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ONEIL News

ONEIL News, our new quarterly newsletter

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Hello, we'd like to present *ONEIL News*, our new e-mail newsletter. Welcome! This newsletter will provide useful information related to the world of product support technology and authoring technical publications. We hope it will be of great interest to you.

You need to do nothing to continue receiving *ONEIL News*... it's free, and you are already signed up.

If, however, you would prefer not to receive future editions, you may remove yourself from our mailing list using the instructions at the bottom of this newsletter. As always, we will not provide your e-mail address to other organizations without your consent.

Simplified Technical English is right for business

Technology can be like the tortoise and the hare. Most technologies come in like the speedy rabbit, but other technologies are like the slow and steady turtle. Remember how the first PCs were so slow to catch on? Today, we are going to look at another technology tortoise: Simplified Technical English.

Technical manuals, which are predominantly in English throughout the world, are notorious for being difficult to understand. Both native and nonnative English speakers have difficulty with technical English. Furthermore, translating technical English into native languages is costly and prone to error. Fortunately, most technical and business people around the world have a basic comprehension of English. Simplified Technical English leverages this limited understanding to put complex procedures into operation throughout the world.

Simplified Technical English is a technology that has been maturing for 30 years and has:

- Proven to reduce costs.
- Proven to improve quality.
- Proven to improve comprehension around the world and at home.

Who uses Simplified Technical English (STE)?

- Caterpillar Inc. pioneered with Cat Fundamental English in the 1970s.
- European aircraft and defense companies introduced Simplified English in 1986.
- In 1995, Simplified Technical English became the international standard ASD-STE100.
- Today, commercial aviation around the world uses ASD-STE100.
- European and U.S. defense industries are using ASD-STE100 as well.
- To stay competitive, automotive companies, computer companies, drug companies, government, and many others have adopted their versions, which are called Controlled Language, Basic English, Global English, Controlled English, Automotive Controlled English, Plain Language, etc.
- The movement to simplified language, which started slowly in global technologies, has economic momentum throughout the world of business today.

What is ASD-STE?

The AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe (ASD) developed Simplified Technical English (STE). Their objective was (and still is) to enable clear, technical procedures that are easy to understand. STE was developed so aircraft can be serviced properly around the world by local technicians and mechanics with limited English skills. The main characteristics of Simplified Technical English are:

- Simplified rules for grammar, punctuation, and style.
- A limited vocabulary with restricted meanings.
- A thesaurus of unapproved words with approved alternatives.
- Guidelines for adding special technical terms to the approved vocabulary.

Its 62 rules for grammar, punctuation, and style are simply good writing practices commonly found in technical writing textbooks. Some examples include:

- Use the active voice.
- Use articles wherever possible.
- Use simple verb tenses.
- Use words consistently.
- Avoid lengthy compound words.
- Use short sentences.

The limited vocabulary and simple grammar-punctuation-style results in down-to-earth manuals that are easy to understand... even for English-speaking technicians.

Simplified Technical English offers enormous benefits

Regardless of your industry, the overall benefits and cost savings for simplified language can be considerable. You don't have to be an aerospace or military supplier to benefit from simplifying your product support documentation. O'Neil has helped clients in widely varying industries to enjoy such benefits.

1. Manuals are more consistent and easier to read.
2. Mechanics and technicians whose native language is not English can understand complex procedures.
3. User mistakes and inefficient confusion are brought under control.
4. Accidents are prevented.
5. Quality is improved.
6. Authoring and editing are more efficient.
7. The total volume of documentation is trimmed down.
8. Translations may be unnecessary in many countries.
9. When necessary, translation is easier, faster, and less costly.
10. Field support can be cut back.

Getting started with a Simplified Language

If your products are complex or are used in foreign countries, your company could greatly benefit from simplified language. If you just want to reduce product support hassle and costs, simplified language may be the tool to enhance productivity.

Although ASD Simplified Technical English was developed for the aerospace and defense industries, it can be adapted to nearly any manufacturing industry. Its 62 rules for grammar, punctuation, and style are simply good writing practices that are appropriate for any technology. The list of acceptable words may require some customization, and the lists of technical names and verbs require extensive review for every technology.

Of course, the biggest problem with any change is getting people to adapt. Writers and editors need to understand and accept the reasons for the change. They will also need some training to effectively implement ASD-STE or whatever version of simplified language is adopted.

For additional information on ASD Simplified Technical English, you can go to the following link: [Specification ASD-STE100](#).

O'Neil has been using STE for 20 years

As we've done for other firms, O'Neil can author your simplified language technical publications using ASD-STE as a foundation. Our authors will provide you with the same high-quality publications that we supply to industry giants and small component manufacturers.

For more than 60 years, O'Neil has been helping companies to create superior documentation. We can do the same for you; call us today at 937.865.0800 or visit our Web site at www.oneil.com.

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