Technical writers put technical information into easily understandable language. They plan and edit technical materials and oversee the preparation of illustrations, photographs, diagrams, and charts.

**Trends**

Though the writing and editing fields are very competitive, the field of technical writing offers more opportunities. Employment opportunities for technical writers are expected to grow by 15% by 2022, which is faster than average. The demand for technical writers is growing quickly because of the continued growth in science and technology, especially web-based technology. Many (38%) technical writers work in professional, scientific, and technical services, while others work in manufacturing (17%), information (12%), or administrative support (6%).

**Education & Training**

Employers typically look for writers who have a bachelor’s or advanced degrees. Many technical writers graduate with degrees in the humanities, especially English or journalism. Technical writers benefit from an understanding of technical fields, such as engineering, technology, or science, since that is what they will be producing documents about. With an increase in the need for technical web content, technical writers with an knowledge of web development are often at an advantage in the job market.

**Tips for Breaking In**

- Take courses in technical writing, journalism, and English
- Gain technical knowledge by taking computer science, engineering, or math courses
- Get an internship or part-time job in writing, editing, or proofreading.
- Seek opportunities to publish writing through school and local papers, online sites, etc.
- Build a portfolio of your writing to show employers

**Licenses & Certifications**

There are no required licenses or certifications for technical writers, although a few professional associations offer certifications. The Society for Technical Communication offers a general credential, and the American Medical Writers Association offers a certification for technical writers in health fields. These certifications can be beneficial for aspiring technical writers.

**Earnings**

The average salary (2014) for technical writers was $69,030.

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**Types of Employers**

- Medical Facilities
- Technology Companies
- Contractors
- Medical Publishers
- Government
- Manufacturing Companies
- Engineering Firms
- Universities and Colleges
- Research & Development Companies

**Example Employers**

- FDA
- Merck
- National Institute of Health
- Cisco
- Microsoft
- Apple
- Carolinas Medical Center
- UNC Charlotte
- United States Military
- IBM
- Atomic Energy Commission
- NASA

**Desirable Qualities, Interests, and Skills**

- Communicating effectively with others in writing as indicated by the needs of the audience.
- Ability to listen to what other people are saying and asking questions as appropriate.
- Knowledge of how to find information and identifying essential information.
- Ability to structure or classify multiple pieces of information.
- Strong analytical skills to reorganize information into an effective structure.
- Ability to work with new material or information to grasp its implications.
- Strong attention to detail in inspecting and evaluating the quality of products.
- Knowledge of the structure and content of the English language.

**Websites**

- Society for Technical Communication | [www.stc.org](http://www.stc.org)
- National Association of Science Writers | [www.nasw.org](http://www.nasw.org)
- American Medical Writers Association | [www.amwa.org](http://www.amwa.org)
- American Society for Indexing | [www.asindexing.org](http://www.asindexing.org)
- International Association of Business Communicators | [www.iabc.com](http://www.iabc.com)
- IEEE Professional Communication Society | [pcs.ieee.org](http://pcs.ieee.org)

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<tr>
<th>Sample Job Titles</th>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Writer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indexer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Architect</td>
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<td>Instructional Designer</td>
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<td>Technical Illustrator</td>
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<td>Globalization Specialist</td>
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<td>Localization Specialist</td>
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