FRIDAY, 17 MAY

7:00 AM  Registration Open  Sky Bridge
8:00 AM  Expo Hall Open  Foyer & Sky Bridge
8:00 AM  Poster Session (unhosted)  Sky Bridge
8:00 AM  Breakfast and Welcome  Lakes Ballroom A/B & Foyer & Sky Bridge

9:30 AM  Resume Writing 101  Lakes Ballroom A
9:30 AM  Lessons Learned Writing CARS Comics  Lakes Ballroom B
9:30 AM  How AI Can Advance Your Career and Skill Set  Lakes Ballroom C
9:30 AM  CPTC Practitioner Level part 1 of 3  Minnetonka A
9:30 AM  Proposal Writing for Federal Contracting  Minnetonka B
9:30 AM  DITA Basics Mini-Workshop  Minnetonka C
9:30 AM  Ensuring DEI in Tech Comm  Harriet
9:30 AM  The New Culture of Documentation  Cedar

11:00 AM  Resume Writing 201: Mastering the Art & Science of the Resume & Cover Letter  Lakes Ballroom A
11:00 AM  Implementing the Docs-as-Code Approach  Lakes Ballroom B
11:00 AM  Prompt Engineering: Getting the Most Out of Generative AI  Lakes Ballroom C
11:00 AM  Interviewing SMEs  Lakes Ballroom D
11:00 AM  Turning Tech Comm Into Marcom  Cedar

12:00 PM  Boxed Lunch  Lakes Ballroom A/B & Foyer & Sky Bridge

1:30 PM  What Do Your Associate & Mid-Level Technical Communicators Need From You?  Lakes Ballroom C
1:30 PM  Meet the Editors  Lakes Ballroom D
1:30 PM  CPTC Foundations Course part 2 of 2  Minnetonka A
1:30 PM  Creating Styler Stylesheets Mini-Workshop  Minnetonka C
1:30 PM  Top 10 Mistakes Content Professionals Make When Looking for Work  Lakes Ballroom A
1:30 PM  Content Modeling for Consistency  Cedar
1:30 PM  Docs as Tests-Write Resilient Docs  Lakes Ballroom B

2:45 PM  Use Gen AI for Your Job Search Documentation  Lakes Ballroom A
2:45 PM  What’s it Like to Author in a CCMS?  Lakes Ballroom B
2:45 PM  Exploring Policies & Procedures in Business Continuity, Aerospace/Defense, and a Not-for-Profit Health Organization  Lakes Ballroom C

3:00 PM  BREAK  Foyer & Sky Bridge

4:00 PM  Secure a New Job with LinkedIn  Lakes Ballroom A
4:00 PM  Community Affairs Committee: Leadership Networking Event  Lakes Ballroom B
4:00 PM  Soft-Skills: The Not-so-technical Side of Tech Comm  Lakes Ballroom C
4:00 PM  Tech Comm Skills through Tabletop Gaming  Harriet

5:00 PM  Speaker Rehearsal  Lakes Ballroom A
5:45 PM  STC ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING  Lakes Ballroom A
6:00 PM  Networking Happy Hour  Foyer & Sky Bridge

THURSDAY, 16 MAY

3:00 PM  Expo Hall and Registration Open  Foyer & Skybridge
3:00 PM  CPTC Foundations Prep Course Part 1  Minnetonka A
3:00 PM  STC Board Meeting (closed)  Boardroom
4:30 PM  1st time Attendees + Students, Orientation & Tour  Harriet
4:00 PM  Speaker Rehearsal  Minnetonka C
6:00 PM  Student Attendee Dinner  Meet at Skybridge

Schedule as of 30 April. May change.
**SATURDAY 18 MAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00 AM</td>
<td>Registration Open</td>
<td>Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Expo Hall Open</td>
<td>Foyer &amp; Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Poster Session (unhosted)</td>
<td>Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Breakfast and Welcome</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A/B &amp; Foyer &amp; Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Resume Review</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>IDC &amp; Quark CCMS Survey: New Insights</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Ask an Expert</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>CPTC Practitioner Level Part 2 of 3</td>
<td>Minnetonka A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Sustainable Content: Balancing UX and Planetary Impacts</td>
<td>Minnetonka B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Gen AI? Nothing to Fear!</td>
<td>Minnetonka C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Transforming Product Documentation</td>
<td>Cedar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>How to Avoid Murder and Mystery</td>
<td>Harriet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Networking 101: Building Professional Relationships</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Modernizing Your Documentation</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Doctor(s) Who... Work With Content that Change Lives</td>
<td>Cedar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Poster Session (hosted)</td>
<td>Foyer &amp; Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Boxed Lunch &amp; Awards</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A/B &amp; Foyer &amp; Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>How to Advance your Career using Personal Branding</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>Are You a Uni-Duck? The Intersection of Instructional Design and Technical Communication</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>The New Culture of Documentation</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>CPTC Certification Overview and Top 10 Study Tips</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>Sort it out!</td>
<td>Minnetonka A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>Building a Microlearn</td>
<td>Minnetonka B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>Enterprise-Level Documents on a Budget</td>
<td>Minnetonka C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>Writing a Book Review for STC Tech Comm Journal</td>
<td>Cedar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>Translating for the Best Translation</td>
<td>Harriet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
<td>Building Your Digital Fingerprint</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
<td>Developers Writing Docs</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>Want to Know about The Body of Knowledge?</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15 PM</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
<td>Foyer &amp; Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Finding the Right Fit</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>TESIG Editing Best Practices</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>AI and Powerful Personas</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Help Your Documentation Using Flowcharts</td>
<td>Minnetonka B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>The Prompt Engineer's Toolkit</td>
<td>Cedar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Strategies for Interviewing SMEs</td>
<td>Harriet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 PM</td>
<td>Community Affairs Committee: Leadership Collaboration Event</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:15 PM</td>
<td>A series of lightning talks:</td>
<td>Cedar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tactical Writing for Email, 7 Minimalism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actions To Improve UX-CX, When Patient Intake Forms Go Bad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overcoming Barriers to DITA Adoption,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultivating an AI Community of Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>STC Awards Reception</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A/B &amp; Foyer &amp; Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUNDAY 19 MAY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00 AM</td>
<td>Registration Open</td>
<td>Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Expo Hall Open</td>
<td>Foyer &amp; Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Poster Session (unhosted)</td>
<td>Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Breakfast and Welcome</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A/B &amp; Foyer &amp; Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Everything You Wanted to Know About</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Finding a Job But Were Too Afraid to Ask</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Building Dynamic Integrated Teams that Exhibit Synergy, Consistent Quality, and Contentment!</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Presentation Skills Training Camp</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>CPTC Practitioner Level part 3 of 3</td>
<td>Minnetonka A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Talk Like a Girl</td>
<td>Minnetonka B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Great Graphics</td>
<td>Minnetonka C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Building an AI Prompt Management Team</td>
<td>Harriet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Boxed Lunch &amp; Networking</td>
<td>Lakes Ballroom A/B &amp; Foyer &amp; Sky Bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>Social Event(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Friday May 17th

Panel: How AI Can Advance Your Career and Skill Set

Wandering How AI is Influencing the Industry and Your Job Prospects? Come to this Session to Find Out!

The buzz around ChatGPT has not slowed down since last year. In fact, generative AI has only grown in popularity and tools, revolutionizing the world through advancements in code, communication, translation, literature, art, and more. Join industry leaders as they discuss the latest trends, tools, use cases, and skills every tech comm professional needs to know about the growing world of artificial intelligence. Bring your questions and your topics to drive the conversation.

Panelists: Jill Stanton (Moderator), Rob Hanna, Susan Kelley, Arthur Berger

Panel: Prompt Engineering: Getting the Most Out of Generative AI

There is so much Buzz about Prompt Engineering; What is it? How can I get good at it?

This panel explores the science and art of prompt engineering, the key to getting quality results out of generative AI tools. These experts will share their tips and tricks, help troubleshooting use cases, and share their insights on how to get the most out of generative AI.

Panelists: Jill Stanton (Moderator), Jason Kaufman, Emily Liand

Panel: What Do Your Associate & Mid-Level Technical Communicators Need From You?

Stop Losing Talent! This Panel will Unveil Actionable Strategies to Retain and Develop Your Associate Technical Writers.

The associate level of technical communication is essential and is sometimes not a fully realized resource for technical communication teams. Guiding and empowering these not-quite-junior, not quite senior-writers can be challenging for managers and mentors alike. We will have a panel of mid-level writers and managers discuss insights and strategies for navigating the transition between junior to senior roles, handling increased responsibilities, and developing subject matter expertise while maintaining strong upward and downward communication skills in this hybrid role. Whether you’re a mid-level writer yourself or someone who works alongside them, this session provides valuable tools and perspectives to understand the challenges intermediate writers face, how to retain them, and how to unleash their potential.

Panelists: Addison Klecker (Moderator), Andrea Howard, Christina May, Mickelle Rast, Tyler Mueller

Panel: Exploring Policies & Procedures in Business Continuity, Aerospace/Defense, and a Not-for-Profit Health Organization

Join P&O Panelists for an Insider’s Perspective on Working in Business Continuity, Aerospace and Defense, and a Not-for-Profit Health organization. There will be time for Q&A.

Kelly Smith will discuss how she helps subject matter experts (SMEs) write their procedures for business continuity and disaster recovery. Business continuity procedures document how companies would continue operations during a disaster. Disaster recovery procedures document how the information technology department would recover hardware and software after it has been affected by a disaster.

John Clement will discuss how he edits SME’s procedures in the aerospace and defense industry. He will also cover the importance of internships and how an internship led to his current position.

Marilyn Woelk will discuss how she worked with a national not-for-profit health organization to develop a policy process and policies for every area of the organization, which were uploaded to a Novell PolicyTech policy management system.

Ann Marie Queney, AM, Queney LLC, will moderate the panel. She has worked primarily with procedures in the medical device industry.

Panelists: Ann Marie Queney (Moderator), Kelly Smith, Marilyn Woelk, John Clement


As technical communicators, we need hard skills every day to create deliverables using specialized tools, detailed analysis, and a robust knowledge of grammar and language. But what about the soft skills that get us the information we need to document in the first place? How can we better engage with SMEs or executives? How do we learn to say “no” and build boundaries that support project management? And how can we blend hard and soft skills for better deliverables? Join our panel for a deep dive into the soft skills that you’ll want to cultivate and nurture (and how to do it) for a successful career in tech comm.

Panelists: Nicky Bleiel (Moderator), Darcy Beyer, Jackie Dambo

Panel: Interviewing Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

Interviewing SMEs is a critical part of most tech comm roles as it tends to be a first step in document creation. But how do you get the information you need from the folks with it? How can you think on your feet? What questions should you ask and how can you ask them to get the most robust and clear answers? This panel will discuss interviewing strategies, preparation, and how to thrive “in the moment”.

Panelists: Amanda Patterson (Moderator), Bethany Aguad, Nicky Bleiel, Rachael Svereffeg

Panel: Meet the Editors

Attend this session to meet the editors of Intercom and Technical Communication. Learn more about how to get published, find out about upcoming themes, and ask any questions you may have.

Panelists: Craig Baehr and Miriam Williams

Intensive: Proposal Writing for Federal Contracting

Mickelle Rast


Federal contracting companies range from large corporations to small disadvantaged businesses—is how can you, as a proposal writer, excel across the field? Learn how to adapt your proposal writing to different processes, resources, and environments. Whether you have minimal support or a great team behind you, you can put out a great (compliant) product on time and within budget.

Learning Objectives

- Resources to help proposal writers with minimal or overly-burdened support network.
- How to make communication easier with Project Managers, SMEs, and the Graphic POC.
- Iterative writing and how to use it to your advantage.

Intensive: Ensuring DE&I in Tech Comm

Jennifer Goode

Did You Know Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategies Affect Your Writing, Visuals, and Other Content? Learn How to Integrate DE&I in Your Work.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategies can impact how a technical communicator’s message is understood, shared, and acted on. Learn how to identify, understand, and apply in your tech comm work with this hands-on workshop. Bring your own tech comm product to review, or use a sample one. You and your audience will look at your words, visuals, and other content differently when you incorporate DEI strategies.

Learning Objectives

- Identify diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategies and their impact on audience understanding.
- Identify common terms to watch for and workable solutions that support DEI initiatives.
- Apply DEI communication strategies to improve an existing tech comm product.
Intensive: DITA Basics Mini-Workshop
Janice Summers
Learn Structured Authoring, DITA Architecture, Minimalism, Topic-type Recognition, Reuse Strategies, and Optimizing Free-form Content into DITA Structure.
Learn the basics for authoring DITA technical content. Good for anyone new to the toolset or simply curious about it. No experience required. In this hands-on workshop, we will walk through authoring and covering everything from creating a new document to publishing a finished product. Each attendee will be on the computer building and authoring a standards-based document. We will also compare DoxBook to DITA to MIL-STD and beyond.
In this hands-on, 3-hour mini-workshop, laptops with Arbortext software will be provided for all 12 attendees. If you already have Arbortext or other DITA-enabled software, you’re welcome to bring your own laptop and work in your own environment.
Learning Objectives:
- Learn the basic DITA topic types
- Learn how to effectively author DITA topics
- Learn how minimalism and DITA intersect
- Gain hands-on experience with an XML authoring tool

Intensive: Creating Styler Stylesheets, a Mini-Workshop
Liz Tray	
Learn How to Set up Page-Based Layout and HTML Output (in One Stylesheet) and Design Stylesheets for the Same Result on Your Content.
Learn the basics for creating stylesheets in Arbortext Styler. Create styling libraries like you create content libraries. Get the blueprint for stylesheet development in Arbortext and learn how to customize it to your unique needs. Change it once and change it everywhere. Design faster. Implement faster. Save yourself time and bring value to your company. This workshop is a combination of lectures mixed with exercises and hands-on exercises.
In this 4-hour intensive, laptops with Arbortext software will be provided for the first 12 attendees. If you already have Arbortext Styler, you’re welcome to bring your own laptop and work in your own environment. Everyone else is welcome to attend and observe.
Learning Objectives:
- Learn how XML publishing works: how source files and stylesheets interact to deliver a variety of published output formats
- Learn how to create DITA Stylesheets with Arbortext Styler
- Learn how to create reusable modules for DITA stylesheets
- Gain hands-on experience with an XML styling tool (Arbortext Styler)
- No programming or previous stylesheet development required.

Intensive: Tech Comm Skills through Tabletop Gaming
Bethany Aguad
Explore how tabletop gaming enhances tech comm skills! Join us for D&D Adventures in Professional Development.
Unlock the potential of your technical communication skills through an unexpected and exciting journey into the world of tabletop gaming! Join us to uncover how skill honed in Dungeons and Dragons (D&D) can elevate your professional abilities. Whether you’re a seasoned tabletop gamer or new to the world of D&D, this event will show you how storytelling, character development, and creative problem-solving in gaming can enhance your tech comm skills. From crafting compelling narratives to conducting interviews with in-game characters, you’ll explore the surprising parallels between D&D and your technical communication challenges.
Don’t miss this opportunity to embark on a quest for professional growth through the fun and imaginative world of tabletop gaming. Join us for an engaging discussion that will inspire you to leverage the power of gaming for your career development.
Learning Objectives:
- Discover the unexpected connection between tabletop role-playing games like Dungeons and Dragons (D&D) and key skills essential in technical communication.
- Apply storytelling techniques and creative problem-solving learned from D&D to enhance professional communication and collaboration skills effectively.

Get Hired: Resume Writing 101
Jack Molisani
“For years I’ve misused speaking about effective resumes, thinking that everything that could possibly be said about the subject has already been covered. But after seeing candidates rejected based on what they had (and didn’t have) in their resumes, I realized it’s time for me to step up and share what I’ve observed over the years: Resume secrets that might surprise you.”
Are you submitting resumes but not getting interviews?
This presentation is for you!

Get Hired: Resume Writing 201: Mastering the Art & Science of the Resume & Cover Letter
Nathaniel Lim
Can a technical communicator create the “ideal” resume and cover letter for a technical communicator? The internet is filled with suggestions and examples of what your job search documents should look like. This session will break those rules to open up other possibilities. We will manually construct a successful cover letter format not found anywhere on the internet.
We will also look at a few internet tools that create and screen such documents.
Learning Objectives:
- Out-of-the-box tips to get your resume and cover letter noticed by recruiters and hiring managers
- AI-generated resumes and cover letters
- Resume and job description comparison software
- Automated screening for resumes

Get Hired: Top 10 Mistakes Content Professionals Make When Looking for Work
Jack Molisani
Want (or need) a new job? Don’t miss this session!
Have you ever submitted a resume for a position but weren’t called for an interview? Or interviewed for a position you wanted but didn’t get? Chances are you made one or more mistakes that scuttled your chance of landing the job.
In this session, Jack Molisani will discuss the top 10 mistakes content professionals make when looking for work (whether contract, permanent, or consulting), with proactive tips on how to avoid these pitfalls and increase your chances of landing that next job or contract.

Get Hired: Use Gen AI for Your Job Search Documentation
Amanda Patterson
Practice your #PromptEngineering skills to advance your career!
Learn how to use generative AI to design your career document (LinkedIn profile, resume, cover letter, etc.) faster and easier while also demonstrating those powerful engineering skills. Bring your computer or smartphone along with any of your current job search materials to develop them live throughout the session. We’ll look at layering prompts, creating docs from scratch, and even reviewing docs you’ve created.
Learning Objectives:
- Use Gen AI to improve and personalize your career documents
- Practice prompt engineering tactics and best practices
- Put your tech comm skills to work for yourself

Get Hired: Secure a New Job with LinkedIn
Graham Riley
Your Resume and Profile Need to be Able to Do These THREE THINGS Before You’ll Get Called for an Interview
We will demonstrate the most effective way to present your abilities and experience! Highlight your education, experiences, and strengths for maximum impact. Develop content to match job requirements; side-step Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to engage directly with the hiring team; position your LinkedIn profile to show up on recruiters’ searches; and Create curiosity in your unique skills, experiences, and capabilities.
We will also cover...
How to explain the gap in your resume
The importance of keywords for optimizing your rankings in ATS searches
And, to build internal advocacy inside the organizations where you wish to work
Learning Objectives:
- Provide attendees with the strategy, tools, and resources to effectively market and sell their experience, skills, and capabilities to a potential employer.
session descriptions

How Things Work: Lessons Learned Writing CARS Comics

Alan Porter

How Lightning McQueen Made me a Better Technical Writer
I've been lucky enough to work on several comic book projects over the years for folks such as Disney, Marvel, and even NASA. All the way, I discovered that writing comics exposed me to ideas and techniques that improved my technical writing skills. In this intensive, we'll discuss the six areas where comics can influence your technical writing, and we'll also have some fun applying those skills to creating an original one-page comic together.

Learning Objectives:
- Be able to recognize the six key areas of comics writing that can transform technical writing skills.
- Understand how to use text and images together to drive an informative narrative.

How Things Work: Turning Tech Comm Into Marcom

Jessica Kiefer

Leverage Your Docs to Grow Market Share and Build Brand.
We're all asked to do more with less — but what do you do when you need to stretch your tech comm work into marketing collateral to grow your customer base and build brand awareness? Come to this session to see why it's actually not that big of a stretch and find tips and tricks to turn your how-to guides into bite-sized content customized for customer engagement. We'll discuss adding marketing to your technical communications content strategy on different sized budgets, using storytelling and narrative to inform and engage customers and prospects, and incorporating marketing milestones into your roadmap. You'll see examples of transforming technical content into popular marketing channels, including web content, social media, e-books, e-mail campaigns, videos, and more.

Learning Objectives:
- Learn steps to repurpose technical content into different types of marketing channels.
- Discover how to add marketing to your technical content strategy and roadmap.
- Find strategies for incorporating technical marketing into your budget.

How Things Work: Content Modeling for Consistency

Giuseppe Gatto

Need Help Managing Technical Content Across Channels? Try Content Modeling! Content Modeling is Creating Reusable Frameworks for Content.
If you're like many professionals who are responsible for technical content, you're not just working in a single communication channel anymore. Maybe the marketing department in your organization asked for a brief summary of the specifications document you just created. Perhaps you work with content in an authoring tool that outputs to your organization's website, mobile app, and help forum. Or perhaps you're just trying to keep track of all the content needs on your latest documentation project and wondering if there's a better way to do so.

In this session, I share how to use content modeling to better manage your technical content across channels. Essentially, content modeling is creating reusable frameworks that allow you to quickly develop, publish, and manage content. Whether your content model takes the form of an in-depth plan for your latest documentation project or a multi-channel content governance plan, I'll help you get started with this essential best practice.

Learning Objectives:
- The minimum ingredients for creating a content model, including content types, content elements, audience needs, and technologies.
- How content models can be used by any type of content to improve efficiency and consistency across channels.
- Several of the best tools for managing content across channels and how to build them into your existing workflow.

How Things Work: Implementing the Docx-as-Code Approach

Girish Karunakaran Sankaran

Implementing the Docx-as-Code Approach with Open Source Tools
Documentation-as-code (Docx-as-code) has emerged as a significant trend in the documentation community, signifying a departure from traditional authoring and publishing practices. This presentation aims to demystify docx-as-code by covering its definition, potential applications, underlying rationale, recommended tools, and practical implementation. The session will conclude with a hands-on segment for practical insights.

Learning Objectives:
- Determine if docx-as-code is a good strategy to implement at your company.
- Determine if docx-as-code aligns with organizational goals.
- Address existing challenges in authoring and publishing.
- Understand how to seamlessly implement a docx-as-code approach.

How Things Work: The New Culture of Documentation

Adele Bellefleur

How a Refreshed Approach to Documentation Transforms Team Effectiveness and Problem-Solving
Documentation has traditionally been viewed as “static.” That is, lifeless piles of paper, dusty binders on a shelf, records in your database. But when applied properly, documentation is “dynamic” – it actively moves your forward and changes outcomes. No matter what your situation is—your files are a mess; you can't get your team to follow up; you're stuck in a vortex of meetings; no one reads your processes; your fancy system is a bust; your expensive, “best-in-class” consultants failed to deliver real change—Dynamic Documentation is about saving your business problems through a distinct set of steps: Capturing, Structuring, Presenting, Communicating, Storing, Leveraging, Leading and Innovating.

This session shares leading best practices, skills, techniques, and frameworks from Adele Bellefleur’s new book The 24-Hour Rule and Other Secrets for Smarter Organizations which you can think about as the first “mass market” book in documentation best practices.

Learning Objectives:
- The 24-Hour Rule: Learn how to optimize your personal and team workflow by processing information before your short-term memory lets it go.
- Dynamic Notes: Develop a practice of capturing information effectively, harnessing the wealth of ideas and opportunities that come your way.
- The Groundhog Trap: Use documentation techniques to eliminate repetitive discussions about project past or future decisions.
- Big D vs. Little d documentation: Understand how the everyday “Little d” documentation skills, habits, and disciplines make our “Big D” corporate projects successful.
- Action-Over-Perfection Protocol: Understand that documents and documentation systems that drive momentum are more valuable than striving for “perfection.”
- Dynamic Documentation “Skill Stack”: Build a comprehensive skill set encompassing note-taking, interviewing, reporting, memoing, writing, design, and basic information management.

STC Community Leaders Networking Event

STC leaders, volunteers, and members interested in learning about leadership are invited to join the Community Affairs Committee for a fun networking event. Get to know your fellow community leaders and build connections for the coming program year through various icebreaker activities.

Annual Business Meeting

Join the STC Leadership and Board of Directors for the STC Annual Business Meeting. We will pass the gavel to incoming President, Liz Herman, and introduce the 2024-2025 Board and Officers. In addition there will be a financial position presentation as well as a State of the Society address. No floor motions will be entertained.
How Things Work: Docs as Tests: Write Resilient Docs
Manny Silva

Keep your Docs Accurate, Complete, and in Sync with your Product.

When product updates are frequent and user expectations are high, maintaining accurate and up-to-date documentation isn’t just a necessity—it’s a competitive advantage. This talk explores ‘Docs as Tests’, a tool-agnostic strategy that leverages documentation procedures to not only test product features and user flows but to also serve as an early warning system for product issues, preserving the integrity of documentation and the product alike. I’ll delve into strategies for using documentation to validate itself, making documentation updates more easily, and maintaining customer trust through consistent, reliable content. Follow my development and implementation of Docs as Tests and learn practical methods to reduce the complexity of identifying and rectifying broken documentation. This talk is a must for anyone looking to transform their documentation from a static resource into a dynamic tool for quality assurance and user satisfaction.

Learning Objectives
- Learn how to programmaticaLy validate documentation content against a software product.
- Learn the benefits and considerations of the Docs as Tests strategy.
- Learn how you might apply Docs as Tests to your docs, whether as an individual writer or as a team.

How Things Work: What’s it Like to Author in a CCMS?
Ted Wolff

Engage in a Time-Lapsed Look at the Day in the Life of a CCMS Author for a Fast-Tracked Look at Authoring Focused, Reusable, Multi-Format Content.

Have you ever wondered what it’s like to author, do single-source publishing, and collaborate on content in a CCMS? Do you wonder how cutting-edge teams reuse content, streamline formatting, and simplify the authoring experience?

Get a rapid immersion into what it’s like to shape the future of content as an author in a CCMS. In this session, we’ll step through some of the important author scenarios for creating targeted content, publishing to multiple outputs, and “doing workflow” so you can start or advance confidently in your authoring career. Join Precision Content in this demo with AEM Guides.

Learning Objectives
- Learn how authoring templates help you hit the ground running to create focused content.
- Understand the possibilities for single-source publishing to multiple outputs, and how to easily customize the output.
- Grasp how to empower content work with reuse, workflows, and authoring tool integrations.

Saturday May 18th
Panel: Modernizing Your Documentation
Join us for a panel discussion exploring ways to innovate technical documentation, and to create modern documents that will remain relevant through generations of technological advancement. What modern solutions are available to make our old documents more accessible? What can we do to streamline our processes to improve reviews and increase or decrease (if needed) end-user engagement? From design to implementation to maintenance, all aspects of document creation are rapidly changing. Technology, such as generative AI, is affecting the day-to-day work of technical communicators around the world. Let’s discuss how to navigate modernization, what it means to be a technical communication in the AI generation, and learn about potential methods of maintaining and updating existing documentation to bring it into the 21st century and beyond.

Panelists: Matthew Stanford (Moderator), Adrienne Bellahumeur, Rob Hanna, Emerson Welch

Panel: Ask an Expert
Bring your “Hallway Track” Topics and Questions to this Session and Learn from our Panels Combined 100 Years of Experience.

The un-conference vibe is center-stage with a panel of industry leaders ready to answer your burning industry questions. Wondering about tools, approaches, skills, or any other ‘why’ or ‘how’ in tech comm? Bring your inquiries to this session! Don’t know what you don’t know? Come absorb the discussion and debate between industry leading experts, spurned on by real-time audience questions. You’ll leave with new ideas and opinions pulled straight from the minds of the experts.

Panelists: Kirsty Taylor (Moderator), Alan Porter, Dawn Stevens

Panel: Are You a Uni-Duck?
The Intersection of Instructional Design and Technical Communication

Have you ever wondered if what you do is more “technical communication” or is more “instructional design”? What’s the difference? Are there differences? Do they even intersect? In this fun and interactive session, we’re going to explore the nuances of both, where they overlap, where they differ, and all the points in-between.

Panelists: Viqui Dill (Moderator/Emcee), Melanie Murphy, Marlee Sastrer

How Things Work: CPTC Certification Program Overview and Top 10 Study Tips
Craig Baehr

Join us for an interactive session on the CPTC Program, including an overview of the three levels and nine core competencies, what you need to know about the exam, sample questions, informative resources available, and the top study-tips for preparing for each of the exams. We’ll also be available to answer your questions about the program, too.

Want to Know About The Body of Knowledge?
Deanne Levander

The TCBDK editing team has been very busy upgrading the TCBDK experience. There are many hands at work behind the scenes to bring the TCBDK to a point where technical communication students, practitioners, and hiring managers can find answers to their most pressing questions.

Get a glimpse of our progress and determine if joining our team is something you’d like to do. We can always use more help!

Panel: TESIG Editing Best Practices
Want to learn some great editing strategies and best practices? Come to the TESIG’s panel to ask questions, discuss your options, and learn how to boost your editing skills.

Join us for the TESIG Editing Best Practices Panel, hosted by the Technical Editing Special Interest Group. Learn from seasoned technical editing practitioners as they share effective strategies and best practices. Ask questions and engage in lively discussion. Boost your skills and network with fellow professionals!

Panelists: Kelly Schnick (Moderator), Rachel Peetkewich, Jessica Kiege, Ann Marie Queekey

Intensive: AI and Powerful Personas
Jill Stanton

Create and Apply Personas for Effective Learning and Engagement for Specific Audiences. Learn AI Best Practices in Creating and Applying Personas.

When designing learning and communications, it’s easy to get so focused on the content and goals that you don’t keep audience needs in focus. Personas are a powerful tool to keep learners’ needs central throughout the design process, align with stakeholders’ and SMEs’, and ensure effective learning; however, they can require significant time and effort to create. What if you could use generative AI to quickly create and update learner personas?

In this session, we’ll discuss the benefits of personas in effective learning design, the basics of using generative AI, recent thinking about inclusive personas, examples of personas and their application, and how to create and use personas to design and develop effective learning experiences.

Learning Objectives
- Determine what makes a useful, inclusive persona including reliability, relevance to learning objectives, and correct level of detail
- Gather information to create personas including analyzing existing data, observing learners and empathy mapping
- Create personas including identifying key characteristics and differentiators that relate to learning objectives
- Integrate personas into your learning design processes using templates, tips, and best practices
- Use online tools including templates and generative AI to support creating and using personas
session descriptions

Ben Weak
Unlock the keys to cybersecurity success in just two hours with our intensive workshop, equipping technical communicators with vital skills, a security mindset, and career insights to navigate the digital landscape securely.

The workshop provides technical communicators with essential knowledge and skills in cybersecurity while emphasizing the development of a security mindset. Participants will gain insights into common cyber threats, learn best practices for handling information, and explore strategies for cultivating a security mindset in their professional practices. The workshop also highlights career opportunities for technical communicators in the cybersecurity field, encouraging participants to consider pursuing roles that leverage their communication skills in promoting cybersecurity awareness and best practices.

Learning Objectives:
- Understand the importance of cybersecurity in technical communication and its relevance in today's digital landscape.
- Identify common cyber threats, including phishing, malware, and social engineering, and their implications for technical communications.
- Apply principles of secure information handling, such as encryption and access control, to protect sensitive information through its lifecycle.
- Cultivate a security mindset characterized by vigilance, critical thinking, and accountability in identifying and mitigating cyber risks.
- Explore career opportunities for technical communicators in cybersecurity roles and consider pathways for professional development in the field.

Intensive: How to Avoid Murder and Mystery
Amelia Lax
Guided Practice for Setting (and Maintaining) Documentation Expectations

As technical writers, we are the stewards of our content. We vet content strategies, organize data, maintain and update information, and carefully evaluate what belongs and what doesn’t. So how do you explain to the marketing team lead that something they’ve asked for just isn’t feasible? What do you say to the lead engineer who insists on including a complex table that nobody asks for?

In this session, we’ll practice conversation strategies so that you can keep your sanity during tense discussions, get to the heart of what is being asked for and why, and learn how to act as an ambassador for your content. After some brief panel discussion of strategies that have worked in the past, participants will be paired up to try their hand in role-playing discussions around real content requests. Participants will be provided with prompts and rules to guide each scenario; fans of murder mystery dinners will recognize the format. After plenty of time for practice, a debrief and round-table will follow to close out. You will leave this session with tools and skills to better manage frustration and expectations, as well as some camaraderie and friends.

Learning Objectives:
- Improve soft skills such as creativity, active listening, perspective-taking, and solutions-oriented conversation
- Increase confidence with uncomfortable discussions and standing up for your content
- Connecting with other writers to share tips, tricks, and tools for converting with SMEs and stakeholders

Intensive: Help Your Documentation Using Flowcharts
Cindy Pao
Do you write Procedure Documents or Task Topics with Flowcharts? If you don’t, come to this Session to Explore How to use Flowcharts in your Documentation.

Do you write procedure documents or task topics? Do you include flowcharts? If you don’t, come to this session to explore the shapes of flowcharts, how to arrange the shapes into an effective flowchart, and how to use flowcharts in your documentation.

Flowcharts are an effective tool that can address high level address how your readers work with processes. In this session, we’ll learn about the shapes in a flowchart and what they tell you. Then, we’ll look at examples of flowcharts in different kinds of documentation. Next, we’ll create flowcharts using two methods: sticky notes and software. Last, we’ll add the flowcharts to different documentation types to see how they can simplify your final product.

Learning Objectives:
- Learn the basic shapes in flowcharts.
- Create flowcharts.
- Incorporate flowcharts into procedure documents and online help.

Intensive: Building a Microlearning
Jennifer Goode
Join a team and build your own microlearning! Gain valuable instructional design experience as you create a shareable learning project.

In this workshop, participants will tackle a training need by developing a script, storyboard, and short microlearning. All participants are welcome: students, IT novices, mid-career professionals, and skilled instructional designers. Work with a dynamic group to crowdsource learning and your solution in this highly interactive experience, which is sure to land on your resume or professional portfolio.

Learning Objectives:
- Create a microlearning script that addresses audience needs, problem context, and learning objectives.
- Build a storyboard that integrates media to support learning content.
- Construct a microlearning that delivers content, meets learning objectives, and addresses learner needs to address a real organizational problem.

Intensive: Strategies for Interviewing SMEs
Nicky Bleiel
Interviewing SMEs can be intimidating — but it doesn’t need to be. Join Nicky Bleiel for wide-ranging discussion and bring your tips to share!

Technical communicators need to be skilled interviewers to do our jobs effectively. In this interactive talk, we’ll share strategies for conducting SME interviews. We’ll discuss how to use the principles of both journalism and technical communication to conduct an effective and productive interview — including the three stages of an interview, how to expand your circle of SMEs, and getting the answers you need in various scenarios.

Learning Objectives:
- Learn strategies for the 3 stages of an interview
- How to prepare questions
- The “magic” question to get the answers you need
- The types of interviews
- Resources for both technical communicators & SMEs

Intensive: Sort It Out
Dawn Stevens
Discover what Legos and Information Taxonomies have in common

Looking for information can be compared to digging in a bucket of Legos for a single piece. However, sorting Legos is child’s play compared to sorting technical content; the distinctions are not always obvious and obvious categories may not be useful to users. Regardless, we can learn from the Lego approach. This workshop draws parallels between sorting Legos and sorting content and suggests other strategies when the Lego model falls short.

Learning Objectives:
- Avoid the top five mistakes made when building an information taxonomy
- Apply six best practices of taxonomy design

Intensive: Sustainable Content: Balancing UX and Planetary Impacts
Alessa Banisignore
Learn How to Measure and Mitigate the Impacts of our Digital Content.

The accelerating wave of digitization is increasing the energy demands on an already overextended planet, and that energy has a carbon footprint. In this session, you’ll learn techniques for measuring and mitigating carbon emissions from data, and how to get management buy-in for sustainable content initiatives.

Learning Objectives:
- Measuring the carbon footprint of your digital content by building your own calculator tool
- Gaining management support for sustainable content strategies
- Understanding the environmental impacts of AI in content
Intensive: Gen AI? Nothing to Fear!
Susan Kelley
GPT and others: Soup to Nuts
If you are nervous about how and when to use tools like ChatGPT, or if your company doesn’t allow it, or even if you are absolutely certain that it violates all sorts of ethical considerations, this session is for you. The robots are not here to take your job. Large language models are teachable tools, models that we can use to help us with daily tasks, to improve our writing, to remove writer’s block and to make our jobs easier.
This session will help you understand what to embrace, what to be cautious of, and how to help you move your leadership team (and maybe yourself) forward in use cases for embracing GPT models as a great writing tool. We will have a great Q&A session, positive examples, and even “prompt tuning models” to alleviate your fears and help you leap forward in the realm of generative AI as the amazing writing tool that it is.
Learning Objectives
- Learning objectives include professional development, tool mastery,
- confidence building, and greater understanding of the risks and
- rewards in using GPT tools currently available.

Intensive: Translating for the Best Translation
Kim Cmnielewicz
Translation has Become a Necessary Component of Content Delivery as Products are Distributed in Multiple Regions.
This session will discuss some of the considerations to evaluate when deciding whether to use an AI-generated translation application for all or part of your translation process and include examples of how you can leverage verified translations to test AI translation tools and calculate if there are significant time and cost savings. Our company requires documentation in 18 languages for our most popular hardware and software products so planning timelines traditionally allotted between two to six weeks, depending on the extent of new content for translation, be completed by our translation services. Our marketing department tested and decided to purchase an AI translation application for their promotional documentation so we were tasked to see if we could also utilize it for all or part of our user support content translations.
Our testing plan encompasses several levels and checks, including comparing the accuracy of an AI-generated translation of a user guide with a relatively simple format to that of a complex help file with many topics and multiple links. We verify if variations are due to different vocabulary choices with the same meaning as the original translations, and how robust the AI is capable of using very precise language consistently. We’re also calculating how much time we need to invest in preparing the AI application and how much reformatting and quality checking may be necessary, especially for languages utilizing non-Roman alphabets in which replicating accurate content indexes may be problematic. We also consult with our legal and compliance departments to confirm our responsibilities in providing operational and safety information that is critical for safe product use and accurate results. This phase also includes collaborating with our regional regulations in order to establish what wording most accurately represents important warning information.
Learning Objectives
- Build a software evaluation plan
- Prepare source files for translation
- Build a translation glossary
- Calculate time and cost savings for translations
- Quality check translation content and formatting

Intensive: Enterprise-Level Documents on a Budget
Laed Butler
From Open Source to DITA Hacks, Learn and Share How Small Companies and Individual Practitioners can save Money and Produce High-Quality Documents.
Everyone wants to produce high-quality technical communications, but not every company or individual has an enterprise-level budget. In this session, Laed will demonstrate some of the creative and cost-saving ways their company produces quality publications on a budget for multiple aviation manufacturers. Come prepared to learn and share budget-saving suggestions for producing excellent documentation. Open source software solutions, incorporating simple scripts in your everyday documentation, DITA hacks, learning additional skills, and best practices are some of the areas that will be discussed. While DITA is the primary authoring standard that will be discussed, all areas of the publication and document management and production cycle will be covered. Audience participation is strongly encouraged.
Learning Objectives
- Software on a budget, from repositories to publishing engines
- How to incorporate python scripts in your everyday documentation management
- Using DITA in creative ways
- Best practices for managing documents without a DITA-aware CMS
- Some additional skills that help save time and money
- Where to spend the money because sometimes it is necessary

Get Hired: Resume Review
Nathaniel Lim, Christina Mayer, and friends
Get your resume reviewed by a tech comm coach 1-on-1 to get customized, actionable feedback on how you can turn it into an eye-catching, ATS-beating resume. Get your resume in front of hiring managers. Appointments will be for 15 min each.
Bring hard copies of your resume.
Notes:
- This is a review only.
- No writing is part of this session.
- Advanced signup is preferred.

Get Hired: Networking 101: Building Professional Relationships
Raymond Kim
Introverted? Socially clumsy? Don’t know how to start? No worries! You, too, can network professionally.
Networking: You keep hearing that word throughout your career development, but you don’t know much about it, much less, how to do it. In this interactive session, we will discuss networking — what it is, why it’s important, and where opportunities exist. You will even have an opportunity to practice networking within the confines of our room. You might even leave this session with new networking contacts! Bring business cards if you have them!
Learning Objectives
- How to get started with networking, even if you’re introverted
- Find opportunities for networking
- Building your network
- Learn how to network online
- Take advantage of social media for networking
- Why business cards are important

Get Hired: How to Advance your Career using Personal Branding
Kevin Meglic
I recently went to a conference where attendees’ name tags included the phrase “Ask me about...” [then the answer attendees provided when registering].” While the intent was to give attendees a way to break the ice when networking, I realized the whole concept of personal branding could be summarized by that simple statement, “Ask me about...”
How is content strategy and technical communication viewed in your organization? Does your boss’s boss think of your department as a core part of the development team, or a burdensome commodity to be acquired at the lowest possible price given an acceptable level of quality?
What can you be doing to promote your corporate value and advance your career? Attend this session and find out!
Get Hired: Building Your Digital Fingerprint
Alex Hakès
Let's Build Your Digital Fingerprint Together! Learn How to Craft Your Personal Brand Using Google Sites, a Free Modern Tool!
Are you new to Tech Comm? Are you returning after time away? Great, so am I! Come learn how to create your own personal website using Google Sites, a free modern tool. Let us learn together how to think of your work through the lens of a personal brand by building one yourself. This session will consist of a 20-minute demonstration and a 30-minute workshop to begin building your own portfolio website. We will go over everything from buying your own website domain, picking a modern template, and integrating multimedia content using Google Drive to display your own personal style.
Come prepared with a collection of past work you would like to share with potential employers as well as any images/graphics that you have created. Also, consider bringing along a digital copy of your most updated resume, as it will be a great guide to start the process.
Let's build your digital fingerprint together! Your portfolio website should explore your personality to best market yourself above the competition. Come learn and try it out yourself!
Learning Objectives:
- Learn how to buy a website domain and assign it to your Google Site.
- Learn the Google Sites workflow: its strengths and weaknesses.
- Learn how to take advantage of Google Drive as a free content management system.
- Most importantly: Walk away with a free website and content management system using Google Sites!

Get Hired: Finding the Right Fit
Susanne Ketchum
Frustrated in Your Job Search? Did you Consider What you really Want? Join Susanne to Deep Dive into your Requirements.
No matter what stage of your career that you’re in, finding the right role for you is daunting. There are so many choices, how do you decide?
Most candidates don’t take the time to think through what they want from an employer and manager. But when candidates do, they find a better fit, are happier, and stay longer. This interactive session will walk you through the process of deciding what you really want from a company, manager, and role. You’ll leave the session with your requirements and a template that you can analyze potential companies against.
Learning Objectives:
- Learn what criteria can affect your satisfaction with your role.
- Decide what’s truly important to you and leave the session with your list.
- Learn how to target companies and ask the right questions of hiring managers.

How Things Work: Transforming Product Documentation
Bethany Agual
Discover how I transformed product docs, collaborating with vendors, enhancing our knowledge base, and building a new team.
Explore my journey in transforming product documentation within my tech company. In this presentation, I’ll walk you through a case study of establishing a product documentation team and deciding to integrate generative AI into our knowledge base. Gain insights into developing new processes, selecting vendors, overcoming implementation challenges, and practical tips for your team. Discover the lessons I’ve learned and future strategies for documentation improvement. Join this session for actionable insights to enhance your next technical documentation initiative.
Learning Objectives:
- Building a Documentation Team: Explain the process of forming a dedicated documentation team, including training and collaboration with product management.
- Vendor Selection: Define the criteria for vendor selection and why generative answering technology was chosen.
- Implementing Generative Answering: Describe plans for integration into existing documentation, including challenges and strategies.

How Things Work: IDC & Quark CCMS Survey: New Insights
Emerson Welch
New Research Insights into TechComms, CCMS, Automation, and AI Adoption in Highly Regulated Industries
Emerson Welch, VP Global Marketing at Quark, will share critical new statistics and narratives gathered from a recently commissioned CCMS survey with renown industry analysts IDC. Attendees will learn where the biggest revolution sits in TechComms and componentized content creation, how and in what capacity AI will impact regulatory content, why integration with the Microsoft ecosystem — including Microsoft Word for structured authoring — is so important, and what technical writers should be considering as part of the wider content automation strategy through 2024 and beyond.
Learning Objective:
- Brand new research insights from the recent IDC and Quark survey on CCMS and AI, especially for regulated industries content.

How Things Work: Doctor(s) Who... Work With Content that Change Lives
Sebastian Fuhrer & Bernard Aschwanden
Mayo Clinic. Two Words That Immediately Tell You the Content You Are Reading Is Credible, Curated, Comprehensive, and Clear.
Mayo Clinic content is the literal source of truth that inspires hope, and contributes to health and well-being. Content means being able to provide the best care to every patient through integrated clinical practice, education and research.
What is it that Mayo Clinic does that stands out when it comes to how they make, manage, modify, and maximize the reach of their content? Join Sebastian Fuhrer and Bernard Aschwanden as they explore the history of content (100+ years!), the current state of content, and the future of content at Mayo Clinic.
Learning Objectives:
- Purpose of content at Mayo Clinic
- Best practices used regarding content
- Pioneering research that drives patient care through content
- Value of content as a crucial asset

How Things Work: Writing a Book Review for STC TC Journal
Jackie Danrau
Elevate Your Expertise, hone your Writing Skills, and Contribute to STC by Writing a Book Review for the Technical Communication Journal.
Explore the art of book reviews as a gateway to deeper knowledge in technical communication. Join this session, where I guide you through the process—from grasping the big picture to crafting your review. Discover strategies for information evaluation, drafting, editing, and submission. Share your insights with the STC community, honing your writing skills and broadening your expertise within our field. Elevate your understanding while contributing to our collective knowledge base and institutional subscribers’ benefit.
Learning Objectives:
- Learn about the STC Technical Communication book review process
- Learn the components of a book review
- Learn tips for writing, editing, and submitting your review
How Things Work: Developers Writing Docs
Thad Titton
How Do You Document a Product Created by and for Developers? Start by Making the Doc Creation Tools and Processes Feel Like Those Developers Use.

Our team creates documentation for ArcGIS Maps SDKs for Native Apps, a product that allows developers to add mapping and spatial analysis to their apps. Since much of the information needed to document our product resides in the heads of subject matter experts (mostly the developers who create the product), we've built a system that uses tools and processes familiar to developers and software engineers.

Our updated approach uses open-source tools (some of which are free) that are readily available for anyone who wants to contribute to the documentation. These changes have reduced headaches for subject matter experts' contributions, freed the doc team from being the gatekeepers (and bottleneck) for creating documentation, and brought documentation processes more inline with product development processes.

Learning Objectives
- Understand how familiar software development tools and workflows can be applied to documentation.
- Find ways to reduce resistance from tools and processes when asking for doc contributions from subject matter experts.
- Understand how tools and processes affect each other, sometimes in unforeseen ways.
- Learn about available tools for managing documentation workflows, many of them free.
- Gain insight from our experiences and perhaps avoid some of our mistakes.

How Things Work: The Prompt Engineer’s Toolkit
Emily Loed
Explore the Art of Prompt Engineering in a Playful, Hands-on Session that Explores Generative AI.

This immersive session is designed to navigate the intriguing landscape of Generative AI through the lens of play. Engage in a dynamic and participatory experience where every turn of phrase is a step towards mastery. You’ll not just learn, but apply the art of crafting prompts that breathe life into AI conversations. Leave empowered with the tools to shape dialogue or create visuals that are as effective as they are imaginative.

Learning Objectives
- An understanding of neural networks
- A practical understanding of trained model algorithms
- Prompt engineering
- Details prompt writing framework and activity

STC Community Leaders Collaboration Event
Join us for small-group brainstorming on role-based topics related to running a chapter or SIG, such as maintaining the community website, planning and promoting educational and social events, membership growth, and succession planning.

Lightning Talk: Tactical Writing for Email
Amelia Lax
Learn Practical Approaches to Apply Minimalism to your Communications, Leading to Clearer, Less Painful, More Productive Email Exchanges

Technical writing is inherently collaborative, especially when it comes to our subject matter experts. And, for better or worse, much of this collaboration happens using everyone’s least favorite medium: email. This lightning talk will cover a baseline checklist to ensure your emails are always clear, concise, and above all, easy to respond to. A happy SME is a helpful SME, and these strategies will help you get the information you need as quickly as possible and with minimal resentment.

Learning Objectives
- Increase communication speed and clarity during the planning and research stages of writing.
- Improve soft skills such as perspective-taking.
- Come away with a concrete list of criteria to evaluate whether an email is complete.

Lightning Talk: 7 Minimalism Actions To Improve UX/CX
Janice Summers
Simple Minimalist Strategies that Drive Customer Satisfaction and Improve User Experience with Your Content.

Minimalism has a long history in culture, art, music, film, poetry, and fiction. Technical content minimalism is the art of balancing between too little and too much. By applying the teachings of this discipline to your content creation, you will improve the quality of the information and drive improvements in UX/CX. I’ll share an uncomplicated approach that you can easily adopt to transform your content.

Learning Objectives
- Learn the basics of minimalism
- Learn how to effectively apply minimalism to your authoring
- Learn how minimalism and UX/CX intersect
- Gain hands-on experience with the art of minimalism

Lightning Talk: When Patient Intake Forms Go Bad
Liz Frayley
It’s Time to Take UX/UI to Customer Surveys: Better Writing Strategies can Improve Data Collection and Increase User Participation

Everyone dreads filling out their doctor’s Annual Wellness Survey Form because, invariably, we’re asked to provide data that exists in our record and that the doctor has better access to, especially at the time we are asked to fill it out. I usually skip doing mine. Once I started digging around, I managed to acquire several examples from a variety of doctors. I found myriad examples that fly in the face of modern UX and CX techniques. I’ll make you laugh, think, and hopefully design better surveys that your customers will actually fill out, allowing you to collect better data.

Learning Objectives
- Learn how modern UX/UI techniques can be applied to survey questions
- Learn how minimalism intersects UX/UI techniques
- Learn what not to do on your next survey

Lightning Talk: Overcoming Barriers to DITA Adoption
Rob Hanna
Learn from Years of Survey Data on DITA Challenges and Barriers to Adoption: What Would You Want to Consider Before Moving to DITA?

The third DITA Satisfaction Survey is underway to help build a better picture of the state of DITA adoption worldwide. This survey has surfaced many of the challenges and misconceptions that have impacted companies wanting to scale content operations to meet increased demand and quality. Learn from the wins of others as you explore this journey.

Learning Objectives
- Trends in structured authoring
- Top challenges faced by DITA authoring teams
- Mitigating strategies to overcome barriers to adoption
Lightning Talk: Cultivating an AI Community of Practice

Embark with Jason Kaufman on Shaping a Community of Practice for Ethical AI Use, Fostering Collaboration and Innovation in your Organization.

Jason Kaufman presents a powerful narrative on fostering a responsible AI culture within your organization through the development of a Community of Practice (CoP). This session will explore the foundational concepts of a CoP tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities presented by Generative AI.

Participants will learn effective strategies for initiating and growing a CoP, engaging stakeholders, promoting continuous learning, and ensuring that AI tools are used ethically and effectively. Through real-world examples, the talk will highlight the tangible benefits of nurturing such a community, from driving innovation to maintaining compliance with industry standards.

This session is a call to action for leaders to cultivate a forward-thinking environment that empowers professionals to navigate the complexities of AI with confidence and shared purpose.

Learning Objectives:
- Understand the concept of a Community of Practice (CoP) and its significance in the context of generative AI.
- Learn strategies for initiating and nurturing a CoP within an organization to promote responsible use of AI.
- Discover methods for fostering an environment of continuous learning and engagement among CoP members.
- Explore the role of a CoP in promoting ethical AI use, risk management, and adherence to industry standards.
- Gain insights into future-proofing AI practices and maintaining agility in the face of technological advancements.

Awards Lunch

We will recognize the Jay R. Gould Award, Ken Rainey Award, Frank R. Smith Awards, Intercom Magazine Article, Intercom Guest Edited Issue, Sigma Tau Chi, Alpha Sigma, and Student Scholarship Awards during lunch.

Awards Reception

Join us as we recognize the Most Improved Community, Community of the Year, Associate Fellows, Fellows, Lifetime of Service, and President’s Awards. Followed by a reception with hors d’oeuvres and a cash bar.

Sunday May 19th

Intensive: Talk Like a Girl

Susan Kelley

Limiting Low-Power Language in the Workplace

Research shows that women, far more often than men, use what are known as “low power terms” in language to de-emphasize, especially in professional settings. This use of language often means they are viewed as less assertive, confident, and competent in the workplace.

This session is valuable to attendees of all gender identities in learning how to use more assertive language without appearing aggressive or overbearing, and how to adopt word choice that builds consensus across boundaries.

Learning Objectives:
- Identify the areas where they frequently use low power language in their own communication, where they can improve their communication skills deliberately, and how they can classify their areas of improvement.
- Apply the principles of assertive communication and categorize assertive language effectively while understanding those instances where low power language is useful and perhaps even needed.

Intensive: Building Dynamic Integrated Teams that Exhibit Synergy, Consistent Quality, and Contentment!

Marilyn Weikel

In this Interactive Session, Marilyn will talk about Four Keys to Creating a Team with Synergy and Flow: Hiring, Setting Expectations, Developing Cohesiveness and Quality, and Maintaining Team Satisfaction.

Marilyn’s team-building expertise has developed teams that have been described as “performing like an orchestra where each member knows their part and all members play seamlessly within unison or shine individually in solo.” This feedback from Marilyn to analyze her team-building style and realize that she had inadvertently integrated her broadcast production training with her people skills to develop a unique model for building teams and managing projects.

Marilyn will discuss her proprietary model and how to “develop the story” that creates satisfied team members and customers who are ready to show up for the next chapter in the company’s future. You can experience this session as an observer or as a volunteer in her real-time team-building demonstrations! Be prepared to laugh, look at your “running/playing style” as a team member or team lead, and analyze your team based on communication factors she presents.

You will have a chance to share specific or generic issues (at your own discretion) and ask questions. At the end of the session, you will come away with new tools to make your team dynamic!

Learning Objectives:
- Understand the role and significance of AI-Prompt Management teams in leveraging generative AI for content strategies.
- Learn strategies for utilizing existing content and knowledge management systems to build and manage an effective PromptBase.
- Gain insights on assembling and integrating an AI-Prompt Management team into existing organizational workflows.
- Acquire techniques for aligning AI-generated content with traditional content systems for consistent, high-quality outputs.
- Explore real-world case studies and best practices for effective Prompt Management.
- Prepare for future advancements in AI technology and their impact on content strategy and management.
Session Descriptions

Intensive: Great Graphics
Tina Spayre

Are Your Graphics Cringeworthy or Exquisite? What’s the Difference Between a Professional-Looking Graphic and an Unexceptional Graphic?

You can spot an inferior graphic or document design just by looking at it. But what makes it unexceptional? In this session, we will explore what makes a professional-looking graphic or design look good, and how you can transform your graphics into attractive examples of visual communication. We will also discuss how image resolution, sizing, and placement matter. Additionally, we will explore free or inexpensive tools that you can use to improve your graphics and designs.

Bring your laptop or tablet if possible. During the interactive session, you will use office software that you may already have, or be able to download free trial versions of inexpensive tools. We will practice techniques with a project that you can take back to your workplace and use right away. If you do not have a device, that’s OK. You can sketch on a sheet of paper and practice your techniques when you return home.

Learning Objectives
- How to identify the differences between professional and amateur graphics
- How to properly size, use the correct resolution, and place graphics in your designs
- Which inexpensive tools are available to enhance your graphics

Panel: Get Hired!

Everything you wanted to know about Finding a Job and Careers but were too afraid to ask.

Come with your questions, and we’ll provide the experts with answers!

Panelists: Amanda Patton (Moderator), Suzanne Kelchner, Jack Molisani, Kevin Meglic

Posters have returned to Summit!

Come see the following posters and interact with the presenters during the Poster Session:

Level Up! Gamify Documentation
Addison Kliever

Creating User-Centric Documentation
Andrea Howard

Generative AI, Tech Comm, and You
Arthur Berger

Help Your Documentation Using Flowcharts
Cindy Pao

Writing a Book Review for STC TC Journal
Jackie Damrau

Streamline Search via Document Organization
Kim Chmielewicz

Giving Reviewers and Managers PoWEr and Other Tools for Coaching Writers
Rachel Petkewich

Crafting a Contact Center Experience
Rachel Houghton

Participatory Design and the Syllabus
William Reppetto
Addison Bonsignore
Addison Bonsignore has many hats, deftly navigating the worlds of software operations, mobile documentation, and technical videography. With a sharp eye for streamlining complex processes and a knack for translating technical jargon into plain language, he empowers users and developers alike. Hailing from Austin, Texas, he is passionate about breaking down silos and creating bridges between different technical communication communities. He has an undergraduate degree from UT Austin and a master’s degree in professional and technical communication from the University.

Amita Lax
Amita Lax is a technical writer and editor with almost 10 years of experience specializing in developing and managing technical communication strategies in the manufacturing sector. Her expertise encompasses leading technical writing teams, enhancing process efficiencies, and implementing advanced software solutions. Additionally, she plays an active role in the Society for Technical Communication, demonstrating her commitment to the field through leadership and conference contributions.

Amelia Lax
Amelia Lax is a technical writer and editor with almost 10 years of experience specializing in developing and managing technical communication strategies in various industries, including electronic health records and home appliances. She specializes in end-user communication from user interface text to cookbooks, and she enjoys the challenge of taking complex concepts and explaining them clearly and succinctly. As part of her current role, Amelia also frequently makes use of conflict resolution and mediation tactics to navigate heated requests and facilitate inter-team communications.

Andrew Howard
Andrew Howard is a driven and committed writer who loves challenges within her work. Documenting improvements and changes are the most interesting and challenging parts of working within the industry and have fueled a passion for what good technical communication means.

Ann Marie Queeney
Ann Marie Queeney is an S.T.C. senior member with more than 20 years of technical communication experience primarily in managing procedures in the medical device industry. Her S.T.C. experience includes serving as a 2020-2022 board member and Communities Affairs Committee (C.A.C.) chair. Her P.I.G. leader, and St.C Education Committee member. Ann Marie is the owner of A.M. Queeney, LLC.

Arthur Berger
Arthur Berger creates technical documentation for service mesh and API gateway technologies and open-source projects. He produces a wide range of products, including instructions, training materials, applications program interface (API) documents, user interface (UI) text, command line interface (CLI) strings, error messages, videos, diagrams, and more. As the President of the S.T.C. Carolinas chapter, he enjoys helping people connect with other professionals, events, and resources to succeed in their tech communication pursuits.

Ben Woelk
Ben Woelk, CISM, CISSP, CPTIC, is Governance, Awareness, and Training Manager for the Information Security Office at the Rochester Institute of Technology, where he leads a team of information security professionals. Ben is a member of the CISM and CISSP certifications and focuses on developing a culture of security awareness and training. Ben is also a course developer for SANS, a program developer, course developer, and instructor for the GIAC CPTIC, and is ITIL v3 certified.

Bernard Ashwanden
Bernard Ashwanden is a trusted thought leader, senior content strategist with CCMA Kickstart, and S.T.C. Past President. He combines over 30 years of experience with business leadership to deliver compelling narratives on strategic content deployment. His expertise in unified content strategies makes him an invaluable resource for optimizing content initiatives, offering authentic storytelling and actionable insights for organizational success.

Bethany Aguad
Bethany Aguad is the Director of Product Documentation at Bullhorn, the global leader in staffing industry software, managing the technical writing team as part of product enablement and education. With a career spanning academia, hospitality, and financial services, Bethany applies her communication skills and process improvement expertise to address complex information challenges.

Christina Mayr
Christina Mayr is a Senior Information Architect and the Knowledge Management team lead at Epic Games. Christina prides herself on leading and coaching others to improve their skills in technical communication. Her professional interests include technical content strategy, content operations, and leadership. In addition to her full-time job, Christina is also an instructor at S.T.C. volunteer leader, presenter, Intercom author, and mentor for over 10 years.
Cindy Pao
Cindy Pao is a senior technical writer, developing user documentation for complex oilfield software. She has been a technical communicator for over 25 years. Cindy received a B.A. in English from the University of Minnesota and a Certified Professional Technical Communicator. She has designed and produced online help systems, user guides, job aids, safety alerts, release notes, policy and procedure manuals, and intranet websites. Cindy has presented at conferences, program meetings, workshops, and webinars many times, including All About the Technical Communication Body of Knowledge, Creating an Online Help System, Developing Workflow-Based Help, New Leader Table: The Basics of Running a Community, Using a Customer Response System in Writing and Updating User Documentation, and Creating a Winlines Project.

Craig Baehr
Craig Baehr, Ph.D., STC fellow, is an APMG International accredited professional trainer, instructional designer, and technical communicator with more than 25 years of technical communication experience. Currently, he serves as STC Chief Examiner for the Certified Professional Technical Communicator (CPTC) certification program and Executive Editor for Intercom magazine. Dr. Baehr is author of numerous books, articles, and presentations on technical communication topics including Web development, online writing, agile communication, and information experience. He has worked in both academia as Professor and Graduate Director of Technical Communication at Texas Tech University and in industry as technical writer/editor, Web developer, and program director for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He is also a Past President of STC and has served multiple terms on its Board of Directors. You can contact Dr. Baehr at stcbahr@gmail.com.

Darcy Beery
Darcy Beery has taught Technical Writing & Editing at MSU Denver for 13 years, she has earned STC’s CPTC certification and is currently writing an Introductory Technical Writing textbook that she hopes to gear toward STEM industry students specifically. The textbook is scheduled to be published in the Fall of 2024.

Dawn Stevens
Dawn Stevens is the president and owner of Comtech Services. She lives solving problems, whether it is related to content strategy and management for her clients or to help her out of an Escape Room. She teaches minimalism in writing, but does not practice it in her life -- having just put up 50 Christmas trees with over 6000 ornaments in her home this past holiday season. She loves Disney and has decorated her office with Disney villains to remind her employees of her true nature.

Deanne Lavender
Deanne is an STC Fellow, past Society and chapter leader, and longtime TCBOK and STC volunteer. She works for an international biomedical manufacturing company and lives in St. Paul, MN.

Emerson Welch
Emerson Welch is VP Global Marketing, responsible for driving Quark’s marketing strategies to strengthen the company’s market position to support business growth. With over 25 years of B2B software product marketing experience, Emerson has successfully led marketing teams for small startups, channel partners, and large enterprises.

He was most recently marketing director at Adobe-based workflow management software company, Oppritus. Emerson’s technology expertise in content automation, creative collaboration workflows, ERP, CRM, IT support services, and more, has resulted in a consistently strong track record of enabling sales to grow revenue through simple messaging and innovative content that turns prospects into customers.

Emily Laird
Emily Laird brings over 15 years of experience in web design, digital automation, and technology, with a particular focus on the burgeoning field of Generative AI and prompt engineering. Her career has spanned the dynamic evolution of digital technologies, positioning her at the forefront of AIs practical application in business and industry. Emily’s work emphasizes the transformative potential of AI in enhancing user experience and operational efficiency, drawing upon her deep understanding of technical communication’s role in the modern digital landscape. As a thought leader, she actively contributes to shaping the discourse around the ethical and effective use of AI, advocating for solutions that are not only innovative but also user-centric and sustainable.

Girish Karunakaran Sankaran
With a rich 16-year tenure in the technology writing sector, Girish brings diverse experience across multiple domains and renowned organizations such as Unisys, IBM, VMware, and Cisco. His enthusiasm lies in continually expanding his expertise by delving into new products and emerging technologies.

Graham Riley
Graham Riley’s Mission, as the person behind CareerFoodBoxUSA, is simple: He’s here to Elevate your Career by Enhancing your Personal Brand. In 2012, he officially launched CareerFoodBoxUSA. He brings a tested and successful strategy designed to propel job seekers forward at any stage of their careers. With a friendly and straightforward approach, he is dedicated to making your journey towards career advancement as smooth and effective as possible. Whether you’re just starting out or looking to take your career to new heights, he’s here to guide you every step of the way.

Guiseppi Getto
Dr. Guiseppi Getto is an Associate Professor of Technical Communication and Director of the M.S. in Technical Communication Management at Mercer University. His research focuses on utilizing user experience (UX) design, content strategy, and other participatory research methods to help people improve their communities and organizations. He has published two books, Content Strategy in Technical Communication and Content Strategy: A How-to-Guide, with Routledge as well as numerous peer-reviewed academic articles and trade publications. He has served the Society in various roles, from being a chapter president for the Carolina Chapter to working on the Education and Website Committees and a regular speaker at the Summit. He has also taught at the college level for over twenty years and has consulted and formed research and service-learning partnerships with many non-profits and businesses, from technical writing firms to homeless shelters to startups. Read more about him at http://guiseppinetto.com.

Jeenen Akula
Jeenen Akula holds a bachelor’s degree in sociology from Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Nigeria. Before pursuing her MS degree in technical communication at Missouri University of Science and Technology, she served as a Program Manager at Avion Global Innovators, a tech company based in Abuja, Nigeria’s capital city. It was her innate passion for articulating intricate concepts in clear and concise manners that drew her to the field of technical communication.

Throughout her professional journey, Jeenen has consistently assumed roles of leadership, notably serving as the Media head of the international student’s organization and as President of the Society for Technical Communication’s Missouri S&T student chapter. Currently, she is undertaking doctoral studies at Texas Tech University, where her research interests encompass user-centered design, multimodality and pedagogy, rhetoric of health and medicine, and disability studies.

Jack Mollisani
Jack Mollisani is the president of Prospring Staffing, an agency specializing in content professionals:
http://ProspringStaffing.com

He’s the author of Be The Captain of Your Career: A New Approach to Career Planning and Advancement, which hit #5 on Amazon’s Career and Resume Best Seller List.
Jack also produces the LavaCon Conference on Content Strategy and Technical Communication Management, to be held in Portland this October https://lavacon.org.

Jackie Damrau
Jackie is a Program Manager/Product Owner for Cathedral Plumbing of Texas LLC working at AvivaView Integrated Solutions where she assists with managing patent/trademark deliverables, writes/edits customer
documentation, and has two software modules where she serves as the Product Owner for the MiView product platform.

In her spare time, Jackie is raising her two grandchildren and loves reading murder mysteries along with other esoteric subjects when time permits. Find more about Jackie on LinkedIn (LinkedIn.com/in/jackiedanmau).

Janice Summers

Janice Summers, Single-Source Solutions, specializes in helping people make the shift from unstructured to structured authoring. Her gentle style helps learners adopt new strategies in minimalist writing for better UX/CK. Mentoring clients to excellence at authoring architectures such as JDEA, ANL-STD 40013, 3878A, 3001, and DocBook XML, authoring since 2005, she hasn’t lost anyone yet! She is the author of “Arbortext for Authoring: An Author’s Guide to Getting Started with Arbortext Editor” available on Amazon.

Jason Kaufman

Jason Kaufman is the President and Principal AI Content Strategist at AIrevo and a pioneer in Generative AI consulting. With a 20-year legacy in content strategy and knowledge management, he now leads the change in integrating AI-driven solutions for businesses. His expertise lies in melding technical writing and AI transforming traditional content strategies with innovative AI applications. Jason holds certifications in KCS and AI for Decision Making, underscoring his commitment to ethical and efficient AI integration in enterprise environments. AIrevo, he stresses organizations towards harnessing the full potential of AI ensuring strategic growth and enhanced customer experiences.

Jennifer Goode, PhD, CPTC

Jennifer Goode, PhD, CPTC is the President and Chief Learning Officer at Anypro, a consultancy that specializes in strategic learning, organizational change management, and people and performance measurement. She has worked with a variety of clients to provide targeted learning solutions with a focus on learner experience, measurable outcomes, and large-scale organizational change. Jennifer has over 20 years of experience in learning and development practice, including 17 years as a corporate trainer and higher ed instructor. She is a frequent presenter and workshop leader at international conferences and seminars. In her spare time, Jennifer enjoys adventuring with her family—in the kitchen, in the garden, and on the road.

Jessica Kreger

Jessica Kreger has led technical communications and marketing communications teams that educate and empower customers across the world. With over 20 years of experience in diverse industries, she has worked for universities, global businesses, and start-up companies.

Jessica is passionate about developing optimal user experiences and creating content that improves people’s lives. She earned a M.A. in Professional Writing from Carnegie Mellon and a B.A. in English from Penn State.

She is a Senior Member of the STC and a Certified Professional Technical Communicator (CPTC).

Jill Stanton

Jill Stanton has 25 plus years of learning design expertise and Education, Theatre, English, and Psychology degrees. Her career has included designing and managing award-winning learning teams and projects, including: elearning, video production, curriculum design, Usability and UX design, performance support, learning strategy and design consulting. Jill is passionate about learning design and has presented on multiple topics including: learning personas, and/or, design thinking, project management, video production, accessibility, personas, AI and research-based instructional design.

John Clement

John Clement is a technical writer at L3Harris Technologies, volunteer in STC, and a recent graduate of the University of Central Florida. He is the author of a professional technical communicator since graduating in 2022 and at L3Harris he works on editing, writing, and reviewing technical documentation for hardware in the defense industry. In STC, he serves as the Student Outreach Director of the Community Affairs Committee (CAC), Secretary of the STC Florida Chapter, and as an alum volunteer with the Future Technical Communicators club at UCF.

Julia Southwick

Julia Southwick currently works at JHT - A Precise Systems Company as a Technical Writer. Julia embraces her role as a neurodivergent technical communicator, advocating for inclusive communication in her community and the profession. In her time with the STC Florida chapter, Julia has served as the chair of the communication committee, editor of the Memo to Members newsletter, co-chair of the 2021-2022 chapter mentoring program, and the chapter Vice President. Julia is a graduate of UF’s technical communication program class of 2019.

Kelly Schrannk

Kelly Schrannk, MA, ELS, has been in technical communication for almost 30 years, and she has been a medical editor in the pharmaceutical industry for the last 14 years. She brings consistency, structure, and clarity to her clients’ content whether she is writing content like blog posts, style guides, and standard operating procedures or editing formulary dossiers, manuscripts, proposals, slide decks, and training materials. Kelly is an Associate Fellow of STC and a BELS-certified Editor in the Life Sciences who has presented on infographics, Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, checklists, editing, and networking.

Kelly Smith

Kelly Smith is a Senior Technical Writer and Business Continuity Administrator on the Business Continuity team at Dart Container. She’s a published author and former magazine editor and has been a member of STC since 2015. She works as membership manager and social media manager for the Michigan Great Lakes chapter and has been working in technical communication since 1997.

Kevin Meglic

Kevin Meglic is the Vice President of ProSpring Staffing, an agency that specializes in content professionals (both contract and perm). https://prospringstaffing.com.

He is also the Director of Operations at The LavaCon Conference on Content Strategy and TechComms Management, which will be in Portland, OR this October. https://LavaCon.org.

Kim Chmielewicz

Kim Chmielewicz holds degrees from Hamilton College in Clinton, NY and the University of Buffalo in anthropology, creative writing, and clinical laboratory science. She currently lives in Westfield, NY and is employed at Kodak Alaris. She has always been interested in adapting how information is presented, organized, and distributed in relation to both the subject matter and the intended audience to improve usability and make complex material more accessible. Her greatest professional accomplishments have come from instructing others and seeing them put their new knowledge to use as well as problem-solving collaboratively to resolve issues and facilitate product improvement.
Kirsty Taylor
Kirsty is celebrating 25 years since starting as an in-house permanent technical writer with a telecommunications software company back in the late 90s. Since then, Kirsty has worked in permanent staff roles, and has experienced what it’s like to undo your content mistakes 5 years later. Kirsty served on the STC Board of Directors for 7 years and is a past Society President.

Lael Butler
As the Technical Communication Specialist at Streamline Designs, Lael works with client and in-house SMEs to develop, implement, and maintain a host of technical documentation including manuals, operating handbooks, checklists, and more. After receiving her BA in Public Relations, Advertising, and Communication, Lael worked with a Fortune 50 company first in Marketing and later in Operations. Lael joined Streamline Designs in 2014 as an Executive Assistant but was given the opportunity to begin learning technical communication early on and in 2020 was promoted to Technical Communication Specialist.

Liz Fraley
Elizabeth Fraley, CEO of Single-Sourcing Solutions and author of “Arbortext 101” and “Arbortext 102,” specializes in helping others grow and develop expertise. She’s founded two companies, been on the boards of three non-profits, and is constantly coming up with new ways to share knowledge in the technical communications and content industries. With experience in both high-tech and government sectors, she advocates approaches that directly improve organizational efficiency, productivity, and interoperability. If you ask her, she’ll say she’s happiest when those around her are successful.

Manny Silva
Technical writer by day and engineer by night, Manny Silva is Head of Documentation at Skyflow, the creator of Docs as Tests, and the creator of Doc Detective. He’s passionate about intuitive and scalable developer experiences and likes diving into the deep end as the 0th developer.

Marlee Sautter
Marlee is a technical writer and instructional designer in the industries of high-tech, health, science, transportation, education, and government, working at companies such as BRL, Xerox, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Cambria, and Regence-Blue Cross. She considers herself a lifelong learner, a backyard birder, an avid vocalist, and curious about how things work.

As an adjunct instructor at Portland State University (PSU) for over 13 years, Marlee taught technical writing in the classroom and online. For online classes, she created asynchronous training modules delivered through a learning management system (LMS), taught Adobe FrameMaker and MadCap Flare using the training manuals she wrote, and taught technical writing to students through presentations and classroom activities.

Marilyn Woelk
Marilyn is the owner and president of Wingz Creative and Technical Group, Inc. She is experienced in business and communications consulting, process improvement, and project management for global communications, training, documentation, and policy projects. She has worked with clients such as the Eastman Kodak Co., Xerox Corporation, Johnson & Johnson, Fujifilm USA, and the Alzheimer’s Association. Marilyn is an STC Associate Fellow and a previous STC Summit program co-chair, SIG manager, chapter president, Spectrum Conference co-chair, and Distinguished Chapter Service Award winner. She is married to Ben Woelk, a previous STC president.

Matthew Cranford
Matthew Cranford is a technical writer for Lifetimer. Products, spending the last fifteen years creating, editing, and maintaining assembly manuals and consumer warning documentation for the Utah-based manufacturing company. He has spent time filming assembly videos, coordinating with focus groups, and collaborating with project managers, change administrators, and production engineers, and is always looking for new ways to bring innovation to his work.

Before his tenure at Lifetimer, he was an award-winning copy editor for the Weber State University Signpost, as well as the assistant editor-in-chief of WSUS’s annual undergraduate literary journal, Metaphor. When he’s not writing manuals, he spends his time reading, writing, and advocating for poetry in his community. He also enjoys cheesy movies and singing at all the “Sad” jokes his kids can think up.

Melanie Murphy
Melanie is a Certified Professional Technical Communicator, working as an independent consultant in the Chicagoland area for the past 20 years. Thanks to the flexibility of gig work, Melanie’s built a diverse portfolio including technical writing, copywriting, editing, proofreading, and graphic design projects. Her most recent client is Argonne National Lab where she is a writer and editor in the Writing Center of Excellence.

A side-gig as a longarm quilter keeps Melanie busy. She’s learned a lot of valuable skills from this hobby that relate to tech comm. Color coordination, color balance, and what a good (and bad) set of instructions look like are just a few of the tips she often passes along to quilty friends. Contact Melanie via email — mgwritergirl@gmail.com — or chat with her at an IIT SIG First Friday at 5 on the STC Slack channels.

Mickella Rast
Mickella is a Proposal Writer for Chenaena Corporation, the largest Alaska Native Village Corporation in terms of federal contracting revenue. Though she initially entered the field with no proposal experience, she has since become the go-to trainer for new writers and is spearheading the integration of AI into the proposal writing process within her business unit. She has a B.A. in Communications and an M.S. in Technical Communication. She is Shipley Certified, APMP Foundation Certified, and a Certified Scaled Agile Practitioner. A lot in the past, she has also worked as a Technical Writer and Freelance Writer. This is her second year presenting at and attending the STC Summit.

Miriam F. Williams
Dr. Miriam F. Williams is Professor of English & Associate Chair of Texas State University’s Department of English. Prior to her career in academia, she worked as a health and safety inspector, policy analyst, policy writer/editor, and program administrator for government agencies. Her award-winning books and articles focus on public policy writing, race and ethnicity, and archival research. Miriam was the recipient of the 2022 Rigo Award (Association for Computing Machinery—SIGDOC) and was elevated to Fellow of the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing in 2017. She was the recipient of STC’s 2023 Ken Rainey Award for Distinguished Research and serves as Editor-in-Chief of STC’s research journal, Technical Communication.

Nathaniel Lim
Nathaniel is an STC Fellow and currently a technical writer for Cepheid, a molecular diagnostics company. His STC roles have included Society nominating committee, Summit Program committee, International Summit awards Judge and manager, and Community Achievement and Pacesetter Awards committee to name a few. He holds an A.S. in Physics and Mathematics from the College of San Mateo, a B.A. in Organizational Studies from the University of California, Davis, and a Certificate of Achievement in Technical Communications from De Anza College. In his 14-year career in technical communication, Nathaniel has written many cover letters and resumes and has been a job interviewer and interviewee.

Nicky Biebel
Nicky Biebel teaches about many tech comm topics, including minimalism, interviewing SMEs, presentation skills, and tools & technologies. She is the Senior Information Developer & Content Strategist at Innovative Systems, Inc. in Pittsburgh, PA and has more than 20 years of experience writing and designing content for software products in a variety of industries. Nicky is an STC Fellow, Past President, and volunteer. Her articles and talks are available at nickybiebel.com.

Rachael Swertfeger
Rachael currently works as technical writer at Sagent. Her current role has her focusing on Release Notes and support the MadCap software and team templates. Previous positions have included contract and permanent work for Lockheed Martin as a technical writer, knowledge base administration and technical writing work at Optum in the healthcare industry, and even a brief stint in education at a local non-profit providing after school programs for students. After graduating from UCF in 2011, she went right into her career with a jump start at Lockheed Martin, first as a contractor and then being hired full-time. Her volunteerism has included helping in the after school programs, prior to being permanently hired, and being a mentor for students through STC and FTC.
Rachel Houghton
Rachel Houghton is the current chair for the STC Fellows Committee and an active STC member since 1998. Rachel has led a versatile 26-year career as a technical communicator, which includes being a fine writer, editor, and an employee in various industries. She is a past Society-level Secretary for STC, past program chair of the STC Summit, competition judge, and book reviewer for the STC Journal. Technical Communication.

Rachel Petkewich
Rachel Petkewich has more than 20 years of experience in technical editing, science writing, marketing, and chemistry lab research. A scientific word nerd, she has worked on publications in industrial, government, magazine, web, and freelance settings for audiences around the world. As a principal technical editor at Regeneron, she also develops and delivers training about writing and editing that aim to boost writing skills and confidence of people at all levels in biotech.

Raymond Kim
Ray Kim is an active member of both STC and PASS (SQL organization). He has presented at numerous events, including PASS Summit and STC Summit. He has experience as a developer, webmaster, analyst, technical writer, and instructor. He holds an MS in technical communication from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a BS in computer science from Syracuse University. He currently works as a technical trainer and writer for The Research Foundation for SUNY.

Rob Hanna
Rob Hanna is an STC Fellow and professional technical communicator with nearly 30 years of experience. He has presented to audiences on the subject of technical writing and structured authoring over the past 20 years. For the past 10 years, Rob has led a team at Precision Content in helping Fortune 500 companies adopt complex structured authoring solutions.

Sebastian Fuhrer
Sebastian Fuhrer is the Director of Content Engineering and Content Operations at Mayo Clinic. He believes strongly in Mayo Clinic’s core value, the needs of the patient come first, and he is passionate about building a better tomorrow through structured content. Standardization can be achieved through content models and robust metadata, ensuring that humans and machines can repeatedly depend on the shape and pattern of their content.

Susan Kelley
Susan is a seasoned technical communicator, dynamic speaker, and passionate educator. In her current role with Medidata, she creates engaging content in the health sciences analytics market, specifically in generative artificial intelligence and data ingestion. Susan is a former professor of Human-Computer Interaction at Carnegie Mellon University and a passionate advocate of the usefulness of generative AI for those in technical communication, content design, and communication strategy.

Suzanne Kelchner
Suzanne Kelchner became the Senior Manager of Precoro Technologies in 2022. She worked remotely for the last eight years, and hired several team members. She has given technical white papers on her current team. Suzanne believes that a technical writer's main job is to translate technical jargon into common English, so that tech docs make sense. She also believes in developing leaders and mentoring her writers to be their best. Suzanne’s been in technical writing for over 20 years. She spent the majority of that time in an Agile software environment.

Ted Wolf
Ted Wolf is an Information Architect at Precision Content. Authoring Solutions Inc with a wide variety of experience in structured content and technical communication. Ted has worked across multiple industries, including finance, insurance, manufacturing, transportation, and software development. He has also worked across content roles to hone a well-rounded content perspective, from content development, tools administration, team management, and consulting.

Thad Tilson
Thad Tilson has worked in the geographic information systems (GIS) industry for nearly 30 years and in his current role as a technical writer for the ArcGIS Maps SDK product since 2013. Over his career, he has also worked as a GIS developer, technical support analyst, course author, and instructor. He enjoys technical writing for the learning opportunities it provides. He's found that the best way to learn something well is to attempt to describe it to others.

Tricia Spayer
Tricia Spayer is a Certified Professional Technical Communicator and Fellow in STC. She has led technical communications at Prescoro Technology Inc. in Sabin, OH for over 27 1/2 years. She has also specialized in computer graphics for 31 years. Tricia researched and implemented her company’s content management system, and has been administering the system and training other developers how to use it since 2007. Tricia served on STC’s Board of Directors, chaired the CAC and CAA committees, and served her local Ohio STC chapter since she joined STC in 2000.

Tyler Mueller
Tyler is currently a purchaser in the manufacturing field, buying for Carestream Health. She was introduced to tech comm during her internship as an associate writer at RJ, becoming a member of the Rochester STC chapter first as a student member and then as a council member. She got her degree in advertising and public relations (ADPR) and enjoys bridging the gaps between ADPR, tech comm, and manufacturing in her work.

Viqui Dill
As Technical Writer and Editor for Navy Federal Credit Union, Viqui is passionate about continued education and lifelong learning for those in our field. Sharing the tips and tricks she has gathered in her 20+ years as a writer, she is actively promoting networking with other writers to help us all learn and stay connected.

In her free time, Viqui plays bass in several bands including the DM Pickers, which features husband Keith on guitar, and son Jim on drums. You may remember them from their live Zoom performance at the 2020 STC Summit. And at the STC Summit in 2017, Viqui got the Rough Drafts band back together to perform at the Washington DC - Baltimore Summit Afterparty.

Viqui describes herself as a “technical writer, wife, mom, bass player, and worship leader. I’m happiest when folks sing along with me.”

William Repetto
William Repetto is a PhD candidate at the University of Delaware studying technical and professional communication. His dissertation focuses on using R as a tool to analyze and visualize data generated by human-computer interaction studies. He is currently a research assistant at UD's grant facilitation team and is running his own small business, Repetto Writing Solutions, LLC, which offers grant facilitation services to other small businesses looking to scale.