

# Writing Escapade: Technical Writing Workshop for Appointed Barangay Functionaries

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## ABSTRACT

Effective technical writing is crucial for communicating complex information, enhancing user experience, and ensuring compliance and safety across various industries. This workshop aimed to equip the barangay functionaries with essential skills and best practices for creating precise, clear, and impactful technical documentation.

Participants will learn how to structure and present technical information and tailor content to different audiences. The workshop will cover key elements such as user manuals, training materials, compliance documentation, and technical reports. Through interactive exercises and real-world examples, attendees will gain practical experience in writing and reviewing technical documents.

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to produce high-quality technical documents that improve user understanding, facilitate knowledge transfer, and support organizational goals. This workshop is ideal for professionals in engineering, IT, healthcare, and other fields where clear and effective communication of technical information is essential.

**Keywords:** Writing Workshop, Barangay Functionaries, Technical Writing Skills

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

The barangay is the primary unit in planning and implementing unit of government policies, plans, programs, projects, and activities in the community. As mandated by the Local Government Code of 1991, the barangay governments are expected to ensure the delivery of basic services in the locality which include agricultural support, health and social services, maintenance of Katarungang Pambarangay, maintenance of roads and bridges, and water supply system, infrastructure facilities, and others, showing the critical the role of the barangays is in the socio-economic development of the country.

Barangay functionaries, or human resources, refer to both the elected and appointed officials and employees in the barangays who should ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills required for the position they occupy as government servants. Some of the duties of the barangay functionaries include crafting resolutions and minutes preparation; These written documents are tedious for they carry important information. They perform a pivotal role not only in the execution of state functions but also in deliberative and democratic governance as well as in civic engagement (Gaventa 2012).

Technical writing can be defined as a communication activity in dealing with and delivering technical information and subjects such as in technology, engineering, science, and other fields with specific

terminologies at certain workplaces through writing (Finklestein, 2007; Indra Devi, Husin & Subatira, 2010; Laplante, 2012; Manivannan, 2005; Pfeiffer & Adkins, 2010; Van Endam, 2005). Job industries demand potential employees with sound technical communication skills including technical writing (Kassim & Ali, 2010; Rhoulac & Crenchaw, 2006).

The researchers aim to help the community by helping the barangay functionaries through a technical writing workshop that will help them enhance their technical writing skills. The writing escapade focuses on the development of the barangay functionaries and helps establish a community extension program as a bond of partnership between the school and the community.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study is grounded in Constructivist Learning Theory, which posits that learners construct knowledge through active engagement and reflection. This framework supports the idea that barangay functionaries will improve their technical writing skills by participating in hands-on activities, collaborative exercises, and reflective practices.

Complementing this is Experiential Learning Theory, which emphasizes learning through experience. The workshop's practical approach, combined with real-world applications relevant to barangay duties, facilitates the transfer of learned skills into their professional roles.

These theories underpin the mixed-method approach, guiding the assessment of both the measurable skill improvements (quantitative) and the participants' subjective experiences and reflections (qualitative) during and after the workshop. This dual focus provides a comprehensive understanding of the workshop's impact on the technical writing capabilities of the functionaries.

### **Objectives of the Study**

As a basis to conduct a community extension service, aiming to help enhance the writing skills of the Barangay Functionaries about technical writing in the Municipality of Monkayo. This seeks the answer to the following questions:

1. What is the writing skill performance of the barangay functionaries before and after the intervention program?
2. What specific technical skills do barangay functionaries find most challenging before attending the workshop?
3. How does the intervention improve the technical writing skills of the barangay functionaries after the implementation?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This research employs a convergent parallel mixed-method design, where quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously but analyzed separately. The results from both methods will then be compared and interpreted together to provide a comprehensive understanding of the workshop's effectiveness.

A paired T-test was used to determine significant improvements in technical writing skills for the quantitative component, and thematic analysis was utilized for the coding and categorization to identify the common themes and patterns for its qualitative component.

### **Participants of the Study**

The study participants were the barangay functionaries of the Municipality of Monkayo who were sorted

out using the fishbowl method (to select 10 Barangays out of 21), and who particularly worked on writing technical and legal documents in their barangay. They have hands-on experience in making and dealing with all legal documentation and technical writing daily, they were then invited to participate in the technical writing workshop to assess their skills and concerns in writing.

**Data Gathering Method**

The data gathering for this mixed-method research involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches. For the Quantitative Data, participants completed a technical writing assessment before and after the workshop to measure skill improvement.

A structured survey was administered immediately after the workshop to gauge participants' satisfaction and perceived utility.

For the Qualitative Data, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with selected participants after the workshop to explore their experiences, challenges, and the application of skills learned.

The quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of the workshop's effectiveness.

**Data Analysis**

This study used a mixed method of convergent parallel research design. The data collected for the quantitative component were analyzed using a paired T-test:

On the other hand, the data collected for the qualitative component were analyzed using Thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is used for qualitative analytic methods (Clarke and Braun, 2017), this entails searching across data sets to identify, analyze, and report repeated patterns.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Research Question 1. What is the writing skill performance of the barangay functionaries before and after the intervention program?**

**Table 1. Paired Sample t-Test**

Measure 1	Measure 2	t	df	p
pretest	posttest	-16.768	28	<.001

**Table 2: Descriptives**

	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
Pretest	29	25.759	3.729	0.692	0.145
Posttest	29	38.172	2.450	0.455	0.064

In Table 1, the t-test compares the means of pretest and posttest scores for the same group of subjects. The t-value of 16.768 indicates a substantial difference between the two measurements. The degree of freedom (df) is 28, which corresponds to the number of paired observations minus one. The p-value is < .001, showing that this difference is statistically significant at any common significance level (0.05). Therefore, the posttest scores are significantly higher than the pretest scores, indicating a significant improvement. The probability of this result occurring by chance is extremely low, suggesting that the observed improvement is likely due to the intervention or condition being tested.

**Research Question 2. How does Sentence Auction help language learners in improving their grammar skills?**

**Table 3. Essential Themes on the Effectiveness of the Intervention**

Essential Themes	Core Ideas
Art of Critical Thinking and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical Thinking (IDP1)</li> <li>• Understanding on how to write effectively (IDP3)</li> <li>• We know that in writing, there are bunch of things that you need to consider like figuring out if the thought of your piece is striking but offensive or is it too much and so on. (IDP7)</li> </ul>
Shallow Waters of Technical Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity and Conciseness is sometimes the hurdle for many barangay functionaries, they may find it challenging to convey the message effectively without using deep words or overly complex language</li> <li>• Clarity and Concision (IDP6)</li> <li>• Clarity (IDP8)</li> <li>• Organizing information effectively and ensuring clarity in writing. (IDP9)</li> </ul>
Writing Configuration of the Prescribed Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Grammar and construction of formal writing (IDP4)</li> <li>• Proper documents formatting (IDP6)</li> <li>• Structure (IDP8)</li> </ul>

The findings for research question number 2 were presented through qualitative data. The raw responses from participants were transcribed and translated. Thematic analysis, a method for analyzing data, was used to identify essential themes based on common responses. The results revealed three key themes about specific technical writing skills that barangay functionaries found most challenging before attending the workshop.

**1. Art of Critical Thinking and Understanding.**

From the responses, it was found that some have difficulties in critical thinking and understanding technical writing. According to Barangay Functionary 7: “We know that in writing, there are a bunch of things that you need to consider like figuring out if the thought of your piece is striking but offensive or is it too much and so on.” In addition, barangay functionary 1 implied: “Critical Thinking”. Moreover, barangay functionary 3 stated: “Understanding on how to write effectively”.

The results show that some barangay functionaries encounter difficulties in critical thinking and understanding. Critical thinking involves questioning ideas and assumptions to develop clear and strong points for consideration. It involved seeking a complete understanding of ideas, arguments, and findings and being open to the possibility of incomplete information (Taylor 2023).

**2. Shallow Waters of Technical Writing.**

Clarity in delivering the thought to all transmittal within barangay and even in inter-barangay communication is also very crucial as another difficulty was spotted as cited by barangay functionary 6 stating “Clarity and Conciseness is sometimes the hurdle for many barangay functionaries, may find it challenging to convey the message effectively without using deep words or overly complex language

(IDP6).” This is supported by barangay functionary 8 choosing “Clarity (IDP8)”. Additionally, barangay functionary 9 noted, “Organizing information effectively and ensuring clarity in writing. (IDP9)”.

The importance of being clear and direct is evident. Unclear writing is the bane of any reader. That’s especially true for technical writing, whose subject matter can cause confusion, setbacks, and other difficulties for readers if the material is not conveyed clearly (Write 2019).

**3. Writing Configuration of the Prescribed Format.**

Grammar is the bread and butter of technical writing for it is essential, along with the proper formatting of legal documents. Some barangay functionaries found it difficult to choose what format to use. As chosen by Barangay Functionary 4: “Basic Grammar and Construction of Formal Writing (IDP4)”.

Writing a technical paper can be a hard task and, often, writers are not certain what should be included and how the information should be presented (Palumbo 2013).

**Research Question 3. How does the intervention improve the technical writing skills of the barangay functionaries after the implementation?**

**Table 3. Essential Themes**

Essential Themes	Core Ideas
Fruitful Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The intervention helps the barangay functionaries develops clear concise writing abilities that enables them to communicate more effectively (IDP2)</li> <li>• It refreshes our ability to write properly and effectively which further improve our understanding on technical writing (IDP3)</li> <li>• Increase confidence and efficiency (IDP6)</li> </ul>
Well-structured written composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a barangay functionary, the intervention helps a lot especially as a barangay secretary, it helps me to create well-structured contents of my letters, resolutions and etc. (IDP1)</li> <li>• It improves the way we conduct such papers (IDP4)</li> <li>• Providing clear guidelines and templates for common documents like reports, proposals, and memos. This helps standardize writing practices and ensures consistency (IDP7)</li> </ul>
Practical Application and Modernizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start learning more after we figure out the new methods (IDP5)</li> <li>• We gain confidence in applying the skills learned, leading to more professional and coherent documents (IDP9)</li> </ul>

The findings for research question number 3 were presented through qualitative data. The raw responses from participants were transcribed and translated. Thematic analysis, a method for analyzing data, was used to identify essential themes based on common responses. The results revealed 3 essential themes about the impact of the technical writing workshop on the barangay functionaries.

### 1. Fruitful Worker

The intervention helped the barangay functionaries to be more effective as barangay functionary 2 cited: The intervention helps the barangay functionaries develop clear concise writing abilities that enable them to communicate more effectively (IDP2). In addition, barangay functionary 3 stated: “It refreshes our ability to write properly and effectively which further improves our understanding of technical writing (IDP3)”

Saeed and Shabir (2013) cited (Benson et al, 2004) demonstrated that investment in employees’ training and skills development may contribute to the further productivity of the employees in the long run.

### 2. Well-structured Written Composition

The workshop also resulted in improving their legal paper formatting, barangay functionary 1 stated: “As a barangay functionary, the intervention helps a lot, especially as a barangay secretary, it helps me to create well-structured contents of my letters, resolutions, etc. (IDP1)”. In addition, barangay functionary 4 added “It improves the way we conduct such papers (IDP4)”. Furthermore, barangay functionary 7 cited “Providing clear guidelines and templates for common documents like reports, proposals, and memos. This helps standardize writing practices and ensures consistency (IDP7)”.

Technical writing is well-structured for a convenient study as well as the retrieval of information whenever required. It is easy for readers to understand and follow the details. A consistent technical text enables the readers to arrive at a piece of information using less time and effort. It is known that the users of such texts in a workplace need easy reference of information, wherein, the structure of the text plays a crucial role (Sundaeswaran 2022).

### 3. Practical Application and Modernizations

The workshop helped the barangay functionaries to be more innovative and to apply the skills they acquired in their everyday work. As barangay functionary 5 stated, “Start learning more after we figure out the new methods (IDP5)”. Barangay Functionary 9 also cited “We gain confidence in applying the skills learned, leading to more professional and coherent documents (IDP9)”.

## CONCLUSION

This research demonstrated that the workshop significantly improved participants' technical writing skills. Quantitative findings revealed measurable improvements in writing proficiency, with post-workshop assessments showing marked gains compared to pre-workshop levels.

Simultaneously, qualitative data from focus group discussions highlighted the participants' positive experiences, emphasizing the workshop's relevance, practical applications, and immediate impact on their day-to-day duties. The integration of these quantitative and qualitative results provides a comprehensive understanding of the workshop's effectiveness, affirming that hands-on, contextually relevant training can greatly enhance the technical writing capabilities of barangay functionaries.

This conclusion underscores the importance of continuous professional development tailored to the specific needs of local government personnel, recommending the broader adoption of such workshops to improve communication and administrative efficiency in barangays.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- 1. Expansion of Workshop Offerings:** Given the significant improvement in technical writing skills, it is recommended that similar workshops be regularly conducted across various barangays. This will



ensure that all functionaries have the opportunity to enhance their writing capabilities, leading to more effective communication and documentation.

2. **Customization of Content:** Future workshops should be tailored to the specific needs of different barangay roles. Customizing content based on the unique responsibilities and writing requirements of functionaries will make the training even more relevant and impactful.
3. **Incorporation of Follow-Up Sessions:** To reinforce the skills learned, it is recommended to implement follow-up sessions or refresher courses. These can provide continued support, address ongoing challenges, and ensure sustained improvement in technical writing.
4. **Development of Support Materials:** Create and distribute technical writing manuals, templates, and guides specifically designed for barangay functionaries. These resources can serve as ongoing references to help maintain the standards of technical writing introduced in the workshops.
5. **Evaluation and Feedback Mechanism:** Establish a continuous evaluation and feedback system to monitor the long-term impact of the workshops on participants' job performance. Gathering feedback will also help in refining future workshops to better meet the needs of barangay functionaries.
6. **Promotion of Peer Learning:** Encourage the formation of peer learning groups within barangays where functionaries can regularly meet to discuss challenges, share best practices, and provide mutual support in improving their technical writing skills.

These recommendations aim to build on the success of the workshop, ensuring that the benefits extend beyond the initial training and contribute to the overall effectiveness of barangay administration.

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