

JARGON

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to II M.A. English students**

What is a Jargon?

- **Jargon is the specialized terminology associated with a particular field or area of activity.**
- **Jargon is normally employed in a particular communicative context and may not be well understood outside that context.**
- **Special words or expressions used by a profession or group that are difficult for others to understand.**
- **The context is usually a particular occupation, but any group can have jargon.**
- **In short, Words and phrases used by particular groups of people, esp. in their work, that are not generally understood.**

JARGON AS A TERMINOLOGY

- **Jargon is a terminology only understood by people in a certain group.**
- **Most words in the English language are a part of common, everyday speech, understood by almost anyone who speaks the language.**
- **However, jargon is like a type of shorthand between members of a particular group of people, often involving words that are meaningless outside of a certain context.**
- **Following are some examples of jargon that will help illustrate the concept.**

EXAMPLES OF JARGON

- **Business Jargon:**

- **due diligence** - refers to putting effort into research before making a business decision
- **bang for the buck** - a term that means to get the most for your money
- **drill down** - to look at a problem in detail
- **low-hanging fruit** - the easiest problems to fix

- **Medical Jargon:**

- **acute** - a condition that comes on suddenly.
- **negative** - results of a test that indicate a tested condition is not present.
- **atypical** - something that isn't completely normal.

- **Military Jargon**

- **AWOL: Short for "absent without leave"**

to describe a person whose whereabouts are unknown.

- **POLICE JARGON:**

- **beat** - an officer's parole area

- **berries and cherries** - the lights on top of a police car

- **code eight** - term that means officer needs help immediately

- **code eleven** - a code that means the individual is at the scene of the crime

- **POLITICAL JARGON:**

- **Franken food:** This term is used by politicians and lobbyists to refer to genetically-modified food products.
- **Public Servant:** Political jargon for an elected official.
- **Reform:** To change a law or a system to make it better or more efficient.
- **Lame duck:** A politician who is considered ineffective, either because he or she was recently elected out of office or announced retirement.

- **WORKPLACE JARGON:**

- **Blue-sky thinking** - A visionary idea without always having a practical application
- **Think outside the box** - This term means not to limit your thinking; it encourages creativity with regards to the job description
- **The helicopter view** - An overview of a job or a project

JARGON AND SLANG

- Although they are sometimes used similarly, jargon and slang are not the same.
- Often, they both involve an informal use of a term to communicate an idea, so there's a bit of overlap between the two words.
- However, slang is simply informal language, whereas jargon is specific to a group of people.
- For example, most English speakers know that “cool” is slang for something that's good.
- Only a plumber would know that “brass” is plumbing jargon for a faucet or fixture.

Summing up

- While speaking informally to other people in the same field of study, occupation, or group, one can use jargon and still be understood.
- However, while speaking to someone outside this group or writing work for a larger audience, one should avoid the use of jargon.
- Some professions have so much jargon of their own that it has its own name; for example, lawyers use *legalese*, while academics use *academese*.
- Jargon is also sometimes known as lingo or argot.
- A passage of text that is full of jargon is said to be *jargony*.

Technical writing

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What is Technical writing?

- **Technical writing is a kind of writing where the author is writing about a particular subject that requires direction, instruction, or explanation.**
- **This style of writing has a very different purpose and different characteristics than other writing styles such as creative writing, academic writing or business writing.**
- **Technical writing is straightforward, easy to understand explanations and/or instructions dealing with a particular subject.**
- **It is an efficient and clear way of explaining something and how it works.**

BUSINESS WRITING

- **Technical writing is not exactly the same as business writing.**
- **Business writing is a broader category. It can be argued that technical writing falls under business writing. It deals with many of the same topics and documents.**
- **Business writing will often include technical information. But, good business writing clearly conveys both information and intent.**
- **Business writing ranges from interpersonal to information to technical. Technical writing and business writing overlap when a business person needs to convey technical information.**

Uses of Technical writing

- The subject of technical writing can either be:
 - **TANGIBLE** - Something that can be seen or touched, such as a computer or software program, or information on how to assemble a piece of furniture.
 - **ABSTRACT** - Something that involved a series of steps that aren't related to a tangible object. One example of this might be steps required to complete an office process.
- Some **examples** of technical writing include:
 - Instruction manuals
 - Policy manuals
 - Process manuals
 - User manuals
 - Reports of analysis
 - Instructions for assembling a product

SCOPE OF TECHNICAL WRITING

- **Technical writing in India is new but upcoming profession.**
- **There are over 14000 jobs for “Technical Writing” on a job portal in India.**
- **Software companies require technical documentation to be done for their products and technical processes like user manuals, guides, online help etc.**
- **Web development companies expect their technical writers to write and edit content for their websites.**
- **Technical writers are also responsible for high website ranking in the various search engines for applicable key words.**
- **This sphere of technical writing is called SEO (Search Engine Optimization).**

SKILLS REQUIRED FOR TECHNICAL WRITING

- **Facility with technology. One must have the potential to grasp technology.**
- **Ability to write clearly.**
- **Talent in showing ideas graphically.**
- **Ability to interact with SMEs (Subject Matter Experts)**
- **Writes clearly, concisely, and precisely.**
- **Proficient in using the tools of the trade.**
- **Able to select the proper support visuals needed to enhance the written word.**
- **Has a natural curiosity for learning how things work.**
- **Knows how to ask questions and learn from the answers.**
- **Refine the art of patience and persistence.**

TIPS TO IMPROVE GOOD TECHNICAL WRITING

- **Regardless of the type of document which is written, technical writing requires the writer to follow the properties of knowing their audience, writing in a clear, non-personal style and doing extensive research on the topic.**
- **By including the following properties, the writer can create clear instructions and explanations for the reader.**
- **Know your audience.** An expert in the field will understand certain abbreviations, acronyms, and lingo that directly applies to such a field.
- **The novice will not understand in the same manner and, therefore, every detail must be explained and spelled out for them.**

- **USE AN IMPERSONAL STYLE.** Write from a third person perspective, like a teacher instructing a student. Any opinions should be omitted.
- **The Writing Should Be Straightforward,** to the point, and as simple as possible to make sure the reader understands the process or instruction. This at times may appear as simply a list of steps to take to achieve the desired goal or may be a short or lengthy explanation of a concept or abstract idea.
- **KNOW HOW TO RESEARCH.** Gather information from a number of sources, understand the information gathered so that it can be analyzed thoroughly, and then put the information into an easy to understand format to instruct those who read it.

- The more inexperienced audience, the more information the writer will need to gather and explain.
- **Be thorough in description** and provide enough detail to make your points; but, you also have to consider that you need to use an economy of words so that you do not bore your reader with gratuitous details.
- A good technical writer can make a **difficult task easy** and can quickly explain a complex piece of information.

SUMMING UP

- **Technical writing is a highly valuable skill.**
- **It is crucial for anyone working in a tech-related business, for engineers and scientists communicating their knowledge, and for people looking for rewarding, full-time work as writers.**
- **Technical writing is not just about understanding technical information and recording it in a document.**
- **Technical writing takes high-level information and processes it into digestible content for a specific audience.**