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## A Day in the Life of a Grant Writer: It's Not All About Writing

By Amy Oldham, President STC MTC

January's monthly meeting addressed grant writing, a topic that our chapter had not previously covered. We had two speakers, Danelle Baker-Miller and Ginger Hausser Pepper, both of whom are successful grant writers. The two sessions were aimed at describing the major components of grants and proposals, explaining the daily tasks required of a grant writer, and identifying lessons learned during the grant-writing process.

Each funder has specific requirements; therefore, not all grant applications are the same. However, each grant typically includes several of the same fundamental components.

Attendees learned that grant writing involved a lot more than simply completing the grant application itself. Similar to other forms of technical communication, grant writing (often considered a specialized subset of technical writing) involves audience analysis, research, project management, writing, editing, resource management, and the ability to work within the confines of rigid schedules. Besides those requirements, developing grants also necessitates that the writer:



**Ginger Hausser Pepper speaks at January meeting**

- stays abreast of trends that affect both the grant recipient and the grantor;
- provides specific, time-bound, measurable objectives;
- is able to describe how the grant and its impact will be evaluated;
- identifies a plan for sustainability; and
- follows and reports upon the grant through its life cycle.

During the sessions, it became clear that grant writing crosses a myriad of sectors, including higher education, local communities, and the government. Due to its far reaching affects, a grant writer's expertise in collaboration and project management can often be the key to successfully attaining funding.

The sessions ended with a lively and enlightening round of questions from the audience.

The presentations of both speakers are available in the Meeting Notes section of the STC MTC website, [www.stcmidtenn.org](http://www.stcmidtenn.org).

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SUBMISSIONS are welcome via email or email attachments. Send to [Elainejackson19@yahoo.com](mailto:Elainejackson19@yahoo.com)

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ADVERTISING: We will publish advertisements for industry-related events free of charge. The newsletter editor, in conjunction with the chapter's governing board, reserves the right to refuse advertising submissions. Non-chapter member ads are limited in page size at the editor's discretion. We encourage advertisers to send promotional items to our chapter to be used to further promote the event. Publication of advertisement in the Communiqué does not constitute endorsement by STC or its members.

## Upcoming Events

Following is a list of upcoming opportunities that may be of interest to STC MTC members. More events will be added to the calendar as the 2008 schedule is developed, so check our website ([www.stcmidtenn.org](http://www.stcmidtenn.org)) often for the latest scoop.

**March 12 through April 14** : STC election. Members will receive email or postal mail instructions for voting from National STC.

**March 14 and 15** : Annual STC Atlanta Currents Conference Workshop (March 14<sup>th</sup>) and Conference (March 15<sup>th</sup>). Find more information or register at: <http://www.stcatlanta.org/currents.htm>

**March 26** : Practical Uses for DITA - Part 2: Product Documentation and Training Webinar. Speakers: Jeff Filo, PTC, Curriculum Development Manager; Pushpinder Toor, PTC, Adoption Architect, Time:12:00 PM CST. Check website for details and RSVP.

**April 2**: Bulletproof Word to PDF Conversion: Ensuring Regulatory Compliance in Your PDF Rendered Result Webinar. Time: 12:00 PM CST. Check website for details and RSVP.

If you have ideas for chapter events or if your company can provide meeting space for an event, please contact Amanda Gaston or Emily Parker Hughes.

## Exploring XSLT with Dave Gash

February's monthly meeting featured technology guru/musician Dave Gash speaking on XSL, the XML stylesheet language, and introducing the attendees to XSLT. In an animated and entertaining session, Dave covered these topics:

- How XML and XSL are related
- What transforms are and what they can do
- How XSLT expands XSL's power and flexibility
- How to create and use transform templates
- XSLT coding for selections and decisions.

Dave explained and demonstrated how to create and use transform (the T in XSLT) templates, which allow users to control the appearance of output by writing very small pieces of code.

Learn more about Dave at his website, [www.hypertrain.com](http://www.hypertrain.com). While on the website, take a look at the Downloads tab, which features many useful, enlightening, and/or entertaining reference materials as well as links to free software.

# Patent Careers for Technical Writers, Engineers, Scientists, and Medical Professionals

The summary below is of an article on the website of Steven C. Oppenheimer, Licensed U.S. Patent Agent:

<http://www.OppenheimerCommunications.com>

After working more than fifteen years working as a freelance technical writer, I discovered another career option that draws heavily on my technical writing background and potentially offers significantly better money. The purpose of this article is to help other technical writers decide if they want to explore this interesting option. This same career option is also open to scientists (in physical, chemical, and biological sciences), engineers, and doctors. (Possibly nurses, too – read on....)

Please bear in mind that what I describe here applies exclusively to the career option of being a patent agent in the United States of America – I have no idea if there are parallel career options in other countries, though possibly similar career options exist!

## **Contents:**

What Is A Patent Agent?

How To Become A Patent Agent

Career Opportunities As A Patent Agent

From Patent Agent To Patent Attorney

Working As A Patent Agent

A Related Path: Patent Examiner

Legal Notices

To view the complete article, please visit Steven Oppenheimer's website: <http://www.OppenheimerCommunications.com>

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Oppenheimer Communications

Technical and Business Writing: From Complexity To Clarity R

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## Career Opportunity

### TECHNICAL WRITER – AVIONICS & AIRCRAFT INTERIORS:

With a company history spanning more than 100 years and a presence in business aviation for about fifty years, our company is continuing to grow through an expanding loyal customer base, a stable staff of long term employees, superior employee benefits, and worldwide locations supporting the business aviation community ranging from aircraft manufacturing to repair facilities. Due to our continued growth the following expansion position has been created in Teterboro, New Jersey:

Feel free to forward this information to anyone who may know of someone that might benefit and feel free to post this on any web sites that could lead to this getting into the right hands or network of professionals. *Joseph Alai, President/CEO, Rockstar Aviation, 404-213-8202.*

### TECHNICAL WRITER – Avionics & Aircraft Interior Modification (Teterboro, New Jersey) Job type: Permanent

- Write and update specifications for Aircraft Avionics and Business Jet Interiors packages.
- Prepare the customer specifications for avionics and interiors packages.
- Maintain the master specifications and options list, to include pricing list, for all aircraft models.
- Distribute revised customer specifications, master lists, and other documents.
- Work closely with the avionics and the interiors teams.

### QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's Degree with at least 3 years of Aviation Technical Writing experience in a database environment (knowledge of XML, Epic Editor, E-Spec, or similar programs a plus).
- Knowledge of aircraft systems, airframes, and/ or avionics.
- Proven organizational skills.
- Ability to read technical schematics.
- Clear and concise written and verbal communication skills.

### COMPENSATION:

- Extensive benefits package with comprehensive relocation package to Teterboro, NJ.
- Base salary in the \$40's to \$60's depending on experience.
- Both more experienced and lesser experienced candidates are encouraged to apply.

Reply with a Microsoft Word Resume to Joseph Alai at [aviation@rockstaraviation.com](mailto:aviation@rockstaraviation.com) for consideration.

# Career Opportunity

For more information or to be considered for this position, contact Donna Clark at Alexander Consulting Services. Her information is at the end of the listing.

Contract position CIGNA Healthcare in Nashville, TN.

**Position:** Project Coordinator – IT System Security

**Duration:** - 6+month

**Location:** CIGNA – Nashville, TN

**Business Group:** IT SystemsSecurity

**Rate:** \$45-\$50/hr

**Skills:**

- At least 2 years of organizational experience
- Highly proficient with Excel, Word and database applications
- Proven record of identifying and carrying through process improvements
- Strong organizational and analytical skills that result in conclusive recommendations
- Ability to manage multiple priorities
- Regular attendance is an essential function of the position

**Duties:**

- Work with the Security Administrative Team in establishing a process that will perform the following functions:
- Process management requests for system access.
- Create monthly, review system reports (RMS/TAPs, Peoplesoft and Facilities Badge Access System) to ensure all employees are appropriately classified in the system
- Maintain and review a comprehensive list of all access granted to each employee on a periodic basis.
- Coordinate the quarterly review of the organizational badge access. Obtain and issue reports to the PAs so that managers can review and approve physical access for each employee.
- Ensure each operational area completes the review and verify that all issues noted are corrected.
- Ensure the physical access for terminated employees has been disabled

**Education:**

B.S. Business Administration or Management Information Systems

Donna Clark  
Alexander Consulting Services  
Mobile : (423) 802.1596  
Phone: (860) 656.7169  
Fax: (423) 892.7416  
Email: <mailto:donna@alexandercs.com>

## News from National STC

### New Director of Community Relations Starting April 11

The following communication is from Susan Burton, CAE  
Executive Director  
Society for Technical Communication

The STC Board and staff are committed to providing excellent service to community leaders and to the membership as a whole. With Evelyn McCamey's departure, we have reformulated the community relations position and have hired a highly skilled association executive who understands the full range of financial, legal and technological issues that affect both the Society and the communities, who can answer community leaders' questions clearly and articulately, and who can make sure that the infrastructure can support the communities and STC. We upgraded the position and combined the responsibilities with operations for the entire Society to ensure community issues will be considered at the same time STC is developing its full infrastructure.

I am pleased to report that Diana Buttram will be joining us **April 11** as STC's new COO and Director of Community Relations. Diana is currently COO at the American College of Health Care Administrators (ACHCA) where she also serves as the liaison to its chapters. She greatly improved the relationship between chapters and the head office through communications programs and the infrastructure to meet the needs of the chapters. Over the years, she has developed expertise in every area of association operations. She has overseen the development of three websites and four database conversions. She has worked with iMIS in three previous associations, including a conversion from another platform to iMIS in her latest position. She has a strong financial management and governance background, and has worked with a wide variety of Boards, committees and chapters. The IT function will be reporting to Diana to ensure it meets the operational needs of the organization and its communities.

Diana is finishing up her COO responsibilities at ACHCA until April, but will join us a few half days a week until then. This will be a chance for her to get an overview of the tasks ahead of her and develop a list of priorities. This orientation time for Diana is particularly important since Merrick Bechini, Director of IT, has announced his long intended career shift. Merrick will be working for Quantum Leap Innovation, a technology company with offices in Virginia and at the University of Delaware. The company specializes in applying agent-based modeling to pandemic and biowarfare problems for both government and private sector clients. He will be working with Geographic Information System technologies and helping with new product and program identification. Merrick's last day is Tuesday, March 18. Please feel free to send him a thank you email for all of his years of service to STC.

These changes will have a POSITIVE impact on chapters and SIGs in several ways:

In the long run the STC operations and infrastructure will be much stronger. Each improvement will be considered with the communities in mind.

In short run, we ask for your patience and goodwill as we complete the planning and implementation of each improvement to iMIS, website, Forum or other technical support.

In all other areas, you can continue to rely on Jackie Damrau, head, Leadership Community Resource and Judith Herr, SIG Advocate, to carry your messages to the Board on a variety of governance, political or operational issues in your communities. Jackie can be reached at 214-505-0100 or [jdamarau3@airmail.net](mailto:jdamarau3@airmail.net) and Judith at 925-443-4514 or [herrij@comcast.net](mailto:herrij@comcast.net).

When contacting Diana during her first few weeks please be sure to copy all emails to Stacey O'Donnell at [stacey.odonnell@stc.org](mailto:stacey.odonnell@stc.org) to ensure prompt handling of inquiries or problems. Diana will start full time as of April 11, but she'll need several weeks to get accustomed to the operational demands.

You (*our chapter president -ej*) will be receiving a communication from Jackie and Judith about how you can help Diana learn more about STC. Your wholehearted desire to work cooperatively with the STC office to benefit our members is so critically important for the partnership between the communities and Society and appreciated. Thank you for your leadership and dedication to STC.

## News from National STC (continued)

### Renewal Challenge

STC is excited to announce the 2008 membership renewal challenge designed to support chapters' renewal efforts with a variety of incentives.

The chapters in each size category that obtain the highest renewal rate by March 31 will receive four free registrations for the Technical Communication Summit, to be held June 1–4, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Other prizes will also be distributed.

To compete in the challenge, a chapter must reach a renewal rate of 71 percent. In case of a tie, a drawing will be held to determine the winner. Winning percentages include all members who have already renewed this year. Size categories are Category 1 (601 or more members); Category 2 (301 to 600 members); Category 3 (151 to 300 members); Category 4 (76 to 150 members); Category 5 (41 to 75 members); and Category 6 (15 to 40 members).

STC will honor the chapters with the highest retention rate at the Technical Communication Summit in June.

### Rates and Lodging for the 2008 Technical Communication Summit, June 1-4

Register online on the STC Web site or by fax or mail by April 15 for Early Bird rates.

The Early Bird rates offer significant savings:

Member early bird rate: \$695—a savings of \$300 off the on-site rate

Nonmember early bird rate: \$995—a savings of \$200 off the on-site rate

Student early bird rate: \$175—a savings of \$75 off the on-site rate

Student nonmember and retired member or retired nonmember early bird rate: \$225—a savings of \$30 off the on-site rate

Conference attendees and exhibitors are encouraged to make hotel reservations early at STC's official conference hotel, the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown. The hotel is conveniently connected to the Pennsylvania Convention Center, site of all conference activities, and many of the city's most popular tourist attractions. (The conference is June 1–4 during a peak time for visitors to enjoy Philadelphia.)

The Philadelphia Marriott Downtown is the official host hotel and offers special conference rates for rooms booked before May 5. STC members who make reservations at the host hotel will automatically be entered to win a selection of prizes, such as: complimentary room nights during the conference, restaurant certificates, or STC merchandise. Reservations may be made by calling +1 800-266-9432 or on the STC Web site. The cost for a single room is U.S. \$218 per day plus tax. The cost for a double room is U.S. \$228 per day plus tax. Additional people in the room are U.S. \$20 each.

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#### Get the latest scoop!

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[www.stcmidtenn.org](http://www.stcmidtenn.org)

National STC  
[www.stc.org](http://www.stc.org)

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