



SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION


Careers in Technical Communications

Speaker: Deb Lockwood



Speaker

- Deb Lockwood
- Senior technical writer at CSG Systems, Inc.
- President of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Society for Technical Communications



Job Types

- Academics
- Content developers
- Documentation specialists
- Information architects
- Instructional designers
- Interface designers
- Multimedia developers
- Technical editors
- Technical illustrators
- Technical writers
- Translators
- Usability and human factors professionals
- Usability testers
- Visual designers
- Web designers and developers



Writing Jobs

- Engineering
- Grant and proposal
- Hardware documentation
- Manufacturing processes
- Marketing
- Policy and procedure
- Software documentation
- Web



Industries

- Academics
- Aerospace
- Education
- Environmental
- Financial services
- Government
- High tech
- Manufacturing
- Medical
- Software firms
- Telecommunications
- Transportation



Employer Expectations

- Excellent use of the English language
- Usually requires a 4-year English, journalism, or writing degree
- Previous work experience
- Writing or editing test



Expected Skills

- Writing
- Editing
- Managing projects
- Researching
- Interviewing subject matter experts
- Translating technical information into end-user information
- Testing and documenting processes
- Learning new software applications quickly and with little supervision



Concerns

- Off-shoring jobs
- Difficulty finding work
- Constantly learning new tools
- Remaining relevant to the users
- Difficulty breaking into the field



Employment

- Two major categories:
 - Self-employed contractor
 - Full-time employee



Salary Ranges - Colorado

- Survey from Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Society for Technical Communications (STC) 2005
 - Entry level \$45-47
 - Mid-level \$42-62
 - Senior-level \$57-87
 - Mid-level supervisor \$67-112
 - Senior supervisor \$71-106



Professional Association

- STC Rocky Mountain Chapter (RMC)
 - Promotes professionalism and exchange of information among its members
 - Educates the community on the value of technical communication



STC RMC Facts

- Founded in 1958
- Based in Denver, Colorado
- Currently 410+ members
- Geographically diverse



STC Organization

- International organization with 16,000+ members worldwide
- Regions
- Communities
 - Geographic communities are *chapters*
 - Communities of interest are *special interest groups (SIGs)* (at a distance)



STC Membership

- Membership is open to anyone employed in, interested in, or concerned with the profession of technical writing, publishing, or associated disciplines



Student Membership

- Includes membership in
 - 2 chapters
 - An unlimited number of SIGs
 - Applicants for student membership may select 1 professional chapter and 1 student chapter
- \$55
 - Student members do not vote in STC elections
 - Student memberships are available only to those who meet the eligibility requirements



Student Membership Eligibility

- Enrolled in an accredited university, college, community college, or technical school
- Taking at least two courses or their equivalent each term
- Preparing for a career in technical communication



Questions?