

When most people consider possible career paths in tech, they automatically think of paths such as frontend development, backend development, UI/UX design, product management, and so on. Rarely, does anyone ever think of technical writing. In my opinion, to be an excellent technical writer, you need to have three core skills: Good writing skills Quite obvious for a technical "writer" role, yeah? As a technical writer, you should be able to string words together to produce meaningful, concise content that adequately communicates the topic or subject at hand. Luckily, even if you weren't born a writer, writing can be learned and developed. You can improve your writing skills by taking a course on writing, practising, and reading what has been done by others to develop your vocabulary and creativity. Fast learning and research abilities As a technical writer, you'll often be required to write about topics you have no prior experience with. As a result, you should be able to carry out research when necessary to fully comprehend a subject and still write about it concisely, within a stipulated amount of time. Software development knowledge There is no "traditional" academic work required to become a technical writer. Here are some courses you can check out: Technical writing course by TechnicalWriterHQ (paid) Fundamentals of Technical Writing by Ed2go (paid) Technical writing course by Google (free) Writing for Software developers (paid) Open technical communication course (free) Technical writing: Documentation on software projects by Pluralsight (paid) Also, if you have no software development experience, then you should consider taking an introduction to programming course. However, knowledge or experience writing code in any niche (frontend, backend, or mobile) or language (JavaScript, PHP, Python, Ruby, et cetera) will give you an advantage. Here are some: Udacity Introduction to Programming (paid) Edx Introduction to Computer Science (free) How to build a technical writing portfolio When applying for a technical writer role (or any of the other related roles above), you'll most likely be asked to provide links to your writing samples or technical writing portfolio. I have articles published on my personal site, Logrocket, CSS Tricks, freeCodeCamp, Bitmovin, StatusHero, Backhub, FingerPrintJS, and a host of other sites. A technical writer serves as a link between a piece of software and the people who will use it. As a technical writer, your work will revolve around creating content for two audience categories: internal users and external users. Then publish these articles either on your own blog or on developer-focused blogging platforms like dev.to, hashnode, or hackernoon. As a technical writer, your job may be to create external documentation, how-to guides, FAQs, tutorials or concept articles, that introduce these users to what your organization's product or service is all about and how it works. For further proof, here's what a typical technical writer job requirement from Flutterwave looks like: Technical writer job description from flutterwave Recommend technical writing courses (free and paid) As a newbie, I'd recommend taking an introductory course on technical writing to help you gain the guided knowledge you'll need to kick-start your journey. While technical writing applies to various industries, this article's focus is on what technical writing entails specifically in the software development ecosystem. Its purpose is to demonstrate to prospective employers or interviewers that you are capable of and have experience writing about technical topics or concepts. Following a tweet I posted on how to make money as a freelance technical content writer, numerous people messaged me to ask questions like: "what is technical writing?", "how can I become a technical writer?", "what do I need to know to become a technical writer?" and "how can I get a job as a technical writer?". Technical writing courses

(free & paid) How to build a technical writing portfolio Possible technical writing career paths List of technical writing communities and job boards What is technical writing? Also, since your primary audience will most likely be developers, having some software development knowledge will help you be more familiar with developer speak, and be better positioned to communicate with them. As a newbie, having one document that links to all your stellar public technical writing samples that you can show prospective employers will always tip the scale in your favour. You can start by creating articles about software development related concepts from whatever introduction to computer science/programming course you decide to take. You can also get documentation experience through programs like Google season of Docs or Outreachy Internships. It could be in the form of API documentation, tutorials, how-to guides, or conceptual guides. As a technical writer, your job may be to create internal documentation and wikis that will serve as a knowledge base for how these APIs, systems, and processes work.