# William Murdick and Jonathan C. Bloemker

#### The Portable Technical Writer

#### **Book Review**

—Reviewed by KIM TAYLOR

Manuscript received Newwoller 2, 2001; revised Noncooler 5, 2001, The reviewer is in the Graduate Program in English, University of Charleston, Charleston, 5C 29424 USA, count knytori vechinkgroups, comp. IEEE PH S 0361-143402402335-4.

Book Publisher: Boxtom, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2001, 326 pp. with index Index Terms—Technical communication, technical writing, writing pedagogy.

When an English professor and a working technical writer. collaborate, the result—at least in theory—should be a textbook with the strengths of both perspectives. William Murdick and Jonathan Bloemker's The Portable Technical Writer is the product of such a collaboration. The book's stated goal is to provide concise vet comprehensive coverage of major concepts in technical writing, emphasizing real-world application. Although the intended audience is introductory-level technical writing students in college, the book's no-nonsense approach to content and organization makes it a viable. reference tool in the workplace. Similarly, because the authors erwision an interdisciplinary college audience ranging from technical writing majors to business and science majors, the theoretical component so prominent in many other technical writing manuals is notably absent. The Portable Technical Writer is designed to be used rather than studied, and instructors who emphasize a hands-on approach to learning technical writing will find this textbook invaluable.

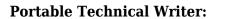
The book's coverage, nearly summarized in a one-page overview on the inside cover, is comprehensive. Murdick and Bloemker develop the subject from a student's perspective, establishing a clear, sequential connection between classroom and corporate writing environments in the first two chapters, "Technical Writing in College" and "Technical

Writing on the Job." Both chapters stress the interactive nature of technical writing, underscoring the human variables to be factored into the writing process. Chapter 3 adds: another layer of complexity, by exploring "Collaborative Writing," The outflors define this activity broadly, encompassing everything from actual group writing to scenarios where the writer collates and edits information from several sources. Thus, the first three chapters are denoted to the many. contexts where technical writers may work, acknowledging both the reachable skills of the classroom and the critical variations on those skills in the workplace.

Beginning with Chapter 4. "Rhetoric," the book shifts its emphasis from general concepts to specific strategies. In keeping with the authors' focus on usability, there is no discussion of clausical or historical models. Rather, information is presented in compact, often bulleted discussions of "how-to," The chapter on rhetoric, for example, describes how to inform, instruct, persuade, request, document, assign, report, sell, and promote ideas through effective choices: in tone, point of view, and organization. Subsections dealing with common rhetorical pitfalls: and the special challenges of cross-cultural communication help students identify oversights that could undermine a document's success with readers. This theme of choice-and-implication is further explored in the next chapter, "Technical Writing Style,"

# **Portable Technical Writer**

**N Noddings** 



## Decoding Portable Technical Writer: Revealing the Captivating Potential of Verbal Expression

In an era characterized by interconnectedness and an insatiable thirst for knowledge, the captivating potential of verbal expression has emerged as a formidable force. Its ability to evoke sentiments, stimulate introspection, and incite profound transformations is genuinely awe-inspiring. Within the pages of "**Portable Technical Writer**," a mesmerizing literary creation penned with a celebrated wordsmith, readers embark on an enlightening odyssey, unraveling the intricate significance of language and its enduring affect our lives. In this appraisal, we shall explore the book is central themes, evaluate its distinctive writing style, and gauge its pervasive influence on the hearts and minds of its readership.

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#### **Table of Contents Portable Technical Writer**

- 1. Understanding the eBook Portable Technical Writer
  - The Rise of Digital Reading Portable Technical Writer
  - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
- 2. Identifying Portable Technical Writer
  - Exploring Different Genres
  - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
  - Determining Your Reading Goals
- 3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
  - Popular eBook Platforms
  - Features to Look for in an Portable Technical Writer
  - User-Friendly Interface
- 4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Portable Technical Writer
  - Personalized Recommendations
  - Portable Technical Writer User Reviews and Ratings
  - Portable Technical Writer and Bestseller Lists

- 5. Accessing Portable Technical Writer Free and Paid eBooks
  - Portable Technical Writer Public Domain eBooks
  - Portable Technical Writer eBook Subscription Services
  - Portable Technical Writer Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Portable Technical Writer eBook Formats
  - o ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
  - Portable Technical Writer Compatibility with Devices
  - Portable Technical Writer Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
  - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Portable Technical Writer
  - Highlighting and Note-Taking Portable Technical Writer
  - Interactive Elements Portable Technical Writer
- 8. Staying Engaged with Portable Technical Writer
  - Joining Online Reading Communities
  - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
  - Following Authors and Publishers Portable Technical Writer
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Portable Technical Writer
  - Benefits of a Digital Library
  - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Portable Technical Writer
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
  - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
  - Minimizing Distractions
  - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Portable Technical Writer
  - Setting Reading Goals Portable Technical Writer
  - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Portable Technical Writer
  - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Portable Technical Writer
  - Distinguishing Credible Sources
- 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning

- Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
- Exploring Educational eBooks
- 14. Embracing eBook Trends
  - Integration of Multimedia Elements
  - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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