

What Inhibits or Enhances Creativity in Technical Communication?

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Abstract

When we say someone is creative, we usually refer to their artistic skills. But is that really the only way people can be creative? What about creativity in the workplace? We took an interest in creativity in technical communication, and particularly if there is a discrepancy between how technical writers and the rest of technical communicators perceive their own creativity in the workplace. This paper is based on a survey of 55 technical communicators with various roles within the industry, who were asked about their scope for creativity at work, their personal approach to it, as well as its impact in building their career.

The results allowed us to determine how technical communicators define creativity, if they view themselves as creative and the tools they use at work. Our study suggests that there is a strong link between the feelings of creativity and flexibility. Associating creativity with innovation, the diversification of missions and tools at work inspire professionals to develop new solutions and skills.

Keywords: *technical writing, creativity, career development, tools, standards*

4,225 words

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Introduction

In everyday life, the concept of creativity is often associated with artistic abilities such as drawing or painting. However, knowing how to draw a tree does not automatically make a person creative. In the general language, creativity is defined as the ability to “produce or use original and unusual ideas” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022) or “transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relationships, or the like, and to create meaningful new ideas, forms, methods, interpretations” (Dictionary.com, 2022). Thus, the tree would have to come with a twist and stand out from other trees in the way it is presented and the message it conveys for its creator to be considered truly creative. The good news about art is that there are no rules: anyone can choose to explore their craft in a million possible ways and there is no right or wrong way to do it, meaning artistic creativity is limitless.

What about creativity in the workplace? Unlike in art, the professional world is burdened with constraints – especially in technical communication where standards and guidelines hold an essential part. Incidentally, the expression “creative job” generally refers to a role in the design field such as artistic director, fashion designer or graphic designer, which reinforces the idea that creativity in the workplace has to do with artistic skills and the ability to deliver aesthetically pleasing content or products. This common interpretation of what makes a job creative would mean that creativity in technical communication solely lies in the design side of the field. However, based on the general definition of creativity we previously established, creativity in technical communication could also refer to many other aspects that we would like to investigate throughout this research paper where we ponder the following question: What inhibits or enhances creativity in technical communication?

We believe that creativity, in its most restricted and obvious sense, is very much limited in technical writing in comparison to other professions of the technical communication field and towards which technical writers who wish to be more creative at work can evolve. This hypothesis was born from our respective experiences as technical communication interns as we noticed how different they are from each other, mostly depending on our roles, tasks and the type of products we work on. This very observation encouraged us to explore this topic as we are graduating and starting our careers in technical communication.

To conduct this research, we asked technical communication professionals to fill out a survey. The main purpose of this survey was to compare the point of view of technical writers to that of other professionals of the technical communication field on how they perceive creativity in the scope of their work environment. First, we will go through the methodology we applied to conduct this research. We will then present and analyze the results.

Methodology

To try and find out what inhibits or enhances creativity in technical communication, we followed the subsequent methodology.

Creating the survey

Before we began writing this research paper, we needed to establish what information was useful to collect in order to carry out our research. To do so, we first studied existing work on the subject and wrote down citations to get an overview of the type of information we would be looking for. From then on, we brainstormed all the questions that came to mind on a shared document, before the number of questions was cut down to the ones that would really help us in this research. We had our survey checked by our research director twice to have an objective point of view as well as make sure we were not losing focus of our thesis nor getting off-track.

Once we had settled on the questions, we began to draft the survey. Some of the questions were kept as they were, but some had to be rephrased. We tried to have a few open-ended questions to minimize the risk of any unintentional bias on our part, but not too many to keep the attention of the respondents. The type of questions were also as diverse as possible in order to keep the attention of the respondents.

Sharing the survey

Our target audience was all types of professionals working in the technical communication field. The respondents were first recruited among our colleagues. Since we all work in this field, this appeared as the most practical option to begin with. A post was created on the internal social media platforms within our companies, or the survey was simply shared by email to our coworkers. However, this did not prove to be sufficient as the people who answered were mostly technical writers from the same company. Therefore, the survey was then shared in Facebook and LinkedIn groups dedicated to technical communication in order to diversify the profiles of the respondents.

A short text explaining the purpose of our research accompanied the survey that the respondents were asked to fill. To reach a broader audience, the text was written in both English and French. The respondents had the choice to remain anonymous if they wished. They could answer in English or French as we considered it is sometimes easier for people to formulate their thoughts in their native language. The survey itself was only in English to simplify the collection of data. Since most technical communicators work in English, we considered this would not be a problem and would not narrow down the number of potential respondents.

Tools

The survey was made using Microsoft Forms. In hindsight, another platform such as Google Forms might have been a better option, because it would have allowed us all to access the results in real time. To counter this minor issue, the person who had access to the results created a spreadsheet of the results on our shared Drive and updated it any time a new response was submitted.

We gave respondents the possibility of being contacted again for interviews. They were asked to provide their email address after completing the survey. The goal of these interviews was to better understand answers that we thought needed clarification. However, we found the answers to the survey clear and complete enough and we did not need any further interview.

Results

As stated earlier, our survey targeted all professionals of the technical communication field. We collected answers from 55 respondents. However, 7 (12.72%) respondents stated they have more than one role.



Fig. 1 “What is your current role in your company?”

The majority of respondents are technical writers: they make up 48.87% of roles represented in this survey, whether it is the respondents’ only role or one of their roles. The second most represented role among the results is UX writer (15.62%), followed by e-learning designer and knowledge manager (6.25%). We also collected answers from 3 user assistance developers (4.69%), 2 content designers (3.12%), as well as 1 documentation manager, 1 e-learning project manager, 1 digital learning PM, 1 product owner, 1 editor, 1 grant writer, 1 product manager, 1 conversation designer, 1 social media specialist, 1 technical writing instructor and 1 self-employed consultant (1.56%).

Defining creativity

We asked the respondents to give us their own definition of creativity (see [Appendix A](#)).

Terms used	Occurrences
“new”, “innovative”, “novel”	24 (English and French)
“solution(s)”, “solve”, “solving”	17
“ability”, “able”	10
“idea(s)”	10
“out of the box”, “outside the box”	6
“different”, “differently”	6 (English and French)

Fig. 2 Most used terms in response to “In your own words, what is creativity to you?”

We then listed what we considered to be recurring skills and tasks in the daily life of a technical communicator and asked the respondents which of those they associate with creativity. The last option was open-ended and respondents were free to add any other relevant item they could think of.

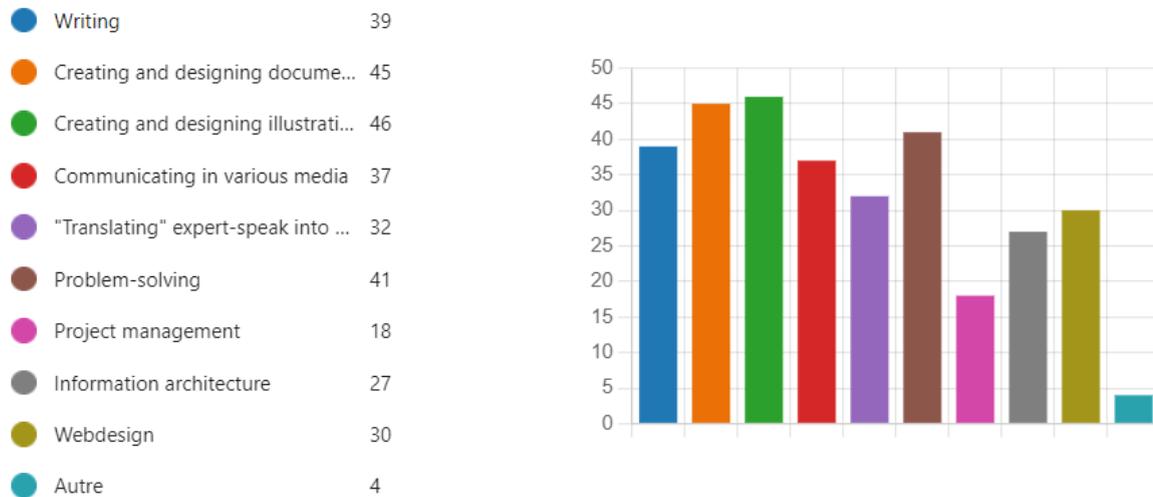


Fig. 3 “Which of the following aspects would you associate with creativity in technical communication?”

The two items that were most voted by the respondents are “creating and designing illustrations” (83.63%) and “creating and designing documentation” (81.82%), followed by “problem-solving” (74.55%) and “writing” (70.91%). On the other hand, the least voted item is “project management” (32.73%). Answers respondents added are “anything that has to do with providing clear information” (1), “developing new ways to deliver help to users” (1), “highly standardized writing rules = no room for creativity” (1) and “I see creativity in every form of technical communication” (1).

Creativity at work

Then, we asked the respondents how creative they get to be at work based on their own definition of creativity.



Fig. 4 “How creative does your job allow you to be?”

23 respondents (41.82%) answered they feel “partially” creative at work, while 18 (32.73%) answered they feel “very” creative at work. On the other side of the spectrum, 12 (21.82%) feel “a little” creative at work and 2 (3.64%) feel “not at all” creative. Depending on how the respondents answered this question, we then asked them different questions:

- We asked the 18 respondents who answered they feel “very” creative at work whether it is the very nature of their role, the work environment at their company or anything else that they believe allows them to be creative at work.



Fig. 4.1 “What do you think allows you to be creative at work?”

17 (94.44%) of them attribute their creativity to the role they hold at their company and 7 (38.88%) to the flexibility of their company. 5 other factors were mentioned, especially the colleagues and team members (2).

- We asked the 37 respondents who answered they feel “partially”, “a little” or “not at all” creative at work if they wished to be more creative at work:

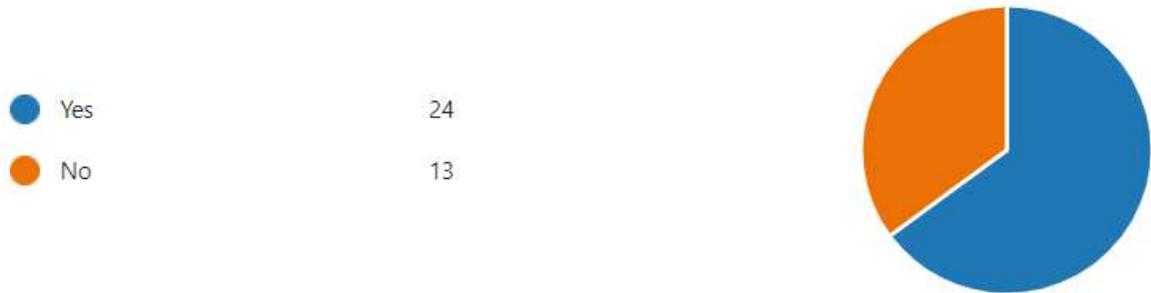


Fig. 4.2.1 “Would you like to be more creative at work?”

24 (64.86%) would like to be more creative at work and 13 (35.13%) do not. We then asked the 24 respondents who answered they wished to be more creative at work to tell us what would allow them to do so (see [Appendix B](#)). This was an open-ended question that allowed them to indirectly give us information on what is preventing them to be more creative.

Terms used	Occurrences
“more training”, “expand the scope” / “more scope”, “new tools”, “new projects”	8 (English and French)
“policies”, “guidelines”, “highly structured”, “more freedom”, “more flexibility”	6
“more collaboration”, “more interaction”	3
“less bureaucracy”, “organization”	2

Fig. 4.2.2 Most used terms in response to “What would allow you to be more creative at work?”

Tools used at work

We then asked which standard requirements they have to follow at work:



Fig. 5 “Which standard requirement(s) do you apply in your work?”

Most of the respondents use their company’s style guide (80%) as well as their company’s templates (65.45%). 9 respondents (16.36%) work within standards and specifications such as ISO

or S1000D. Other standards were mentioned: Design Systems (2), other companies' style guides such as Microsoft's or Google's (2), the industry's best practices (2) and accessibility requirements (1). Finally, a minority of 5 people (9.09%) answered that they don't have to apply any standard requirement.

We were then interested in knowing what tools and formats our respondents use at work:

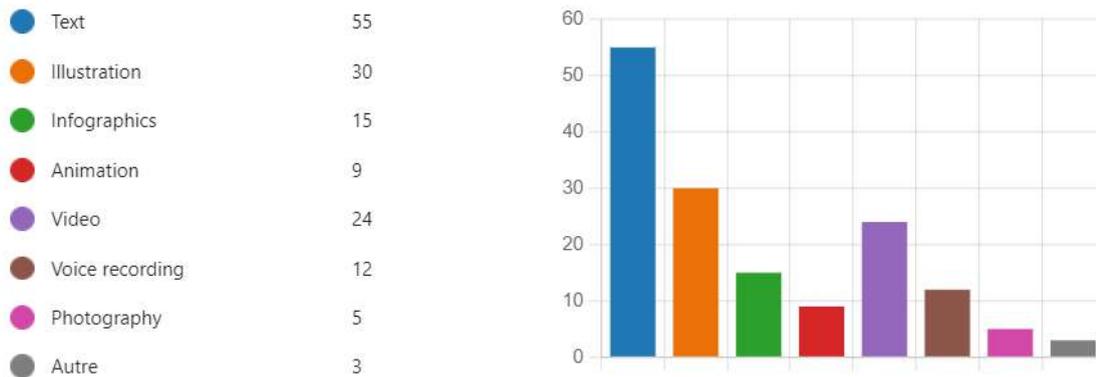


Fig. 6 "Which of the following formats do you work with in your day-to-day job?"

The three most-used formats are text (100%), illustration (54.54%) and video (43.64%). The least used formats are animation (16.36%) and photography (9.09%). Other answers that were added by our respondents are wireframes (2) and interaction design (1).

The goal of our next question was to learn more about the types of products and subjects our respondents work on on a daily basis:

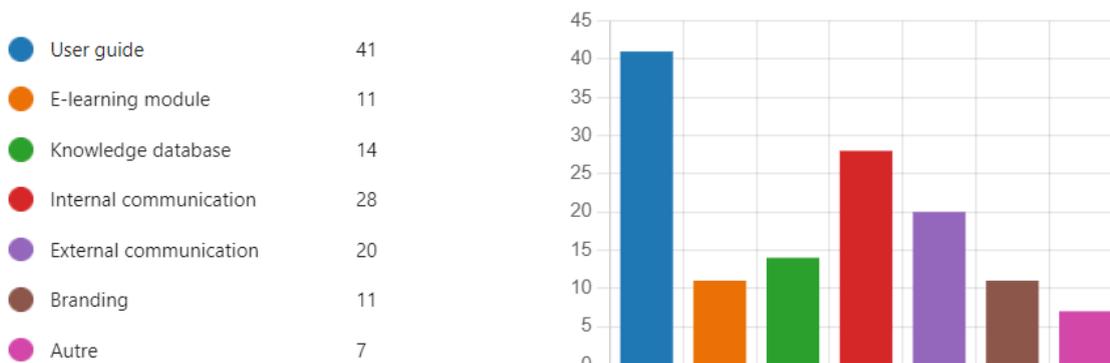


Fig. 7 "Which of the following subjects do you work on in your day-to-day job?"

The three most voted items are "user guide" (74.54%), "internal communication" (50.91%) and "external communication" (36.36%). 14 respondents work on knowledge databases (25.45%), 11 work on e-learning modules and 11 on branding (20%). We also let people who work on other subjects tell us what they work on: UI content (3), documentation website (1), content style guide (1), UX copy (1), product (1), voice response applications (1) and applications (1).

For our last question, we wanted our respondents to reflect on their career development and the role creativity plays in it:



Fig. 8 “How important do you think creativity is for your career development?”

27 people (49.09%) answered that creativity is “very” important for their career development, and 23 people (41.82%) answered that it is “partially” important. 3 people (5.45%) deemed creativity “a little” important for their career development and 2 respondents (3.64%) believe that creativity is “not at all” important for their career development.

Discussion and interpretation

For the purpose of our research, we chose to make no distinction between technical writers and user assistance developers, as well as between all e-learning professionals due to their similarities. Since our research focuses on technical writing in particular, we also chose to separate the 3 technical writers who have more than one role from the 27 technical writers and user assistance developers who only have this one role.

Creativity: the challenge of defining a subjective concept

As previously mentioned, creativity is the ability to challenge traditional ideas, which turns out to resonate with the majority of definitions respondents gave. Based on the analysis of their responses (fig. 2), the general consensus seems to be that creativity is the ability to think outside the box to solve a problem with innovative ideas. This also meets Newbold C.R. 's stance on creativity, which he defines as “*the ability to apply a complex understanding of a situated problem to an innovative solution*” (2008, p. 11). This definition can be applied in all areas of life and work, including technical communication.

However, we must point out how subjective creativity is. Even if we do settle on this definition of creativity, how creative people consider themselves to be can vary from person to person depending on their personalities and the level of creativity they aspire to reach.

Are designers really the only creative technical communicators?

At the beginning of this paper, we argued that the designers of technical communication probably were the most creative, at least based on the common perception of what a creative job is. To verify this statement, we used the results from the question “How creative does your job allow you to be?” (fig. 4) and filtered out answers from all respondents whose job title does not include the word “designer”. This left us with e-learning designers, content designers, UX designers and all conversation designers, representing a total of 8 respondents:

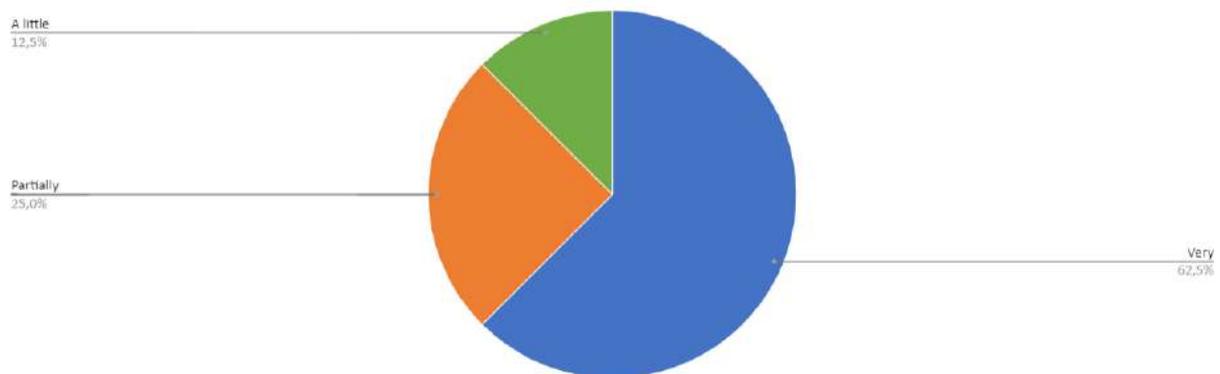


Fig. 9 “How creative does your job allow you to be?” as answered by respondents whose job title includes the word “designer”

From this graph, it appears that a majority of respondents whose job titles include the word “designer” consider that their job allows them to be “very” creative at work (62.5%), compared to 32.73% for all roles without distinction. None of them answered “not at all”. On the other hand, when we filtered out all respondents except for technical writers and user assistance developers, we got the following results:

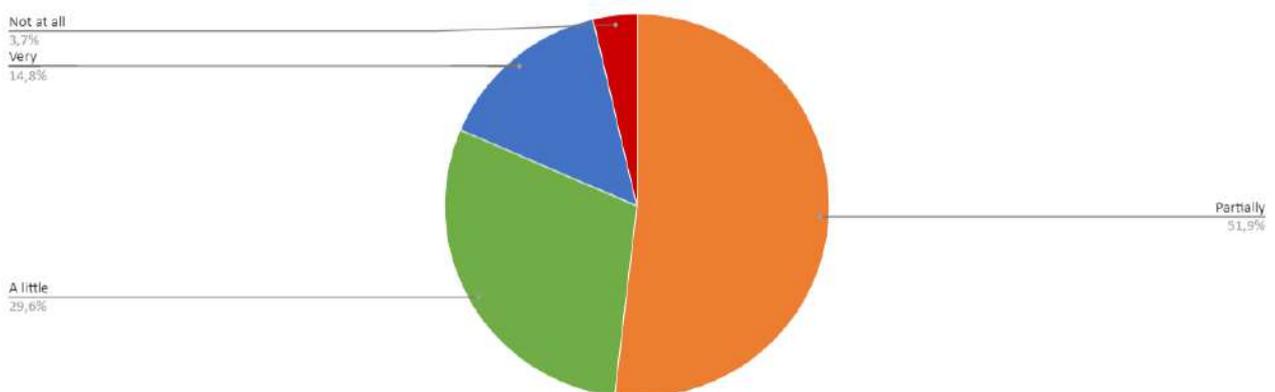


Fig. 10 “How creative does your job allow you to be?” as answered by technical writers and user assistance developers

Only 4 technical writers/user assistance developers out of 27 (14.8%) feel like their job allows them to be “very” creative. In contrast, 3 out of 4 knowledge managers (75%), as well as 3 out of 6 e-learning professionals (50%), answered they feel “very” creative. These results seem to

confirm our first impression that technical writers do not feel as creative as other technical communicators do in their role.

We built our starting hypothesis around our own observation that most technical writers work within a rigid framework. It appears that out of the 13 respondents who have to apply at least 3 standard requirements in their work, 7 (53.84%) are technical writers while out of the 11 respondents who have 1 or no standard requirement, only 3 (27.27%) are technical writers. This shows that technical writers make up a large majority of technical communicators who have to comply with many norms on a day-to-day basis and may actually be one of the reasons why so many technical writers from our survey feel so little creative in comparison with other professions.

Of course, we must not ignore the fact that there are technical writers who do feel like their job allows them to be very creative (14.8%) and a little over half of them (51.9%) still feel partially creative in their job. What then, could explain this discrepancy between the respondents?

Standards and guidelines: an obstacle to creativity?

As we analyzed the answers to our survey, one major obstacle to creativity mentioned by our respondents was having to comply with guidelines, and the lack of freedom that following guidelines causes. When asked what would allow technical communicators to be more creative at work, respondents gave answers such as *“Less guidelines to follow... but unfortunately, this is a sweet dream!”*, *“Taking on projects that are not so highly structured and defined, that offer more scope for personal input”* and *“More open standards (guidelines) and more time (resources) to do my best and most creative work”*. Even though guidelines are an essential part of technical communication, implemented in order to help users find information quickly, they can also put a curb to room for creative thinking. As it turns out, 4 of the 5 respondents who answered that they do not have to follow any standard requirement also answered that they feel “very” creative (80%).

Kholmatova A. (2017, p. 36) states, *“pattern libraries are sometimes blamed for stifling creativity, leading to generic looking websites. [...] If your system is fundamentally rigid and restricting, the pattern library can reveal and emphasize the rigidity. If it allows plenty of creative experimentation, a good pattern library can make the experimentation easier”*. In other words, guidelines and creativity could be compatible depending on how these guidelines present themselves. Guidelines could be responsible for the lack of creativity, but only if they are restrictive. They do not hinder creativity if they allow experimentation. Among the 13 respondents with the most standard requirements, 5 (38.46%) think they get to be “very” creative at work, 5 (38.46%) believe they are *“partially”* creative at work and only 3 (23.08%) deem to be “a little” creative. None

of them reckoned that they are “not at all” creative, which is evidence that standards and guidelines do not determine whether they feel creative or not.

The takeaway from this analysis is that each field of technical communication needs to apply defined guidelines, even in roles that are considered creative. As a matter of fact, even professionals in fields that are commonly considered creative, such as fashion or graphic designers, need to follow guidelines that will serve as a framework. As Kholmatova A. proclaims, “for a group of people to follow a creative direction consistently, reliably and coherently, patterns need to be articulated and shared.” (2017, p. 25), implying that we need standards to guarantee efficient collaborative work. Ultimately, standards serve multiple purposes that benefit everyone in the long run. In fact, standards define the cohesion and quality of documentation.

Therefore, even if the rigidity of the framework might be one of the reasons technical writers claim to feel less creative than other technical communicators, there must be other factors at play.

Juggling with tools and products

A general trend emerges from the comparison of the answers to the questions about the tools the respondents use at work, their missions and their scope for creativity. It appears that the professionals who feel “very” creative use the most variety of tools and have more diverse missions. On the other hand, those who feel “not at all” or “a little” creative seem to use a low number of tools and have less missions. This observation stems from the following data analysis:

How creative does your job allow you to be?	Has more than one role or mission	Works with 3 or more formats (tools)	Works on 3 or more subjects (missions)	Average number of formats (tools)
Very (18)	83,3%	61,1%	44,4%	3,3
A little, not at all (14)	64,3%	35,7%	28,6%	2

Fig. 11 Creativity level based on number of roles, missions and tools

To go further, we looked at the case of professionals whose only tool is text and work on user guides. They represent 7 of the respondents. As to how creative they get to be at work, 3 of them responded “partially”, 3 others “a little”, and 1 “not at all”. This analysis leads to the hypothesis that, for a technical communicator to have a wide margin for creativity, it relies heavily on the use of a variety of tools (such as text, video, animation and the use of many other media) and working on several products (user guide, knowledge database, e-learning module, internal and external communication, branding, etc.).

Incidentally, Welch, K. D. (2010, p. 37) states about creativity in technical writing: “*Design is not limited to text. It is about using the full range of materials available to produce understanding so the reader can use the product or navigate the system: (...) visual elements, such as choice of typeface, help to increase clarity.*” The ability to be versatile does not only help creativity but also the understanding and comfort of the users as technologies and tools evolve. As demonstrated by the major occurrences we found among respondents who wish to be more creative at work, many of them claim to want “more scope”, “new projects” and work with “new tools” (fig. 4.2.2). Not limiting to text and taking advantage of the diversification of resources makes oneself a more flexible professional who will potentially have more chances of attracting career prospects.

With this observation in mind, we cross-analyzed the results to the questions “Which of the following formats do you work with in your day-to-day job?” (fig. 6) and “Which of the following subjects do you work on in your day-to-day job?” (fig. 7) to find out how these parameters vary from one profession to another:

	Proportion of respondents who only work with 1 type of format (tool)	Proportion of respondents who only work on 1 type of subject
UX writers (10)	50%	30%
Technical writers & UA developers (27)	29.63%	37.04%
Knowledge managers (4)	25%	0%
E-learning professionals (5)	0%	0%

Fig. 12 Proportion of respondents who work with one type of tool and/or product per profession

However, though UX writers and technical writers do seem to be more limited in tools and subjects in comparison to other fellow technical communicators, it is important to note that a large proportion of them *do* juggle with multiple tools and subjects, allowing them to be creative at work.

Creativity and career development

One last thing that may be relevant to mention to answer the question of creativity in technical communication is professional ambition.

As we all embark on our respective professional journeys, we all have different goals in mind. In the technical communication community, some may see their job as their dream job: this is what they always dreamed their career would be. Others may work in this field right now but only see it as a way to gain valuable experience and work toward their own dream job in another field.

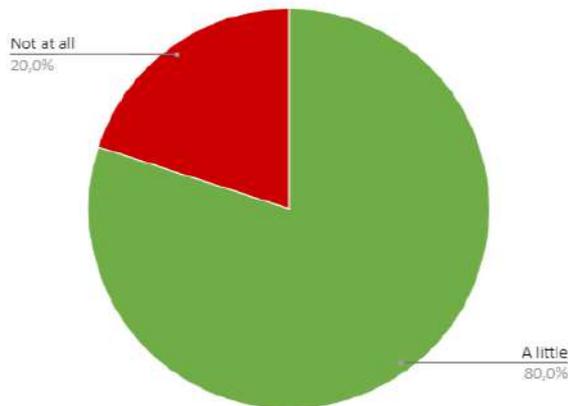


Fig. 13 “How creative does your job allow you to be?” as answered by respondents who answered “not at all” or “a little” to “How important do you think creativity is for your career development?”

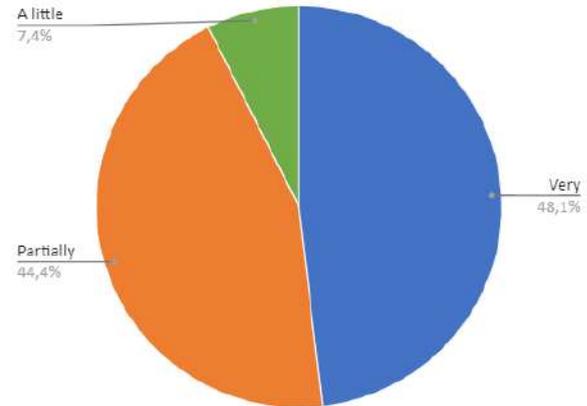


Fig. 14 “How creative does your job allow you to be?” as answered by respondents who answered “very” to “How important do you think creativity is for your career development?”

Out of the 5 respondents who answered creativity is “a little” to “not at all” important for their career development, all of them (100%) also answered they are “a little” to “not at all” creative at work (fig. 13), and 4 of them (80%) do not wish to be more creative at work. In contrast, out of the 27 respondents who answered creativity is “very” important for their career development, 25 of them (92.59%) also answered they are “very” or “partially” creative at work (fig. 14), and out of the 14 who feel “partially” creative, 13 (92.95%) said they would like to be even more creative at work. These results show that creativity is not an end goal. A person not being creative at work does not necessarily mean it is a bad thing if they are perfectly content with their job. However, these results also show that creativity can be a valuable tool for those wanting to develop their career.

Conclusion

This article stems from one conversation where we wondered if there is room for creativity in technical writing. As we carried out our research, we discovered that creativity is a subjective concept that everyone defines differently and that our initial vision of creativity being mainly reserved for designers was a misconception.

Even in professions such as technical writing where creativity seems to be limited, there is actually still room for creativity in applications that do not necessarily involve visuals. To the eyes of the respondents, what prevails and makes them feel creative is coming up with new solutions, as well as being able to innovate and stand out. For some people, this obviously implies a more appealing formatting of the content which goes with design skills. However, our analysis demonstrates that what matters when it comes to creativity is the use of various tools and for one to diversify their projects – and, mostly, the *need* of each individual for creativity.

Recommendation

Despite our best efforts, we did not get as much diversity as we were hoping for in the answers. A lot of the people who answered our survey were technical writers from the same company, which inevitably makes the results biased. Therefore, it is difficult to draw any definite conclusions from the results gathered during this research project. In further studies, it would be a good idea to not limit the job title of the respondents, because we realized during the study that technical communicators often have several roles or a different name for the same kind of responsibilities. It would also be best to get answers from people with similar job responsibilities from more companies. However, since the answers are anonymous, this may prove challenging to implement.

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Appendices

Appendix A - *“In your own words, what is creativity to you?”*

“La capacité à explorer différentes manières de répondre à un besoin, voire de le surpasser, pour proposer un produit/résultat efficace, innovant et original.”

“The ability to produce something or find a solution to a problem by putting together things or approaches in a new way.”

“Invent, imagine, and find solutions”

“Finding new ideas which improve our work”

“Having imagination and ideas that go beyond the obvious/traditional, and being able to implement them.”

“Thinking outside the box.”

“To be able to think outside the box”

“Créer du contenu physique ou dématérialisé de façon originale, en faisant appel à des méthodes ou à des outils qui se différencient des méthodes/outils standards (utilisés de tous). Pour cela, il y a également une notion de valeur ajoutée, durant le procédé de création, et par rapport au résultat obtenu (soit en termes d'esthétisme ou de qualité du rendu).”

“Like breathing... I need it!”

“DIY”

“inventing new solutions”

“Creativity is about understanding topics, analyzing what is worth for the end-users, and finding the shortest way to explain how things work. You need to find how to explain the use of features, how they fit in a workflow, how they can be described with words, graphs, screenshots.”

“The ability to come up with new content (usually in an artistic setting).”

“A way of placing a part of yourself in the work you create.”

“An ability to contrive a new ideas and unusual, effective approach to things.”

“Creating something original or unusual”

“Personally I believe creativity is that something useful to our society, that convey a new idea which can lead to an invention which multiplies the effect of human effort. But it can be depended to many facts , like creativity is something which attracts attention and gives happiness; for example we can see a creativity in a drawing, we can see a creativity in arts or sciences like that.”

“thinking about content structuration”

“Generation of novel approaches, solutions, and expressions”

“Always figure out solutions to convey the right message whatever the form.”

“Anything that makes me wonder "How did they come up with this?" is creative according to me!”

“Flexible, innovative, deep, or complex thinking and feeling, and the desire and ability to express those thoughts or feelings to others”

“Apporter quelque chose de nouveau, peu ou pas du tout vu/utilisé auparavant. Voir les choses différemment. Être capable de partir de quelque chose de standard et de le présenter différemment sans perdre l'essence même du "produit" de départ (comme par exemple pour une recette de cuisine).”

“Innovation, easy, design”

“The art to explain anyone anything in a simple way”

“it's the fact to have imagination and to have many ideas”

“Présenter l'information de manière innovante (nouveaux formats).”

“Creating surprising and powerful + bringing solutions to existing problems”

“Defining new smart ways of doing things”

“Thinking out of the box. Do things differently.”

“Problem solving by thinking out of the box”

“Doing things differently, using one's imagination to find new solutions to make a product stand out or constantly improve it.”

“problem solving in unconventional, eloquent ways”

“Doing a procedure out of the box (If applicable)”

“Finding new ways to do things. Making what you do your own.”

“Solving problems and creating solutions that balance UX principles as well as business requirements/compulsions.”

“The ability to find new ways to solve a problem”

“The ability to take existing ideas and make them into new ones”

“Creativity is about using your mind, imagination, to solve issues in fast and efficient ways, to put elements together in an esthetically pleasing way, to design new ways of creating stuff.”

“Unusual combinations and associations.”

“In my work, it's problem solving”

“I think creativity is thinking outside of the box and considering what is appealing to all people on all levels, not just visually.”

“Exploring ideas with an open-mind to find novel or the best approach to accomplish a goal”

“Creativity is a collaborative process where you create a solution that didn't previously exist”

“Openness to new ideas and making connections that other people might not have thought of.”

“Coming up with new/unexpected ideas or solutions”

“Shaping experiences”

“Freedom to not be boring”

“It means either problem solving or finding unusual methods of communicating, depending on the situation.”

“Thinking ‘outside the box’ - thinking of ideas that others don’t automatically think of, and that are original rather than predictable.”

“A way to express oneself”

“Being able to connect the dots that others don't see”

“Bring your own vision to life through whatever you're creating”

Appendix B - “What would allow you to be more creative at work?”

“Doing more cross-team collaboration to be more exposed to different areas of expertise and points of view.”

“More flexibility”

“Needs on new projects and tools, to improve quality, to reduce time spend on a task”

“Not sure if it's the nature of the job that blocks creativity a bit, but I try to think outside the box when the content allows me to do so. I don't have an exact answer for this.”

“Less guidelines to follow... but unfortunately, this is a sweet dream!”

“availability of developers to implement creative solutions”

“More open standards (guidelines) and more time (resources) to do my best and most creative work”

“Training on new tools to enlarge the offer we provide our users.”

“Engaging in new projects rather writing the same guides, UX Designing/Writing”

“Plus de formations pour développer de nouvelles compétences.”

“More freedom in document layout”

“Reducing the number of technical issues”

“Working more in collaboration with the Branding team. Adapt the tone of voice to the product.”

“More room for thoughts”

“Less bureaucracy”

“More interaction with UX designers and researchers. More involvement at the product discovery stage.”

“Having more time to finish each task”

“More ability to innovate and expand the scope of my responsibilities”

“I think if I had another job in general”

“My organization doesn’t prioritize what I do, so I have a lot of independence to do what I want the way I want. However, they will not use certain things. In a sense, while I can be creative, the effort is wasted. If the organization would value technical and educational communication more, it would establish a better culture.”

“An application with a different persona”

“Taking on projects that are not so highly structured and defined, that offer more scope for personal input.”

“Being more wordy”

“Policies and regulations”

About the authors



Néda El Hadj-Mimoune is a technical writer at Scaleway. She designed her own pedagogical materials when she was teaching English classes. She found the best of both worlds in technical communication: using her love for languages and pedagogy alongside her curiosity in all things tech.



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Solène Caudron is a user assistance developer at Dassault Systèmes. She studied international management and experimented with web design and documentation creation during an internship for a cultural event. This led her to the path of technical communication which combines her interest for languages and content management.



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