

## Discussion Board Response Example

### Terminology/Acronyms

In my line of work as a technical writer, we use the following terminology and acronyms.

1. **Technical Specifications:** Detailed terms or conditions under which something, such as a product or an electronic document like a Web page, is produced.
2. **Statement of Work (SOW):** A document that specifies terms and conditions, as well as the exact tasks associated with a project. If a project calls for only the development of a prototype, then the team is not responsible for writing user documentation for the prototype unless it is part of the SOW.
3. **Document lifecycle:** The process associated with creating a document like an analysis report or software manual. The lifecycle begins with ideas for the document and ends when the document is delivered to the client.
4. **Technical Review:** A document review by experts in a particular field. A technical review is conducted to ensure the content is accurate from a scientific or technical point of view.
5. **Subject Matter Expert (SME):** A person who is an expert in a particular field. In the review process, a SME may be called on to be a technical reviewer.

### Knowledge and Skills Required for a Technical Writer

In general, technical writers must have strong writing and speaking skills. This is because most technical writers are required to do more than just write, which is why they are also called technical communicators. Technical writers work in a variety of professions including information technology, engineering and other science-related fields, medicine, and business. Generally, technical writers create user manuals, instructions, online help guides, and other documents that help non-technical readers perform or understand more specialized or technical tasks or information (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). In some rare cases, a person without a college degree can work as a technical writer; however, as industries and businesses become more complex and specialized, more employers require technical writers to have at least a bachelor's degree in English or a writing-related field. Other important skills a technical writer must possess are strong organizational skills and attention to detail, because they are often not only writers but editors too.

#### *Reference:*

*Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2009). Technical writers. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos319.htm>*