Chapter 1

An Introduction to Technical Communication

- Ethical dimensions of technical communication
- Socioeconomic dimensions of technical communication
- Technical communication in an electronic age
- Types of technical communication
- Main characteristics of technical communication
- Communicating about technology

Review checklist

The global window
The collaboration window
Exercises
Accessibility

Characteristics of the Design of Technical Communication

The characteristics of the design of technical communication should address the following:

1. **Usability**: Make the information easy to use and navigate.
2. **Loyalty**: Make sure the information is relevant and accurate.
3. **Usability**: Make sure the information is accessible to everyone.
4. **Usability**: Make sure the information is usable in a variety of environments.

Technical communication is not just about making complex technical information easy to understand, but it also involves making sure that the information is accessible to everyone, regardless of their background or language. This means considering the needs and abilities of all readers, including those with disabilities. Technical communication is not just about presenting information, but also about helping readers understand and use it effectively.
Types of Technical Communication

Some common forms of technical communication include:

- **Product manuals:** Provide detailed instructions on how to use a product.
- **Assembly diagrams:** Illustrate the steps required to assemble a product.
- **Operation manuals:** Explain how to operate and maintain equipment.
- **Technical reports:** Provide data and analysis on a specific topic.
- **Instructional materials:** Educate on the proper use of tools or techniques.
- **Warranty information:** Outline the terms and conditions covered by a warranty.

These forms are designed to inform and educate readers on technical aspects of various products and processes. Each type serves a specific purpose, whether it's instructing, providing guidance, or ensuring compliance with legal or safety standards.
Societal Dimensions of Technical Communication

Despite society's calls for effective technical communication, issues such as accessibility and information overload in today's information age can lead to information overload. The problem is exacerbated by the sheer volume of information available online. When people consume too much information, they may become overwhelmed and lose focus on what is most important.

To address these issues, it is important to develop strategies that help people manage and sort through the information. One effective approach is to use electronic communication devices. These devices allow users to access and share information quickly and easily.

Figure 1: Electronic communication devices. We are in an age of information overload.

Technical communication involves many factors, including the audience, purpose, and content. It is important to consider the needs of the audience and the goals of the communication. Effective technical communication requires clear and concise language, as well as a good understanding of the subject matter.

To be successful, technical communication must be tailored to the specific needs of the audience. This may involve using different communication methods, such as writing, speaking, or presenting. It is important to choose the most appropriate method for the situation.

In conclusion, technical communication is a critical component of any organization. By understanding the needs of the audience and the goals of the communication, organizations can effectively use electronic communication devices to share information and improve productivity.
The Global Window

The Global Window is a tool that allows users to view and interact with information from various sources on the internet. It is particularly useful for technical communication, as it helps in finding and organizing information efficiently. The Global Window is designed to enhance collaboration and productivity by providing a comprehensive view of relevant data.

Exercises

1. Choose an example of a technical document and break it down into its components. List the different sections and their purposes.

2. Write a short report comparing two technical reports. Include a brief summary of each report and your overall assessment.

3. Discuss the role of the Global Window in technical communication. How can it be used to improve efficiency and collaboration?

4. Create a mind map for a technical project. Use the Global Window to gather relevant information and organize your thoughts.

5. Conduct a search on the Global Window for a specific technical term. How many results did you find, and what were they about?

6. Reflect on your use of the Global Window in a recent technical communication task. What did you learn, and how did it improve your work?