documentation that work has been done. Sales letters generate income .

Technical writing also keeps machinery working (maintenance, instructions, it ensures that correct equipment are purchase (technical descriptions), it gets you jobs (resumes, it inform the world about your company's product through websites etc.)

TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION CONSUMES TIME AND COST MONEY

Recent researches have proved that on an average and average employee spends approximately 20% of his work time on technical communication. As you move higher the order, employees spend more time on technical communication which may range from 50% to 90%. Twenty percent is just a base figure. Corporate bosses and supervisors spend more time not only on technical writing but also spends additional time reviewing and revising the writings composed by subordinates. However, even if we consider only 20% of the time spend on technical communication, that comes to an average of one complete working day in a working week. Time is money that means you are been paid 20% of your salary for your technical communication skills. If an employee fails at effective technical communication skills, the company suffers financially and the employee will soon have to look for a new job because he would be found incompetent to work. If an employee does not write clearly and effectively the readers are confused and they will again seek further explanation. This results in the wastage of time and you are been paid for the time you give at your work place. The wasted time cost the company. Good communication has additional monetary value other than the salary and the cost of correspondence. If you write clearly, the readers get right on the job and the job is done effectively.

TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION IS AN EXTENSION OF YOUR INTER PERSONAL SKILLS

“I will pay more for the ability to deal with people than for any other ability under the sun”

(JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER)

This is a very relevant remark about the interpersonal skills. In business most problems are people's problem. When we solve the people problems our business problems are substantially resolved. Technical communication is the extension of such interpersonal skills which are required and very integral in today's working scenario. When you write a memo or a letter or a report you are not just communicating information you are also revealing something about your interpersonal skills. If you communicate properly you tell your audience that you are capable of thinking logically and effectively.

Through your technical communication your competence is also judged. Through good technical communication you also reveal to your audience that you can tell people what to do and how to do besides motivating them to do it.

IMPORTANC OF TECHNICAL SKILLS FOR TECHNOCRATS

Engineers need to have a very sound Technical Communications Skills. They should be able express their ideas in a clear, succinct and lucid manner. Sound technical skills is very important for technocrats. One of the main objective of technical communication is to provide organized information which in turn facilitates quick decision making. Research studies have concluded that excellent communication skills is extremely important for engineers and technocrats. Studies have also concluded that problem solving is considered to be the most important skills, but secondary to them are team work, communication and management skills. Effective technical communication skills assists for technocrats in utilizing various visual aids like graphics, drawings, charts, diagrams, images etc.

Conclusion

The fast developing and growing technical know-how complemented with development of sophisticated information technology has changed the way we communicate in professional situation. There is literally an explosion of knowledge and technology in the current scenario, where in, technical communication has become a central factor and technocrats need to have sound communication skills in order to be effective. Whether you are an executive working in a multinational company or an engineer, a scientist or an engineering students you need to have effective technical communication skill. Technical communication is integral to effective management. The whole world has become a global market and the communication of technology and its implementation is playing a major role in the economic growth and development. The success of technology also depend majorly on the ability to analyse , organize and to present the information.

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