

Call for Contributors: *Negotiating International and Cross-Cultural Technical Communication: Stories of Technical Communicators*

Summary

We request story proposals of 300 words for an upcoming collection *Negotiating International and Cross-Cultural Technical Communication: Stories of Technical Communicators*. This collection is designed for technical communicators to tell their stories working in international and cross-cultural contexts, working for/with clients/colleagues from diverse cultural backgrounds, or writing/designing for audience from diverse cultural backgrounds. We hope this collection will be a venue for contributors to share their experiences and lessons-learned, to inform and educate fellow practitioners, and to demonstrate their value-add to employers and clients. Submissions that meet the scope of the collection will be followed up for full-length stories.

Editors

Han Yu, Assistant Professor, English Department, Kansas State University. Han's research focuses on workplace writing, intercultural technical communication, and more specifically, technical communication in China. Her work has appeared in *Technical Communication*, *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, and *Business Communication Quarterly*. Han has worked as an editor for State Farm Insurance, as a technical writer for the Laboratory for Integrated Learning and Technologies at Illinois State University, and as an editor and translator for New Oriental Publishing Group in Beijing. She has received numerous grants and awards for her research and teaching.

Gerald Savage, Professor, English Department, Illinois State University. Jerry's research focuses on the ethics and politics of technical communication, workplace practices, and issues of social justice in international technical communication. His work has appeared in *Technical Communication Quarterly*, *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, *Journal of Business and Technical Writing*, and as chapters in a number of essay collections. He is co-editor with Dale Sullivan of the book *Writing a Professional Life* published in the Allyn & Bacon Technical Communication Series and co-editor with Teresa Kynell Hunt of the two-volume collection of essays *Power and Legitimacy in Technical Communication* published in the Baywood Technical Communication series. He has worked as a freelance contract writer, researcher, and editor for numerous organizations and government entities, including Eaton Software, Epicenter Press, Alaska State Operated School System, University of Alaska Museum, City of Bloomington, IL, and *The Journal of Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, among others.

Themes

We welcome a wide range of stories from technical communicators who work within or outside the U.S. Possible topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Working as technical communicators outside of U.S.
- Non-U.S. technical communicators writing or designing for clients or audiences outside of the communicators' own countries or cultures
- U.S. technical communicators working with clients, subject matter experts, writers, or editors from various nations or various cultural backgrounds within the U.S.
- U.S. technical communicators writing or designing for audiences from various nations or various cultural backgrounds within the U.S.
- Coordinating or managing technical communication projects that span national or cultural borders
- Involvement in outsourcing, translation, localization, or globalization projects
- International and cross-cultural stories from various technical communication fields such as business communication, science writing, engineering writing, medical writing, nonprofit organizations or NGOs, government writing, usability testing, technical translation, etc.

What to Submit Now

- Story synopsis (300 words)
- Biographical note (150 words)

Submit to: hyu1@ksu.edu

Timelines

- Submission of story synopsis and biographical note: July 31, 2010
- Notice of synopsis acceptance: August 31, 2010
- Submission of 1st draft full-length story: November 30, 2010
- Notice of draft acceptance: January 31, 2011
- Submission of final draft full-length story: June 30, 2011

Writers' Guidelines

We are interested in stories that engage readers and help them identify with the protagonist(s) in the story. In this sense, these stories are not unlike feature news stories and fiction. If you have little experience writing such narratives, following are some suggestions that might be helpful:

- Tell a concrete story, not a general overview or description of your work. Remember to “Show, not tell.”
- Stories have the 5Ws and 1H:
 - **Who** was involved?
 - **What** happened?
 - **Where** did it take place?
 - **When** did it take place?
 - **Why** did it happen?
 - **How** did it happen?
- An alternative framework is SCAD:
 - **Situation:** What is the occasion that makes the story? This may be an incident, a crisis, a typical occasion that illustrates what it's like to be an intercultural technical communicator.
 - **Character:** People, especially the main characters. Readers should get a sense of characters as real, distinctive human beings. The best writing doesn't spend a lot of time describing people. Instead, their nature, character, personality, temperament, etc. become evident through their actions and reactions, what they say, what other characters say to them and how other characters act in relation to them.
 - **Action:** Something important, significant, or interesting happens in the story. These are often performed by **characters** and may cause changes to the **situation**.
 - **Dialogue:** Usually verbal communication but could be other modes of communication.
- The story needs to have some point, but it does not need to be explicit. The point could be implicit—readers need to figure out for themselves. Or the point could involve some ambiguity.
- Stories don't have to begin at the beginning; they can begin in the middle, at the end, a long time later, or anywhere in between.
- Story can be developed from one particular incident or a synthesis of multiple real incidents.
- People, project, and company names can be omitted or pseudonyms can be used to protect confidentiality.
- Story should be around 3000-5000 words.