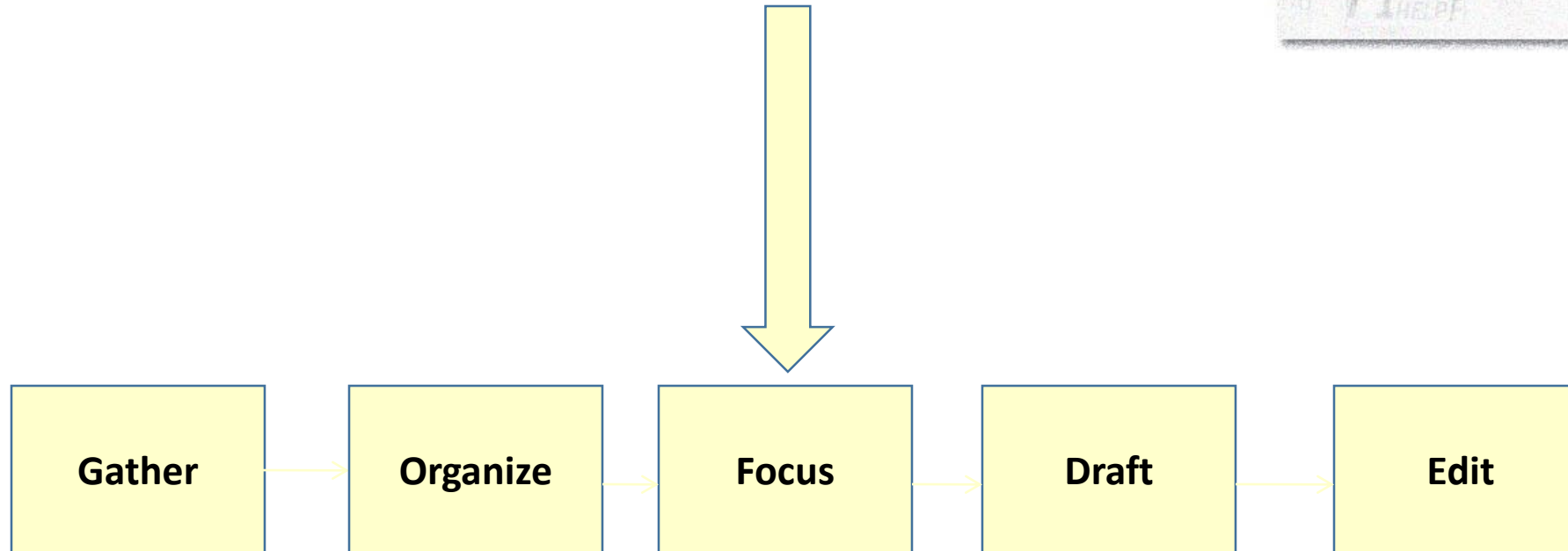
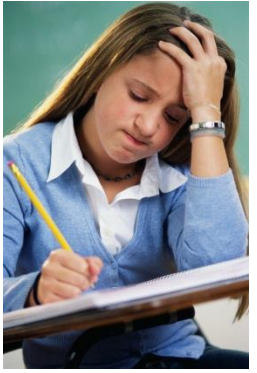


An illustration of a person's head and shoulders. The head is filled with various text fragments, including "HELP DO", "F1", "HELP B", "USABILITY", "TECHNICAL WRITING", "ONS", "TES", "TYPER", "UNCT", "SPEC", "PUNCTUATION", "USER FRIENDLY", "TECHNICAL WRITING", "SPECIFICATIONS", "DOCUMENT", "ONAS BASED DOCUMENT", "HELP DOC", "ALT H", "F1", "TESTING", "HELP". A hand is holding a pen, pointing at the head.



Writing Process



- **Gather**

Articles, Books, Financial Statement, Interviews, Databases, Information from world wide Web, Brain Storming, personal Notes, and others.

- **Organize**

Strategic order, batching or grouping ideas, Heading, introduction, Body and conclusion.

- **Focus**

“Skim only technique”, “Nutshell”, “teach” your ideas, elevator techniques, and others.

Writing Process

- **Draft**

organize and focus first, Compose in any order, avoid editing, get a typed copy and leave a time gap before editing.

- **Edit**

Edit for strategy, for macro issues, for micro issues and edit for correctness.

How is Technical Writing Different?

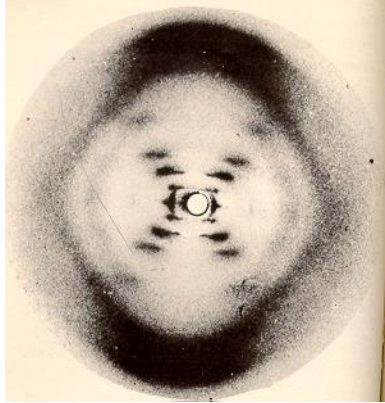
- The information is organized, presented and communicated in a specific format.
- The writing is concise, clear and accurate.
- The writing takes into account the audience's needs, biases and prior understanding.
- The writing presents information to help readers solve a problem or gain a better understanding of a situation.
- The writing conveys technical, complex, or specialized information in a way that is easy for a non-technical reader to understand.

Characteristics of Effective Technical Writing

- **Clear**—is easily understood by the intended audience without ambiguities.
- **Accurate**—is factual, correct, free from bias.
- **Correct**—follows both grammatical and technical conventions.
- **Comprehensive**—contains all necessary information.
- **Concise**—is clear and complete without excess or redundant verbiage.
- **Accessible**—includes headings and subheads, indexes, and table of contents.

A Matter of Difference

1. Subject Matter



2. Writing Constraints

audience

purpose



occasion

3. Purpose of Writing

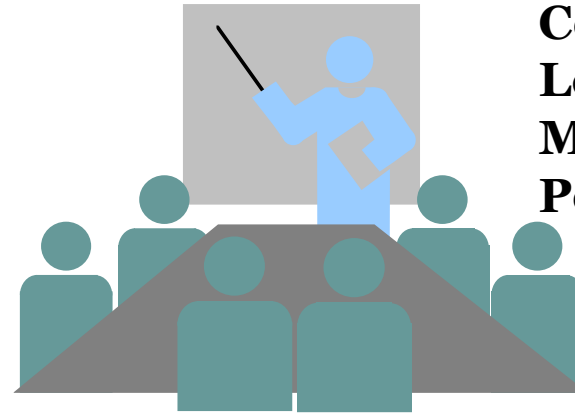
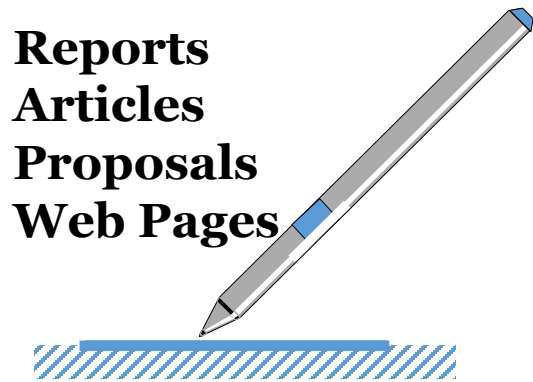
To inform

To persuade

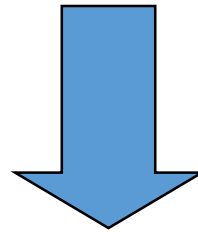
4. Writing Style



Communication Needs



Conferences
Lectures
Meetings
Posters



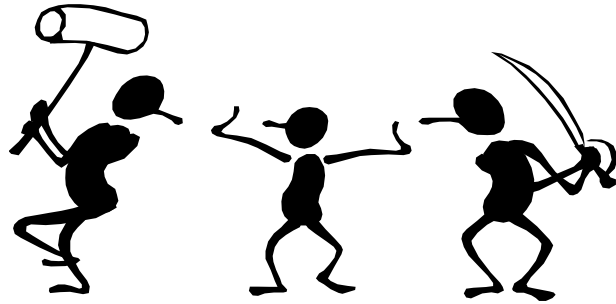
**specific
technical
audiences**

**general
technical
audiences**

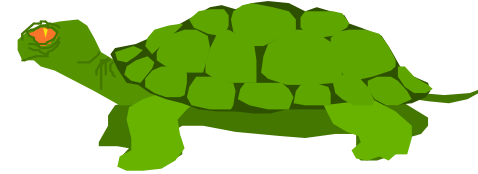
**non-technical
audiences**

Writing Stages

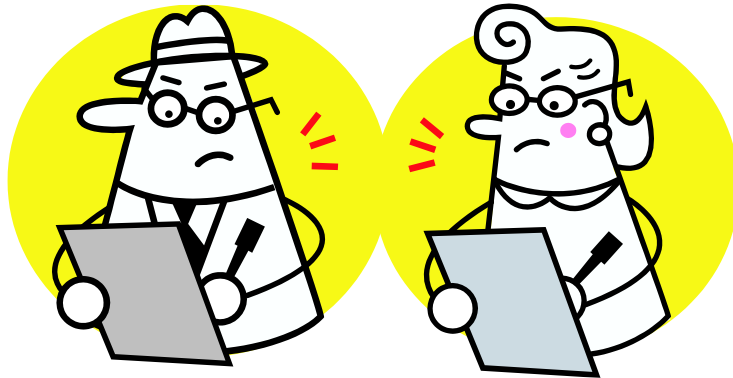
1. Getting in the Mood



2. Writing the First Draft



3. Revising, Revising, Revising



4. Finishing



Aspects Affecting Reader

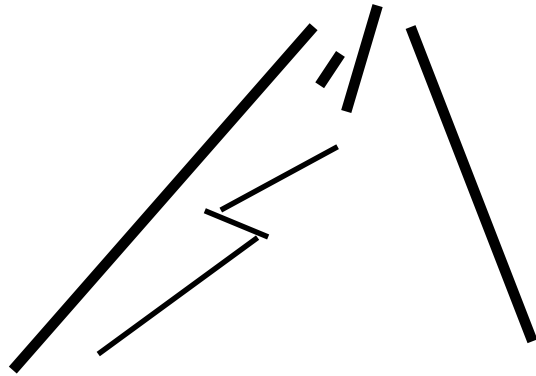


Content

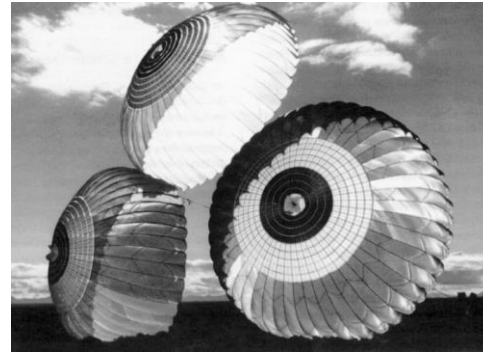
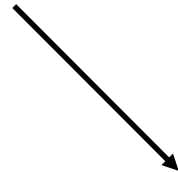
Style

Form

Style What You Control



Structure



Illustration

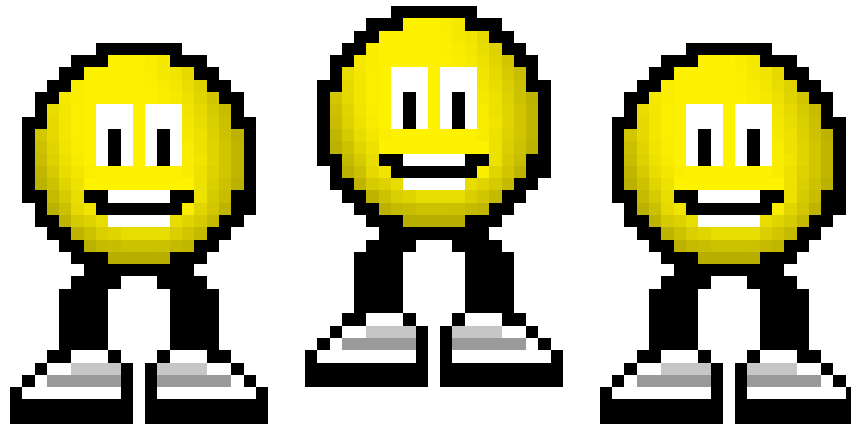


words
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Language

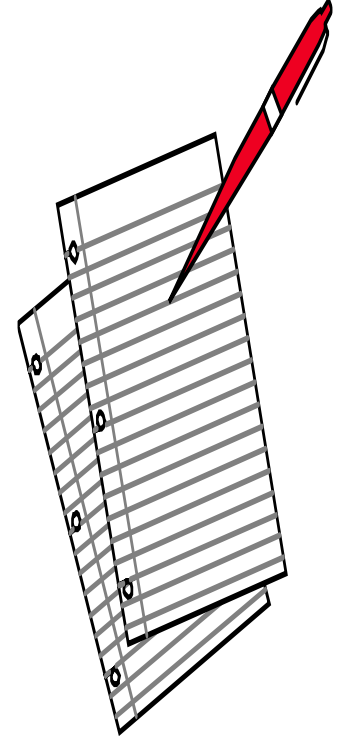


Notice that the technical description is clear, concise, and coherent. These three C's are trademarks of technical writing.



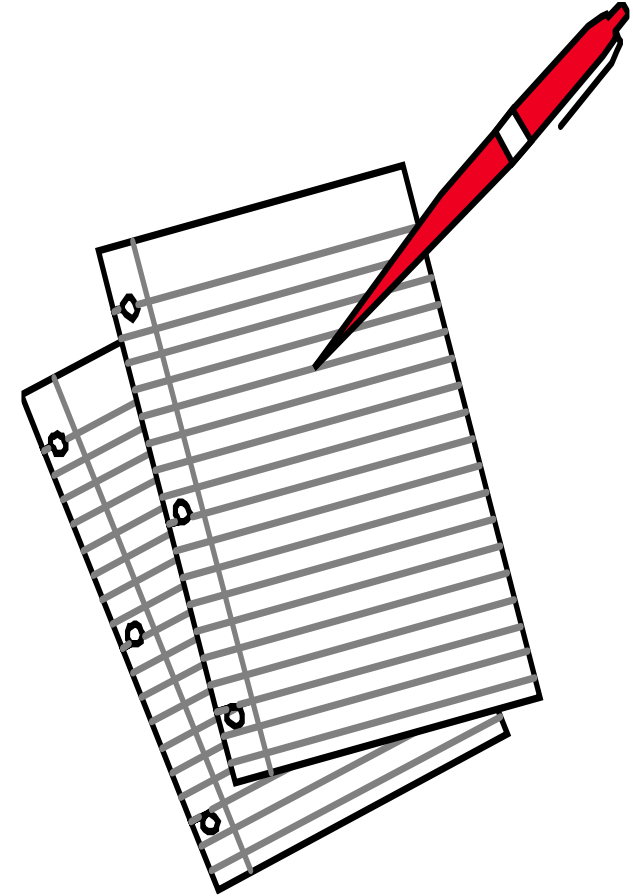
Examples of Technical Writing:

- Action Plans
- Advertisement
- Agenda
- Audit Report
- Book Review
- Brochure
- Budget
- Business Letter
- Business Plan
- Catalog
- Contract
- Critique
- Data Book or Display
- Description
- Diagram, Chart, or Graph
- Editorial
- Email
- Feasibility Report
- Field Test Report
- Incident Report
- Informational Form
- Informational Poster
- Informative Summary
- Instructions
- Interview Questions
- Itinerary



Examples of Technical Writing (cont.)

- Job Application
- Job Description
- Lesson Plan
- Letter of Inquiry
- Letter of Recommendation
- Magazine/Newspaper Article
- Marketing Plan
- Memo
- Meeting Minutes
- Newsletter
- Observation Report
- Performance Evaluations
- Persuasive Proposal
- Position Paper
- Product Comparison
- Proposal
- Questionnaire
- Research Report
- Résumé/Portfolio
- Scientific Paper/Report
- Survey
- Test
- Transcription
- Training Manual
- Travel Guide
- Web Page
- Work Order



Focus on strong verbs!

- **Assess**
- **Classify**
- **Compute**

- **Develop**
- **Eliminate**
- **Require**

Why Technical Writing?



- Build on existing knowledge
- Propagate the knowledge
 - Co-workers/Team members
 - Sales/Marketing personnel
 - Customers

Technical Writing is a Skill So, Practice is the best of all instructors.“

Choosing Appropriate Channels:

↪ What channel is best to announce decreased benefits coverage for 250 employees?

E-mail, memo, speech

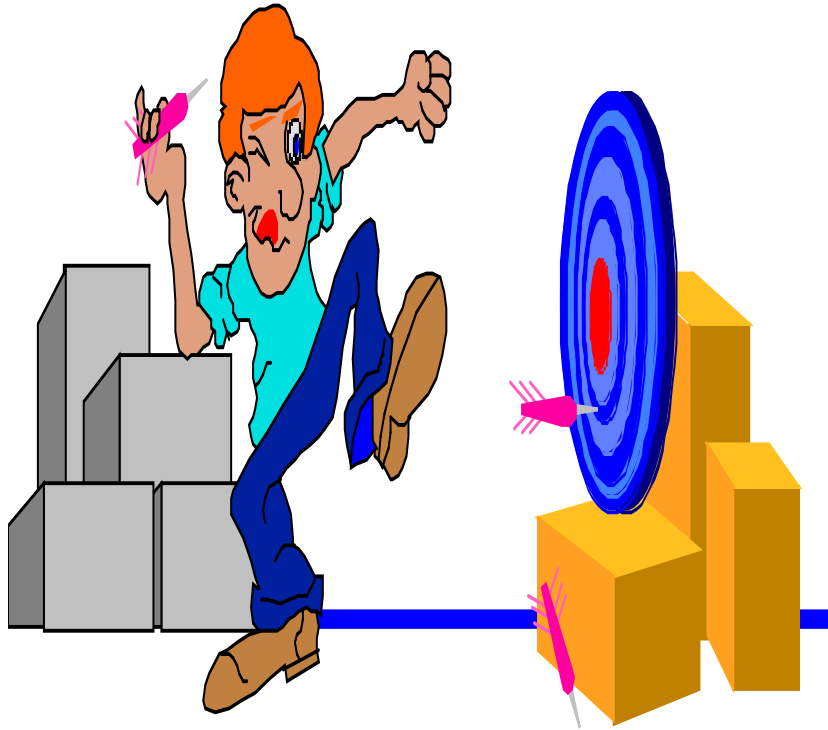
✂ What channel is best for a sales message promoting a new product to customers?

Letter, brochure, web site, meeting (press conference), conversation, sales call

✂ What channel is best for responding to routine customer inquiries?

Web, form letter, e-mail, telephone

Is it clear? Have you hit your target?



**In written
communication most
confusion &
frustration are
caused by failing to
be specific**

**Make it clear, brief and
concise.....**

Brain Storming

- By using brain storming and mind mapping techniques, you will be able to identify a document's
 - Content (the information that will be included)
 - Structure (what information goes where)
- When you brainstorm, you or a group of people shout out every idea/solution you can think of around topic or problem. No answer is wrong and everything is recorded.
- Mind mapping records your brainstorming

Brainstorming (Cont.)

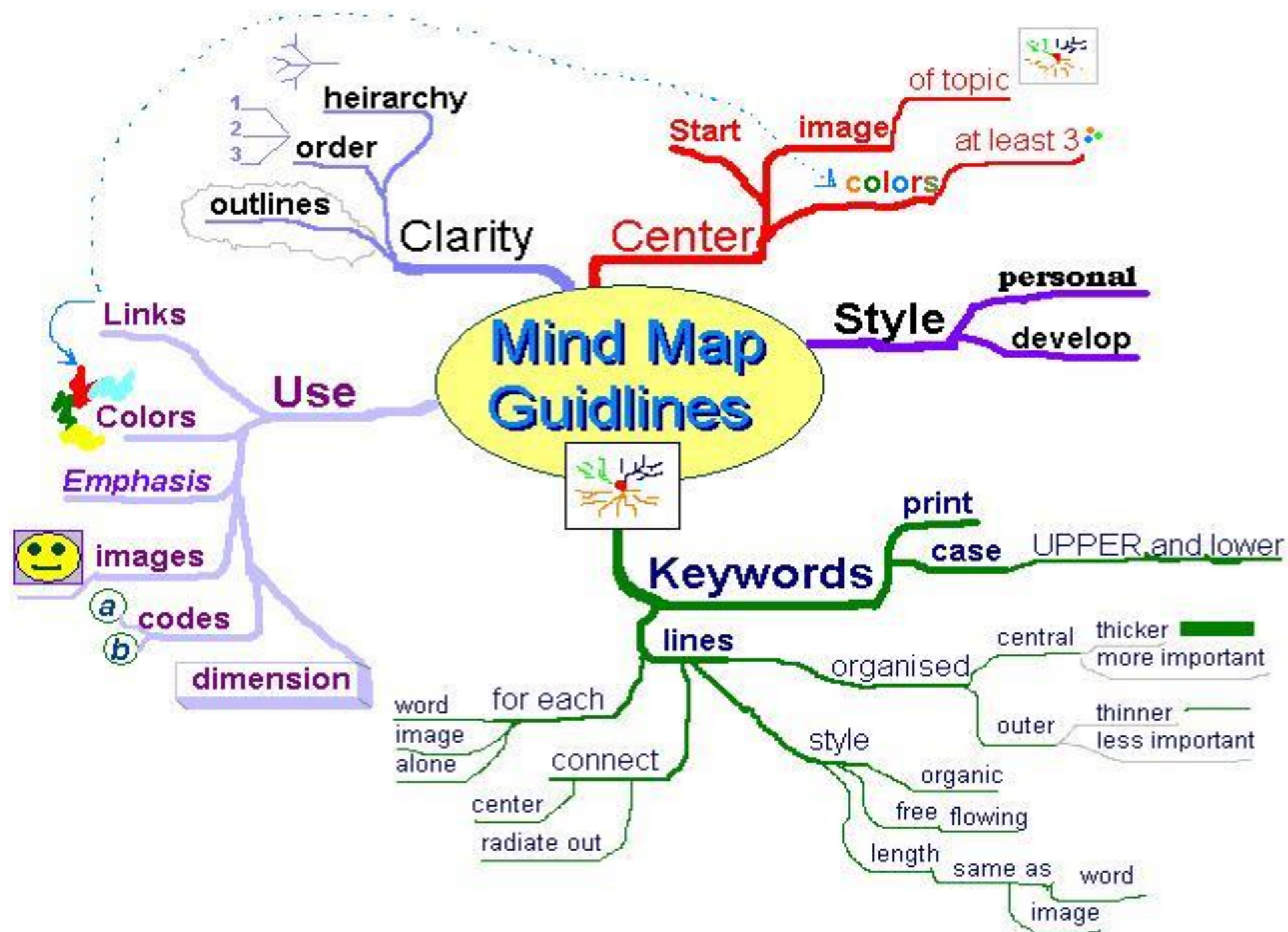
- When you finish brainstorming, start working with your mind map. Make sure you:
 - You on topic and prevents a 30 page document from becoming a 300 pages.
 - Draw dotted lines between ideas or similar topics to help you decide where the information belongs or prevent repeating the same ideas
 - Move ideas from one area to another to start constructing sections and chapters and to decide how much information will be in each one.

Brainstorming (Cont.)

- Make sure you:
 - Add ideas when you obviously missed something.
 - Never criticize ideas
 - Decide what your main topics/chapters are and which ideas fit under them.
 - Only ask for clarification
 - Write every idea down in a board or a flip chart to be seen by every one.
 - Construct a tentative table of content using the final mind map.

Brainstorming (Cont.)

- Mind maps are a hard-copy version of you brain storming.
- Mind maps start with your document's central topic; as you continue to brain storm, your ideas are recorded and begin to surround and fan out from you central idea.
- Once you have exhausted the topic (which can take anywhere from half an hour to half day), you can start to organize and analyze you comments/ideas



What to do with the results of Brainstorming

- clarify issues collected from the brain storming.
- Narrow down ideas
- Prioritize grouped ideas
- For each major issues define the desired outcome
- Prepare action plan



Technical Writing



What is the purpose of technical writing?



- Technical writing is the delivery of technical information to readers in a manner that is adapted to their needs, level of understanding, and background.
- Technical writing is intended to communicate to a specific audience, for a specific purpose.

Structure well

- Make use of headings and sub-headings, with a consistent numbering scheme.
- Do not refer to information by reference number alone.
- Itemize facts wherever possible.
- Use textual highlighting for emphasis (italics, underlining, boldface).

Use Passive and Active Voice Appropriately

Passive verbs are longwinded, ambiguous and dull.
Active verbs make your writing simpler, less awkward, clearer and more precise.

Use passive voice:

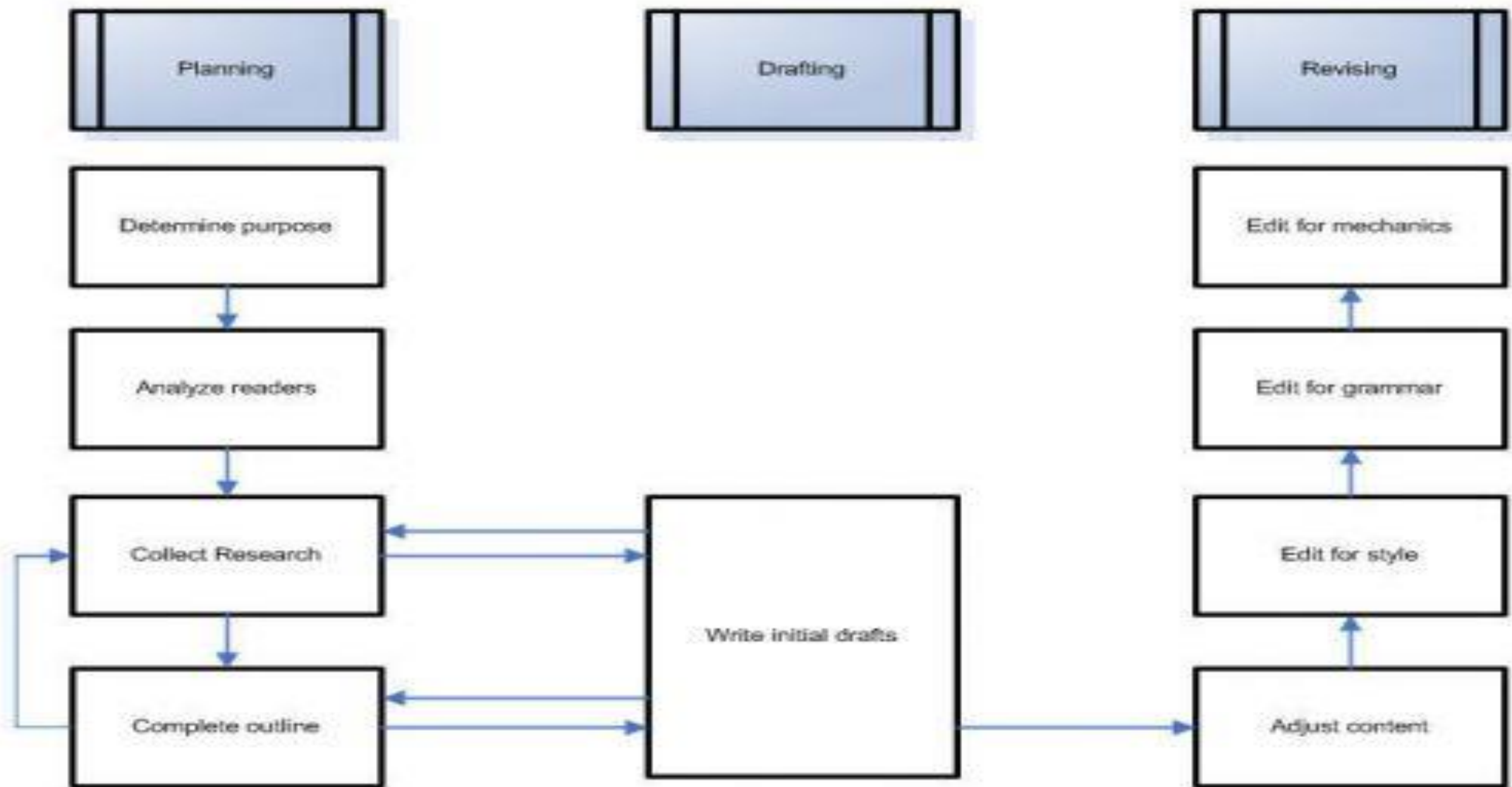
- 1) when you don't know the actor (The door was left unlocked.)
- 2) when the actor is unimportant to the point you're making (The office will be open on Monday.)
- 3) when the emphasis is clearly not on the actor but on the acted upon (What happened to the student who plagiarized his paper? The student was failed.)

Use Active and Passive Voice Appropriately

Active: You are past due on your registration payment.

Passive: Your registration payment is past due.

- The passive example is less confrontational. It takes the actor out of the sentence so that the message does not appear to blame someone.



What is a technical report?

- An orderly, objective message used to convey information from one organisational area to another or from one institution to another.
- A technical report is a formal report designed to convey technical information in a clear and easily accessible format.

Why does your report need to be *WONDERFUL*?

- To impress the boss.



- To beat out the competition and get what you want.



Nature of Report

- **Examines a question or problem and provides a detailed examination of the issues.**
- **Usually uses a formal style, providing evidence to support claims.**
- **It is divided into sections which allow different readers to access different levels of information.**

Which Reports?

Sales Reports

Inspection Reports

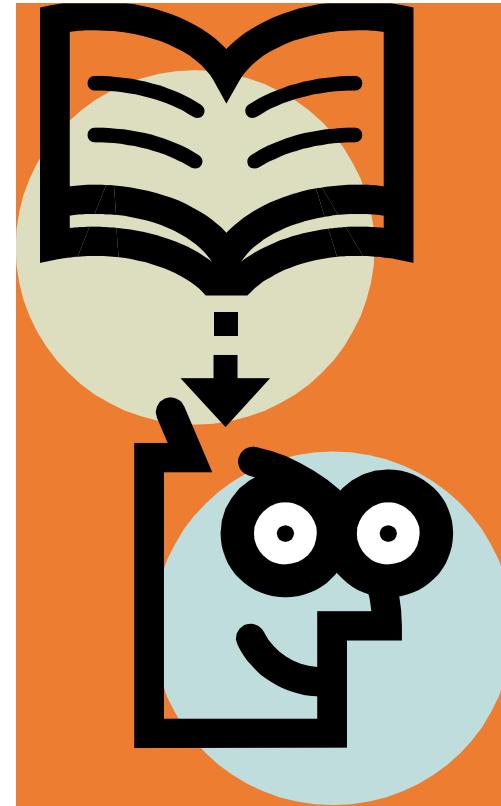
Annual Reports

Audit Reports

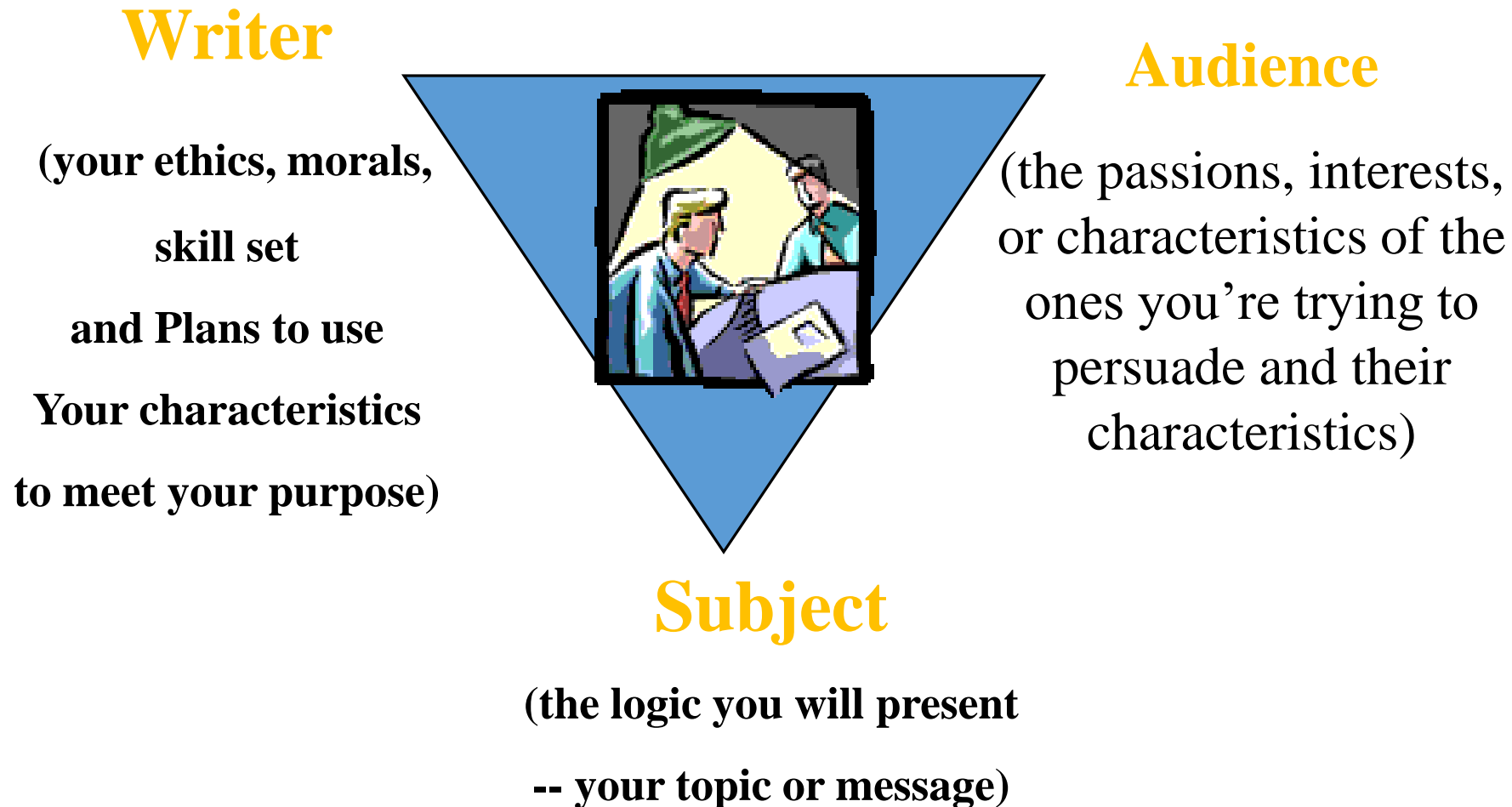
Feasibility Reports

Progress Reports

White Papers



Regardless of what you write, Consider the Rhetorical Triangle . . .



Questions facing the writer

- **Who will read my message? (Audience)**
- **What is my message supposed to accomplish? (Purpose)**
- **What exactly shall I Write? (Message)**
- **What emphasis shall I choose? (Tone)**
- **What Language level shall I Use? (style)**

Your Reader



- At the most basic level, report writing seeks to convince the reader that what is being said is true.
- Some reports will try to persuade the reader to take an action or think about something in a certain way.

Know Your Reader

- **Before you write, ask yourself these questions about your reader:**
 - How interested or involved in the subject is my reader?
 - How knowledgeable is he or she on the subject?
 - What is my reader's purpose for reading? To make a decision? To be better informed?

Know Your Reader

- Does my reader have special concerns or strong views about the subject? What are they?
- How does my reader regard me personally and professionally?

Audience

- There are two general types of business readers: **skimmers and skeptics.**
- Your documents will be most effective if you write for both types of readers.

Skimmers

- **Skimmers** are readers that are typically very busy. Pressed for time, they often skim documents in a rather short period of time.

The documents you prepare for **skimmers** should:

- State the main point clearly and up front
- Place the most important information at the beginning or ending of paragraphs
- Highlight key dates or figures

Skeptic

- The second type of reader is a **Skeptic**. A Skeptic is a reader that is cautious and doubtful.
- Skeptical readers will tend to read a document carefully, questioning its validity and the writer's claims.



Audience (cont.)

- In order to meet the needs of the Skeptical reader, it is necessary to **support your statements with sufficient details and evidence.**
- Provide specific examples, numbers, dates, names, and percentages to meet the needs of the skeptical reader.

Know your audience

- Match your content to your readers' knowledge.
- If you are in doubt, aim for the simpler approach.
- If appropriate, include several alternate levels of info.
- Define your terms.
 - computer terminology fluid
 - if many terms need definition, use a glossary

Know your Audience

With technical writing you must present your information so readers can:

- extract the main points without necessarily reading the whole
- easily find information that interests them
- quickly absorb crucial information

Purpose

- **Knowing and establishing your purpose will keep your message “on track” and will give the reader a clear sense of how to handle your information**

Tone

- **Tone is the word choice and phrasing which expresses your attitude towards the subject.**

e.g.

(emotional, sarcasm, enthusiasm..)

- **Good writer avoid humor, satire, anger and bitterness.)**

Style

- **Style is the manner of expression in language, your way of putting thoughts into words.**
- **Use uncomplicated sentences and short paragraphs.**
- **Avoid Technical terms and jargon.**

Message

Three of the most common expectations are that your writing will:

- **Keep it simple**
- **Avoid long confusing sentences**
- **Use clear sentences**