# Three Technical Writing Tips



**by Kathy Pallis, Technical Writing Editor**

**Be clear.**

Keep separate thoughts separate. Review your sentences and make sure they flow logically from one to the other.  Keep sentences short and sweet and stay on the point. When you move to a new thought, start a new paragraph.

Use tables and graphs to quickly and accurately convey your data. Use tables for actual numerical values; use figures when showing relationships. Use a list for any sequence of three or more items. Use numbers only if the sequence is important–for everything else use bullets.

**Identify your writing goal.**

The more specific and clear the goal, the better the process will be for both your research and your report. Spend time thinking about this, put it down for a while and then come back to it and try to look at it as though you haven't seen it before. Criticize it as though it is someone else's goal, then rewrite it and make it better.

 **Explain acronyms, abbreviations, and jargon.**

Spell out or explain any specialized terms or abbreviations the first time you use them. If you are using an abbreviation or acronym, use it throughout the rest of the document without spelling it out again.

If you have many acronyms, abbreviations, and other terms, consider adding a glossary