

Ragged Left

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THE SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

BERKELEY CHAPTER

Winning Tactics for Interviewing

Thinking of starting off the new year with a new job? Give your career a kick start with the inside track on interview techniques and strategies.

January's meeting will feature the Dean of Northern California Technical Communications Recruiters, Andrew Davis, holding forth on "Acing the Interview."

Mr. Davis, active in STC circles for years, will discuss strategies for succeeding once you've gotten your foot in the door with a prospective employer. His insights and advice will be valuable whether you're looking for your first contract or job—or your hundredth. Join us on Wednesday, January 10th for this fascinating and useful presentation. We'll see you there!

Meeting details appear on page 2 and you can make reservations online at www.stc-berkeley.org.

STC Job Search Resources Online

The STC-Berkeley chapter compiles a list of contract and full-time job openings for technical communicators. This handy resource is distributed by email to list subscribers.

To subscribe, send an email message to STCJOBSBA-L-request@stc-berkeley.org.

Leave the subject line blank and turn off your automatic email signature if applicable. Insert the following command in the first line of the message body:

subscribe

Please do not send messages to the list address.

To unsubscribe, send an email message to STCJOBSBA-L-request@stc-berkeley.org.

Leave the subject line blank and turn off your automatic email signature if applicable. Insert the following command in the first line of the message body:

unsubscribe

For information on how to prepare job listings for this list and where to send them, please send a message to postinginstrux@stc-berkeley.org.

For more information on this service, see our Web site for details at: www.stc-berkeley.org

Rewarding Inadequate Instructions

At last, a chance to claim revenge on the manuals or instructions that have made your life miserable.

Have you ever been so frustrated with a manual or set of instructions that you cursed the author and wished you had never bought the product? Do you remember the last time you used Help on your

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About the STC

TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION is the bridge between those who create ideas and those who use them. Conveying scientific and technical information clearly, precisely, and accurately is an essential occupation in all sectors of business and government.

STC has more than 20,000 members and 144 chapters worldwide. Its members include writers, editors, artists, illustrators, photographers, audiovisual specialists,

managers, supervisors, educators, students, employees, and consultants.

STC strives to:

- Advance the theory and practice of technical communication.
- Promote awareness of trends and technology in technical communication.
- Aid the educational and professional development of its members.

Membership

Membership is open to everyone. Regular membership is \$110/year, with an additional \$15 enrollment fee the first year. Student membership is \$45/year.

To receive additional information and an application form, via mail or email:

- Call our chapter voicemail number 510-466-5464 and leave a message.
- Send email to bkymbrs@stc.org.
- Send mail to STC-Berkeley, PO Box 1007, Berkeley CA 94701-1007.

Advertising Rates

Page \$70, 2/3 page \$50, 1/2 page \$40, 1/3 page \$30, 1/6 page \$20, business card \$10. STC members receive 20% off. Ad deadline is the fifteenth of the month prior to publication.

Submissions

Ragged Left publishes original articles and illustrations. We edit them to meet our needs. You retain copyright but grant every STC publication royalty-free permission to reproduce the article or illustration in print or any other medium. Please contact the editor for details of how to submit articles and illustrations.

Deadline for unsolicited submissions is the 21st of the month preceding publication. Other STC publications are hereby granted permission to reprint articles from *Ragged Left*, provided such reprints credit the author and the specific *Ragged Left* issue, and a copy of any publication containing such a reprint is sent to the *Ragged Left* editor.



STC-Berkeley Chapter Meeting Details

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 10.

Café de la Paz serves STC-Berkeley members delicious South American food. The meeting begins at 6 P.M. with networking, conversation, and a no-host bar, followed by the buffet at 6:30 P.M. Chapter business and announcements are made around 7:15 P.M., followed by the speaker.

If you want to eat dinner, reservations are required and *must* be received (by Bill) no later than 12:00 NOON the Monday before the meeting (January 8). Reservations are necessary so that we can order the right amount of food. Do *not* contact the restaurant.

Send checks to Bill Kritzberg, 401 Melrose Avenue, Alameda, CA 94502.



RSVP online: Use your credit card to order meeting reservations via the chapter Web site, www.stc-berkeley.org.

With a reservation, the meeting fee with food for members is \$17, for student members is \$14, and for nonmembers is \$20; if you come for the program only, starting at 7:30 P.M., the fee is \$12 for members and non-members (\$10 for students). If you are not eating, payments may be made at the door.

Fix Your Résumé

STC-Berkeley offers free résumé reviews to all comers, whether they are members or not. If you know someone who is a technical writer and would like some help with his or her résumé, we offer résumé reviews by people who have experience making hiring decisions.

With the average employer taking less than a minute to look at your résumé, another pair of eyes can help present your qualifications in the best light, *and* get you hired.

Résumés for review must be received the Friday before the monthly meeting (January 5). Send résumés to employment@stc-berkeley.org. Arrangements will be made to meet at the monthly meeting and to discuss the suggestions.

computer and every click of the mouse led to a new set of decisions?

Does this sound familiar? How about \$500 for your frustration? Technical Standards, Inc. (TSI), a Southern California documentation services company, is offering \$500 for the winning entry in their 'Worst Manual Contest.'

Send a manual or set of instructions that is hard to understand, poorly written, or just plain wrong. Send it if it has bad grammar, too much legalese, is poorly translated, or has missing steps. If it is the worst entry, you will win \$500.

"We thought we would have fun with this contest. Everyone has had trouble with a manual," says Michelle Wier, Director of Operations of Technical Standards, Inc. "That's why we started our company. People like products they understand how to use, and good technical documentation reduces the need for technical support. That's why good manuals are so important."

You don't have to send the whole manual; excerpts of the worst parts are okay. The deadline for submissions is January 15, 2001, so check those holiday gifts for potential entries. Entries must be in English. For complete contest rules see the TSI Web site at www.tecstandards.com.

Freelancing Resources

Some resources for entrepreneurs and freelancers.

Alumni Resources in San Francisco A non-profit organization with workshops, coaching, support groups and library for career development. www.ar.org or phone 415-274-4747.

American Medical Writers Association Conducts workshops on the business of freelance writing. www.amwa.org for the national organization, and www.amwancal.org for the Northern California chapter.

American Society of Journalists and Authors Features a service which lets authors know about the contract terms for most popular magazines. asja.org/cw/cwpage.htm

East Bay Editor's Guild A support and information group. Email to kristin@barendit.com.

Help for Med Writers

Web sites for medical writing opportunities and information:

genomejobs.com

biospace.com

www.fda.gov

bioview.com

Other Related Local Resources

NATIONAL WRITERS UNION (UAW)

A labor union for freelance writers of all genres. Contact Mike Bradley, 510-482-1712, or the NWU Tech Writers Job Hotline, 415-979-5522.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMPUTER EDUCATORS (PACE)

Serves the technical training community in the Bay Area. Most meetings are the morning of the second thursday in San Francisco. See www.pacenet.org.

Grilling for the Interview

The 16 "Most Popular" Interview Questions with Carole Hall

STC SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17TH, 2001
6:00 P.M.: NETWORKING AND SELF-SERVE HORS D'OEUVRES
7:00 P.M.: PROGRAM

If you have ever been asked a question in a job interview that made your mind go blank, this meeting is for you. Any of these "popular" questions could cause problems if you're not prepared. In this interactive Q&A session, everyone in the audience will help provide answers to all these questions.

Even in this time of excellent job prospects, a bad interview can prevent you from getting the job you really want. You need to feel confident about your ability to respond quickly and intelligently in an interview. The variety of responses you'll have from this session will ensure that you can handle almost any interview situation, even those dreaded team-style interviews.

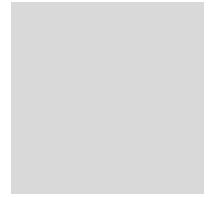
Carole Hall has been a technical communicator for several decades. Her company, HallTech, has provided writing and training consulting for both large and small Bay area businesses and organizations. For the past five years, she has instructed technical communication (TC) courses for universities (SJSU, UCB, UCSC) and for local companies. She is the author of a handbook, *Instructions and Procedures That Work*, that has helped hundreds of her students write good instructions and procedures.

Meeting Location: London Wine Bar, downstairs 415 Sansome Street, Downtown San Francisco
STC members: \$10; Non-members: \$12; Students: \$8
Details: <http://stc.org/region8/sfc/www/index.html>

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P.O. Box 1007
Berkeley, CA
94701

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Guaranteed



Next Meeting:

Wednesday January 10

Acing the Interview with Andrew Davis

Meal reservations required by Monday, January 8.

See page 2 for costs and contact info. **RSVP online:**

Credit cards accepted at Café de la Paz.

Please do not call the restaurant!

Café de la Paz: 1600 Shattuck Avenue (at Cedar)

Buffet and No-Host Bar 6:30 - 7:30

Announcements and Program 7:30 - 9:00

STC-BERKELEY MEETING LOCATION AND DIRECTIONS

By BART: Exit the Berkeley station (Richmond line) at Center and proceed north six blocks up Shattuck Ave. to 1600 Shattuck at Cedar.

From north of Berkeley: From I-80, take the University Avenue exit. Go east (towards UCB) to Shattuck Ave. Turn left (north) on Shattuck and go seven blocks to 1600 Shattuck. Turn left on Cedar for parking.

From south of Berkeley: Take I-880 north from San Jose through Oakland. Follow the highway as it curves sharply to the right (where traffic merges) and becomes I-980. Continue on I-980 to Highway 24 (toward Berkeley/Walnut Creek). Take the first exit from 24 (Martin Luther King Jr./51st). Turn right on 51st St. and make first left onto Shattuck Ave. Proceed north on Shattuck to downtown Berkeley. Turn left on University Ave., then right again at first light (north) onto Shattuck. Go seven blocks to 1600 Shattuck. Turn left on Cedar for parking.

From San Francisco: Take the Bay Bridge towards Oakland (I-80 East). At the end of the bridge, stay in the left-hand lanes and head towards Berkeley and Sacramento. Proceed two miles and exit onto University Avenue (on the exit ramp, stay in left lane of split). Go east (towards UCB) to Shattuck Ave. Turn left (north) on Shattuck and go seven blocks to 1600 Shattuck. Turn left on Cedar for parking.

From far East Bay: Take Highway 24 west through Caldecott Tunnel, exit Ashby Avenue. West on Ashby to Shattuck Ave. Right on Shattuck to downtown Berkeley. Turn left (west) on University Ave., then right again at first light (north) onto Shattuck for seven blocks to 1600 Shattuck. Turn left on Cedar for parking.

