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Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this style guide is to provide grammatical, graphical and visual recommendations for the production of training materials for the project.

This will give our group of instructional designers a consistent approach as they work independently to develop training materials that, when finished appear to have been authored by a single person.

Acronyms & Abbreviations

Acronyms

Acronyms are always capitalized.

If an acronym is plural, add a lower-case “s” to the end without an apostrophe.

Example: CBAs

Avoid using the possessive form of an acronym.

Provide a definition for an acronym the first time you use it within the body. Place the definition first, followed by the acronym. In titles, spell out the full words.

Example:

Lesson 1: Working with Corrective Maintenance Work Orders

Topic 1: Creating a Corrective Maintenance Work Order

Corrective Maintenance (CM) work orders are created in a break/fix situation...

After the first occurrence of an acronym, use the acronym alone.

Define acronyms in the glossary.

Cross References

In general, the capitalization and punctuation of a cross reference should match that of the item it references.

Example: See “Opening Your Account” on page 12.

When you refer to a chapter, numbered section, table, figure, or step, use the label and number in the reference. Use initial caps for the label.

Example: Chapter 1, Section 5, Figure 2-9, or Step 24.

State

When you refer to a state by its abbreviation, use the standard form employed by the United States Postal Service.

Example: KS, OK, TX

Capitalization

Titles

Title case for:

- Titles
- Topics
- Subtopics

For example: SAP for Tax Analysts

Titles of people should be capitalized if preceding a name, otherwise not.

Phases of Work

Capitalize Phases of Work:

Example: Initiate, Plan, Schedule, and Close

Computer Terminology

Buttons / Icons

The name of the button or icon is spelled out in bold-face type.

Example:

Click: The **Save** button.

Result: The **XYZ** screen displays.

Menu Path

To indicate the selection of various items from a menu, spell out the selection using Title case and bold type followed by a space, greater than sign and a space.

Example: **File > Open > Computer**

Multiple Keys

If two or more keys are pressed simultaneously, join them with plus signs and treat them as one word in bold type.

Example: Press: The **Ctrl+Alt+Del** keys to restart the computer.

Text Formatting

If ...	Then ...
Text refers to a screen name, window, button, field, or actual data entry	Use Bold type Example: The Job Details screen. Example: Enter 4801 in the Street field.
Text refers to variable information	Use <i>Bold and Italic</i> type Example: Enter the <i>house number</i> in the Street field.
Text refers to a system status	Type the status in italic face. Example: <i>Ready to Close</i>

Copyright & Trademark Indicators

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Dates & Times

Dates

Use the month name-date-year format for dates

Example: July 15, 2015

Avoid using the numeric format (05/01/15), as it can cause confusion for those accustomed to putting the date first instead of the month.

Exception: When writing about a program that uses a specific date format, use the format required.

Time

Make all references to time as Central Time.

Use the 12-hour format with “a.m.” or p.m.” to indicate time.

Example: 2:00 p.m.

To indicate morning or evening, always use lower case a.m. and p.m.

If it is not obvious which “12:00” you are talking about, use “midnight” and “noon” instead.

Some applications may require you to use the 24-hour format for time. In this format, no punctuation is used between the hours (the first two characters, (0900) and the minutes (1700).

Graphical Imagery

Arrows



Line: None

- Fill: R-91/G-155/B-213
-

Callouts



Line Callout 2 with black lines, **default line width.**

- Fill: R-255/G-250/B-235
 - Line: R-204/G-51/B-0
 - Text = Arial Narrow 10 pt.
-

File Types

Save images as .JPG or .PNG files (use .PNG for images that contain transparencies).

Screen Shot Border

- Color: Black
 - Line Weight: 2-pt
 - Use drop-shadow
-

Numbers

Identification Use numerals for numbers that identify specific things.
Example: See Step 1
Example: Select values 1, 2, or 3.

Large Numbers Combine words and numerals for approximate numbers greater than 999,999. Example: The country has about 2 million residents.

For exact large numbers, use numerals.
Example: The processor contains 3,234,876 separate components.

Numbers When expressing numeric values in the body of the document, spell out the numeric values from zero through nine. For numeric values larger than nine, express the value using numerals.

Example: There are seven people on our team.
Example: We must train over 2,000 people.

When expressing a range of numeric values, separate the numerals by an en dash.

Example: 20–30

Numbers in a Series Use numerals if one or more numbers are greater than nine.
Example: Use 2 olives, 20 pickles and 13 garlic cloves.

Spell out the numbers if they are all less than or equal to ten.
Example: Use one olive, two garlic cloves, and four scallions.

Ordinals Apply the normal work-or-numeral standard to ordinal numbers.
Example: This is the fifth step.
Example: When the PC beeps for the 1000th time, reboot.

Side by Side Numbers When two numbers appear side by side, spell out the first one and use a numeral for the next one.
Example: You will need fourteen 4-by-4 posts.

Continued on next page

Punctuation

Bulleted Lists	When using a bulleted list: • Place a period at the end of sentences. • Do not place a period at the end of phrases or single words.
Commas	Use commas as follows: • Do not place a comma after the word <i>and</i> when used between two words. • Place a comma between words and after the word <i>and</i> when used between three or more words. Example: Betty and Jane Example: Betty, Jane, and Mark
Dashes	Use dashes as follows: • Dash (-) when hyphenating words Example: step-by-step • En dash (–) in a range of numbers • Em dash (—) to set off clarifying elements in a sentence Example: The primary components—widgets, gaskets, and plugs—are universally available.
VL Icons	See actual templates.
Working in Word	Turn on the pilcrow/paragraph markers (¶) so all of the formatting and styles are visible. Turn on View Gridlines (Layout > View Gridlines)

Tables

If/Then Table Use the following as a template for If/Then tables

If ...	Then ...
The work order will be rejected	Go to Step 9.
The work order will be accepted	a. Enter: The <i>appropriate GL Account</i> information. b. Click: The Select Value icon next to the Priority field. Result: The Select Value window opens.

Terms

Terms

Use This	Not This
Activity	Exercise
Canceling	Cancelling
Click	Click on
Close	Closure
Course, Lesson	Module
Double-click	Double click
Dropdown	Drop-down
email	e-mail
Enter	Input, Type
Instructor	Facilitator
Log in or Log out (v)	Sign in
Login or Logout (n)	Signin
Participants	Students, learners
Right-click or Left-click:	Right click or Left click
See	Refer
Select	Pick, choose, check
T-code	t-code
Use	Utilize
Uncheck	Deselect
WiFi	Wi-Fi

Writing Style

Active Voice

Example	Non Example
Ensure that all column widths are consistent.	All column widths should be consistent.
Obtain the manager's signature on the report.	The manager must sign the report

Present Tense

Example	Non-Example
The system displays the message...	The system will display the message
The manual is designed to...	This manual was designed to

Quotes

Enclose references to sections within the document in quotes.
Example: The concept is discussed in "Understanding Pages."

When you discuss a word as an object or use it in a special sense, enclose it in quotes.

Formatting:

- Comma: inside the ending quote
- Period: inside the ending quote
- Colon: outside of the ending quote
- Semicolon: outside the ending quote
- Question mark: outside the ending quote, unless expressing a direct quotation

Slashes

In general, avoid using slashes to create compound terms. As an alternative, use "or", "and", "versus", or other appropriate terms.

If a compound term is usually written with a slash, don't change it.
Example: Clean the read/write head.

Otherwise: Express the words with slashes using a space before and after the slash.

Writing Style, Continued

Step-by-steps Step-by-steps are numbered and begin with a verb. Each step contains only one action. The following action contains the name of the button in bold type and a period.

If a resulting action follows, on a new line, the word Result followed by a colon (:) and a space should follow the action with a statement indicating the expected outcome.

Example:

Click the **OK** button.

Result: The file is attached to the record.
