



KAREN REMPEL

SENIOR DOCUMENTATION SPECIALIST

Bridging people and technology

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Executive summary

Writing clear materials, with superior written and verbal skills

Working from technical specifications, source materials, and software under development, and conferring with subject matter experts, I produce award-winning, clear, concise written materials that meet the needs of a variety of audiences.

Agile development

I have worked on various types of agile and extreme development teams to produce quality software products quickly. On a recent contract I used an agile development approach to deliver online help for a banking software product, working with a team of business analysts, trainers, subject matter experts, software developers, testers, and end users to document sets of processes as they were finalized for the business.

Writing for the web

I have been developing materials for the web, including web-based training products, since 1996. For some projects this has been the primary focus, while in other cases it has been ancillary. I currently maintain and write content for two websites that I created.

Problem solving and analytical skills

This is an area of strength, evidenced by meeting all deliverables and deadlines, always. This is only achievable by solving problems and accurately analyzing project needs, followed by communicating solutions and translating analysis into concrete written results.

Creating and implementing effective communication plans, combined with leadership and project management

My first project manager role was in 1996 (Xinex), when I coordinated production of user documentation and marketing materials and implemented a multi-faceted communication plan, including wizards, white papers, speeches, press releases, and presentation materials. Since then, I have produced and implemented documentation plans for most of the projects I've worked on. In a recent example of my leadership as STC CWC chapter president (2008–2009), the previously faltering chapter held 7 successful program meetings for members, the volunteer team grew from 12 to 27, and the chapter won a Pacesetter Award for our innovative use of technology.

Wide range of subject matter experience

I have written documentation for a wide range of industries and subjects, including:
Banking and credit unions • computer software • telecommunications • automated manufacturing processes • systems modelling • business operations • accounting • libraries • health care • newspaper, magazine, and book publishing • risk management • financial analytics • HTML, XML, and DITA • client-server and network operations • mathematical notation

Information architecture

Structuring and organizing complex information to make it accessible is a challenge that I enjoy; in a recent project I organized the content in 20,000+ files into user manuals and online help that was easily accessible from a few menu items, with a common organizational structure and “look and feel” across the various documentation pieces that helped users quickly find what they were looking for.

Working independently and as part of a team, with excellent interpersonal skills

I have a high degree of self-motivation that helps me be extremely productive when working independently, and excellent interpersonal skills that flourish in the dynamic interpersonal environment of working on a team. For evidence of the latter, please see the recommendations of my work on LinkedIn, at <http://www.linkedin.com/profile?viewProfile=&key=20869870>.

Summary

I have worked as a technical writer since 1993, writing and editing many types of documentation. My role has varied from supervising writers in-house to being the sole writer on an international team where all the communication was virtual. I have a diploma in Professional Writing from the highly regarded Print Futures program at Douglas College, as well as an MA degree. I served my professional organization, the Society for Technical Communication's [Canada West Coast](#) chapter, in its highest office, president, for the 2008–2009 term. I was also honoured to win the STC's Distinguished Award for technical communications.

I produce top quality documentation quickly and always meet deadlines. I learn about my clients' products rapidly, and am adept with the latest development tools. My experience and skill-level allow me to meet my clients' goals in a fraction of the time of less experienced writers. In recommendations on www.linkedin.com my clients say my top qualities are "expert, great results, on time, high integrity."

Skills

Writing and editing • project management • business analysis • requirements gathering • taxonomies • document and web design • user interface design • research • HTML, XML, and DITA • supervising and training • regulatory reporting • accounting • blogging

Writing experience

User and system administration manuals • online help • web materials including online tutorials, websites, forums, and wikis • training and quick reference materials • policy and procedures • white papers • newsletters • press releases • proposals • terminology guidelines • style guidelines • functional requirements • design requirements

Computer experience

Text, layout, web, graphics, and help software

Adobe Technical Communication Suite (includes FrameMaker, RoboHelp, Adobe Acrobat Professional, and graphics software), Microsoft Office, MadCap Flare, Dreamweaver, Adobe Captivate, SharePoint Designer, Interleaf, PageMaker, Microsoft FrontPage, WebWorks Publisher, Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, Paint Shop Pro, RVSiteBuilder, WordPress, many others

Other software

Microsoft Visio, Microsoft Project, Microsoft SharePoint, Visual SourceSafe, Temenos T24, Tracker, ClearQuest, ClearCase, FactoryTalk AssesCentre, Arena, PanelBuilder, RSView32, RSView Machine Edition and Supervisory Edition, Library Pro, CA-Accpac/2000, ACCPAC Plus, Simply Accounting, Triton (Baan), many others

Writing and publishing experience

Contract work 1995–present

[Inventure Solutions Inc. – A Vancity Company](#) Developed a set of Quick Wins for improving the user interface of T24 software for banking system implementation. Created a template and captured To Be procedures during team-based process reviews. Planned help project; developed online help framework and topics. (2011–2012)

[Coast Capital Savings Credit Union](#) Developed documentation charter (plan) for creating end user documentation for banking system implementation. Recommended platform for documentation development, delivery, and maintenance using single sourcing and version control. Worked with developers to find innovative way to integrate new online help into T24 user interface. Developed online help content. Designed and developed software menu structure. Trained replacement. (2010–2011)

Contract work

1995–present, cont'd

Smaller projects omitted for brevity.

[Rockwell Automation, Inc.](#) Updated online help, users' guides, installation guides, and product inserts for manufacturing process control and modelling software, working with a team of international and local software developers, product managers, testers, and reviewers. Updated a documentation set consisting of 20,000+ files, 7 users' guides, 20 help projects, and 5 product inserts in 9 months. Prepared PDF files of manuals well in advance of final software builds. Assisted with project tracking. (2006–2009)

[Rockwell Software Ltd.](#) Planned, wrote, and edited users' guides, installation guides, getting started guides, reference guides, readme files, and online help for manufacturing process control software. Worked with an international team on multiple projects and products. Coordinated user interface design. Designed HTML style sheets and produced HTML help. Edited XML code. Converted Interleaf documents to FrameMaker. Assisted employees in following departmental procedures. (2000–2006)

Dynapro Systems Inc. Researched, wrote, edited, illustrated, and desktop published manuals and online help for manufacturing process control software and hardware. Documented internal financial, resource planning, and production (ERP) processes, producing a 1,200-page manual that helped owner sell company. (1996–1999)

Chancery Software Ltd. (Now [Pearson Education, Inc.](#)) Restructured existing library software manual and online help to give a task focus. Consulted and trained end users. Created web tutorials and training materials. (1998)

Xinex Networks Inc. Project manager; coordinated production of user documentation, online help, and marketing materials for telecom and multimedia products. Wrote wizards, white papers, speeches, press releases, and presentation materials. Hired and supervised independent contractors. Updated website (now defunct). (1996–1997)

Author

Complete Beading for Beginners

[Harbour Publishing Co. Ltd.](#)

Pender Harbour, BC

1994–1996

Concept development and promotion Researched, wrote, designed, illustrated, and desktop published 66-page, full-colour prototype of beading how-to book. Prior to acceptance by Harbour, pre-sold 1,500 copies; arranged for distribution to Canadian bookstores and Canadian and US beading supply stores. Upon acceptance by publisher, expanded content, provided 197 extra illustrations (final length 159 pages).

Awards Won the Society for Technical Communication Canada West Coast chapter's Distinguished Award in the Training Materials category, 1996. Won the STC's International Merit Award for Training Materials, 1997.

Technical writer

Computer Associates

(Now [Sage Accpac](#))

Vancouver, BC

1993–1995

Technical writing Planned, wrote, edited, and indexed accounting software user manuals; designed, wrote, and desktop published newsletters and a quick reference card that shortened manual length by 52 pages; wrote update notices; documented procedures for internal writers' handbook; prepared text for French translation; checked finished translation for completeness and accuracy; wrote and compiled online help; created sample data; provided input on products; met all deadlines.

Public relations assistant

Fraser-Burrard Hospital Society

(Now [Fraser Health](#))

New Westminster, BC

1992

Marketing and fundraising Wrote journal articles, advertising copy, and brochure series; wrote proposals to obtain funding; edited newsletter. Arranged photography for brochure series; worked with designer to plan newspaper ads. Helped develop promotional materials.

Other publication credits

1991–present

Newspaper, magazine, and creative writing Contributed articles, reviews, fiction, and poetry to these and other publications: BC Woman, Canadian Health Care Magazine, Coastlines, Diamond Dust, Discorder, Herspectives, Intercom, Merritt Herald, Other Press, Pearls, Room of One's Own, TV Week Magazine, Vancouver Sun.

Business and administrative experience

President

Monkey Valley Enterprises Inc.
Vancouver, BC
1995–present

Direct all aspects of consulting business, including marketing services to clients, maintaining [website](#), accounting, preparing corporate tax returns and other government reports, and maintaining professional insurance and WorkSafeBC coverage. Incorporated in 2003.

Executive director

Monkey Valley Retreat Centre
Merritt, BC
2003–2011

Created a retreat center on 160 acres in the wilderness near Merritt. Guided yoga, meditation, and vision fast retreats. Hosted for-profit and free residential retreats for groups of up to 25 people. Planned and executed all logistical details, including promotion, meals, and accommodations. Coordinated the activities of up to 10 people during the facility construction and improvement stages and supervised cooking staff and volunteers during retreats.

Created website and blog: www.bcwildernessvisions.com. The blog, still active, is mostly about nature, yoga, running, and ecopsychology.

Management accountant

Quick Fax Registry Services
New Westminster, BC
1988–1990

Controlled all functions of accounting department up to and including financial statements. Increased departmental output by 30% and streamlined procedures to reduce work-time by 85 hours per month. Trained and supervised up to six employees.

Management accounting officer

Transport Canada (Now
[Vancouver Airport Authority](#))
1987

Prepared financial statements, updated budgets, performed variance analysis, and generated graphics to produce 37-page monthly report under deadline. Assisted in preparation of annual budget and five-year financial plan for the airport.

C.A. student

Chambers, Phillips & Co.
Vancouver, BC
1985–1987

Performed clients' monthly and year-end accounting; prepared financial statements. Prepared individual and corporate tax returns. Controlled firm's computerized individual tax return output for two tax seasons.

Education

[Naropa University](#)
Boulder, CO
2007

MA Master of Arts degree in transpersonal psychology, with an ecopsychology concentration (cumulative GPA 4.0).

[CMA BC](#)
Vancouver, BC
1989, 1995–1996

Postgraduate course work toward partial completion of the Certified Management Accountant (CMA) designation.

[Douglas College](#)
New Westminster, BC
1993

Diploma Print Futures professional writing diploma. Achievements: Dean's list, received scholarships for outstanding academic achievement and entrepreneurial ability.

[Simon Fraser University](#)
Burnaby, BC
1988

BBA Bachelor of Business Administration degree, with an accounting concentration. Achievements: Dean's list, received scholarships for high academic achievement.

Service work

[Yoga Outreach](#)

Vancouver, BC

2008–present

Currently teach bi-weekly evening yoga classes at the [Pacifica Treatment Centre](#). Teach yoga and skills for managing emotions and increasing self-esteem, including meditation and self-awareness practices. Previously taught young men and women at the [Burnaby Youth Custody Services](#) facility. Raised funds with the Reach Out Challenge.

[Diamond Approach Vancouver](#)

Vancouver, BC

2002–present

Manager of scholarship fund for non-profit educational group; handle banking and disbursement for the fund and assist with various administrative tasks (2002–present). Fundraising committee member (2004–2007).

[Society for Technical Communication](#)

Canada West Coast chapter

Vancouver, BC

2008–2012

1996–1999

Information Interview Coordinator (2011–2012). Designed and implemented a “mentorship lite” Information Interview Service. Linked new and aspiring writers with senior writers in the Vancouver area. Chapter won a Pacesetter Award for innovative community operations.

President (2008–2009). Led team in transition from geographically-based to virtual chapter, while continuing to support local programs. Recruited volunteers (increasing team from 12 to 27). Guided budget preparation and strategic planning. Chapter won a Pacesetter Award for innovative use of technology.

Vice-president (1998–1999). Coordinated the chapter’s technical publications competition. Assisted the president. Participated in decision-making.

Treasurer (1996–1997). Guided the chapter’s executive members to prepare a detailed budget for the year’s activities. Handled all banking, investments, and financial affairs.

Diamond Dust Newsletter

Berkeley, CA

2005–2008

Wrote interviews and regular column for international newsletter with readership of 550. Performed layout edits, copyedits, and proofreading. Trained others in layout and editing skills. Created template, style guidelines, and other procedural guidelines. Worked with nine editors in three countries.

[Canadian Earth Institute](#)

Merritt, BC

2005–2006

Facilitated BC discussion groups of Oregon-based Northwest Earth Institute courses on voluntary simplicity and sustainability. Mentored group members to run their own discussion group on sense of place.

1991–2004 service work omitted for brevity.