

Human Factors for Technical Communicators

By Marlana Coe

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A crash course in human factors theory and practice for technical communicators

If you're a technical writer, technical editor, documentation manager, user-interface designer, usability tester, or any other type of technical communication professional, you've probably found yourself becoming more and more involved in the development, design, and testing of technical communication products. In order to handle your expanded responsibilities effectively you need a solid grounding in human factors, the art and science of designing for people. And now this book gives it to you--fast.

First, expert Marlana Coe takes you on a fascinating tour of the burgeoning science of human factors. In terms that you can understand, she explains all about the psychology and physiology of how users access, learn, and remember information; the impact of colors, shapes, and patterns; learning styles; approaches and obstacles to problem solving; action structures; and more. And, with the help of real-life examples of various technical communication products, she vividly demonstrates what works, what doesn't, and why.

Then, she shows you how to apply what you've learned to create the best technical communication products possible. You'll find out how to:
* Analyze users' needs and learning styles
* Get and interpret user feedback and create partnerships with users
* Select the most effective layouts, colors, fonts, and graphics
* Build better navigational infrastructures
* Develop content that gives users everything they need to quickly identify and resolve problems
* Test and improve your product's usability

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Editorial Review

From the Publisher
Designed for those who need to learn (and quickly!) the human factors basics that were not part of their initial education or training. Commences with an introduction to human factors theory using easy-to-understand language with examples applicable to technical communicators. The latter half demonstrates how to translate the theory into practice by analyzing and learning from end-users; applying color, graphics, different layout and type designs, online help screens, graphical-user interfaces, icons and normal messages that appear on a computer screen or in a manual.

From the Back Cover
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About the Author
MARLANA COE is owner of Coe Communications, a technical communications consulting firm. She also teaches an introductory course in human factors at UCLA.

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Crystal Sanchez:

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