



Technical Writing and Product Documentation Training: User Guides and Structured Authoring



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Introduction:

Technical writing and product documentation training on user guides and structured authoring is a 5-day course for technical writers, engineers and product teams that ends with a Product Documentation Plan and sample topic set for a case product. Many organisations ship products with manuals copied from older models, help pages that contradict the interface and Arabic editions that lag the English release, which drives support calls and returns. Nominees already draft user guides, operation and maintenance manuals or online help, and work through case studies on real product content. CoreConcept Training Center delivers this technical writing and product documentation course.

Course Objectives:

- Profile product users and break their goals into tasks that define which user guide, manual and online help topics a release needs
- Restructure page-based manuals into concept, task and reference topics assembled through DITA maps for print and help outputs
- Apply a house style guide and ASD-STE100 controlled language rules so that product content reads one way and translates cleanly
- Plan screenshots, annotated illustrations, exploded views and short videos that carry steps more clearly than text alone
- Run single-sourcing, conditional filtering, review rounds and release versioning so one source serves several product variants
- Prepare English and Arabic editions with a termbase, right-to-left layout checks and documentation metrics that show whether users succeed

Target Audience:

- Technical writing staff responsible for user guides, installation guides and online help for hardware, software or equipment products
 - Engineering and design staff responsible for supplying and checking technical content for operation and maintenance manuals
 - Product and project team members responsible for release notes, feature descriptions and documentation sign-off at launch
 - Customer support and training staff responsible for help-centre articles, quick-start cards and user onboarding material
 - Translation and localisation staff responsible for Arabic and English editions of product content
 - Documentation coordinators responsible for content repositories, templates, review workflows and publishing schedules
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Course Outline:

Day 1: Product Documentation Landscape and User Task Analysis

- Product Documentation Set Map From Quick-Start to O&M Manual
- User Persona Sheet for Operators, Installers and Service Technicians
- Hierarchical Task Analysis Turning User Goals into Topic Lists
- Content Inventory Audit of an Existing Product Manual
- Support Ticket Mining to Find Missing Help Content

Day 2: Topic-Based and Structured Authoring Models

- DITA Concept, Task and Reference Topic Types Compared
- DITA Maps for Sequencing Topics into Guides and Help
- Lightweight DITA and Markdown Authoring for Smaller Product Teams
- Topic Granularity Rules and Minimal Context Topic Writing
- Information Model Design for a Product Documentation Portfolio

Day 3: Writing User Guides, Help Topics and Product Visuals

- Task Topic Writing With Prerequisites, Steps and Results
- ASD-STE100 Writing Rules Applied to Product Instructions
- House Style Guide Build for Terms, Voice and Formatting
- Screenshot, Callout and Exploded View Illustration Planning
- Safety Messages, Notes and Hazard Pictograms in User Guides

Day 4: Content Reuse, Review Control and Arabic-English Localisation

- Conref and Key-Based Reuse for Shared Warnings and Specifications
- Conditional Filtering Attributes for Product Variants and Audiences
- Documentation Review Rounds With Subject Matter Expert Checklists
- Release Versioning, Change Logs and Documentation Branch Strategy
- Arabic Termbase, Right-to-Left Layout and Translation Readiness Checks

Day 5: Case Study and the Product Documentation Plan

- Case Product Brief Review and User Task Matrix
 - Sample Task and Reference Topic Set for the Case Product
 - Reuse and Variant Filtering Scheme for Two Case Models
 - Documentation Metrics Set for Task Success and Search Findability
 - Product Documentation Plan Completion and Peer Review Defence
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Skills You Will Gain:

- User Task Analysis
- Topic-Based Authoring
- Information Model Design
- Controlled Language Writing
- Technical Illustration Planning
- Single-Source Content Reuse
- Documentation Localisation
- Documentation Quality Measurement

Why Attend This Course:

- Deliver a Product Documentation Plan with a sample topic set to the product manager, engineering lead and support head who approve release content
- Decide which manuals to restructure into reusable topics, which variants to filter from one source and which content to retire
- Avoid shipping manuals that contradict the product, Arabic editions that trail the English release and support calls caused by missing steps
- Share the persona sheet, style guide, topic templates and review checklist with writers, engineers and translators across the product line

Conclusion:

Back at work, the participant hands the Product Documentation Plan to the product manager, the engineering lead and the support and localisation heads. They use it to approve the topic structure, the reuse and variant scheme, the style guide and the review route for the next release, and to fund conversion of priority manuals. After the first release documented under the plan, the team should compare support contacts, search success and review turnaround with the baseline and revise the topic templates, termbase and metrics.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What should participants know before technical writing and product documentation training?

Participants should already draft or review user guides, manuals or online help for a product. No XML or programming skill is needed. A laptop and an anonymised extract of a current manual or help page make the case exercises closer to their own work.

How does technical writing and product documentation training differ from report writing or procedure writing courses?

This course documents products for their users: manuals, help topics and quick-start guides built from reusable topics and localised. Report writing courses present findings for decision-makers, and procedure courses document internal processes or maintenance tasks for staff.

Why does product documentation use topic-based structured authoring such as DITA?

Topic-based authoring writes each concept, task or reference item once and assembles it into several guides and help outputs. Reuse and variant filtering cut duplicated text, keep product variants consistent and reduce translation volume for each new language edition.

What do participants take back from technical writing and product documentation training?

Participants take back a Product Documentation Plan for a case product, with a user task matrix, sample DITA-style topics, a style guide outline, a reuse and filtering scheme, a review checklist, an Arabic localisation checklist and a documentation metrics set.
