

TRM 316/IST 366 Assignment #6

Title: Written Instructions

Due Date: 3 November 2008

For the written instructions, you can select any item or topic (whether fictitious or not). However, instructions on how to install or begin using a product will generally be easier to develop. You **MUST** use your own words in describing the process the user is to follow.

Written instructions must include the following **four** elements:

1. **General introduction:** Include the preliminary information that readers will need in order to follow the instructions **safely** and **easily**. You could include the topic and purpose and provide overview of the rest of the instructions. You must provide **at least one** danger, warning, and/or caution statement.

a. **Who, When, & Why**

- **Who** should carry out the task?
- **When** should the reader carry out this task?
- **Why** should the reader carry out these instructions?

b. **What safety measures** or other concerns should the reader understand?

In addition to the safety measures that apply to the whole task, mention any tips that will make the job easier. **Caution! Warning!**

NOTE: For ease of assembly, leave all nuts loose. Give only 3 or 4 complete turns on bolt threads.



c. **What items** will the reader need?

- List necessary tools, materials, and equipment in the introduction so that readers will not have to interrupt their work to hunt for something.

2. **Step-by-Step Instructions:** The **heart** of a set of instructions is the step-by-step information on **how** to carry out the task or procedure.

- Number the instructions.
- Present the right amount of information in each step.
- Use imperative mood (“Attach the red wire.”). Begin steps with an active verb.
- Include graphics.
- Do not omit the articles (a, an, the) to save space.

3. **Conclusion:** Instructions often conclude with **maintenance tips**. Another popular conclusion is a **troubleshooter’s guide**, usually in the form of a table that identifies common problems and explains how to solve them.

4. Please include any sources cited in your set instructions. This could be on a separate last page.

Grading Criteria

Written Instructions (50 points)

1. Clear title
2. Effective design, with adequate white space and a clear relationship between the graphics and the accompanying text
3. Introduction
 - a. State purpose of task
 - b. Describe safety measures, concerns, tips, etc. that reader should understand
 - c. List necessary tools and materials
4. Step-by-step Instructions
 - a. Numbered
 - b. Expressed in the imperative mood
 - c. Simple and direct
 - d. Appropriate graphics included
 - e. At least 400 words used in this section
5. Conclusion
 - a. Follow-up, maintenance, and/or troubleshooting
6. Cite sources

WORKSHEET

Steps to aid you in developing your set of instructions

1. Determine your task:

2. Define the purpose and the audience:

General Audience. Define technical terms and provide detailed directions.

3. Define the steps of the task:

Be sure to number the instructions and to present the right amount of information in each step. Remember, each step should define a single task the reader can carry out easily without having to refer to instructions.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

4. Do some research if necessary (sources, etc.):

5. List the equipment, materials, and supplies needed:

List any item your reader will need in order to perform the task.

If you think readers might not be able to identify these items easily, include drawings next to the names.

6. Plan the special notices: Caution, Warning, Note, and Danger notices:

Your most important responsibility in writing documentation is to make sure you do everything you can to ensure the safety of your readers. Even though some kinds of tasks do not involve safety risks, many do.

- Write clear and concise safety instructions; avoid complicated sentences.
- Write safety information that is prominent and easy to read.
- Safety information is often printed in color.
- Place safety information in the appropriate location.
 - ❖ What is an appropriate location?
 - ❖ This question has no easy answer because you cannot control how your audience reads your document.
 - ❖ Be conservative; put safety information wherever you think the reader is likely to see it, and don't be afraid to repeat yourself.

7. Determine which graphics you will include for which set of instruction(s):

- ❖ Graphics can be used in safety information.
- ❖ Graphics can be used to provide examples and clarify how to perform a step.

8. Consider terminology:

9. Plan introduction:

- ❖ Include the preliminary information that readers will need to follow the instructions safely and easily.
- ❖ Indicate the topic and purpose and provide overview of the rest of the instructions.

10. Adding a conclusion:

- ❖ Troubleshooting table
- ❖ Maintenance tips