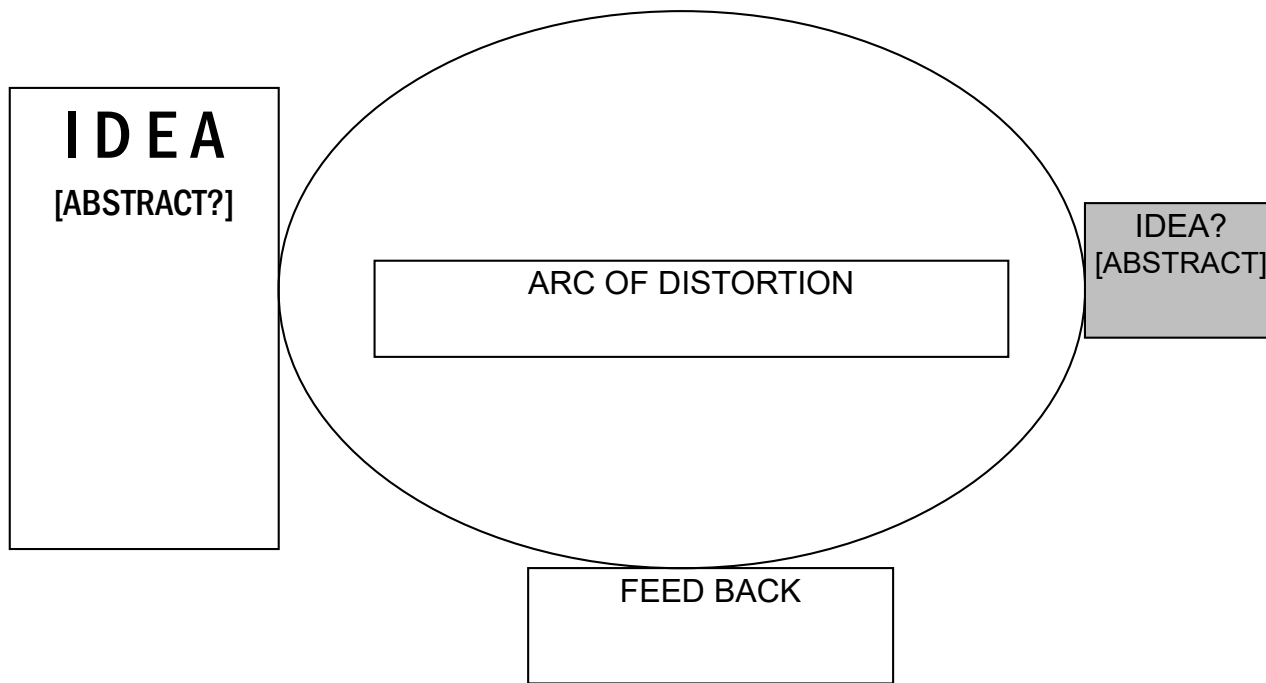


# Introduction to documentation



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# The communication loop



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# Why document

- Because we forget.
- Reach more people.

To

- Record.
- Inspire.
- Inform.



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# Why document

- Support your work
  - Why is it important?
  - What effort went into it?
- Raise credibility.
  - Become an information provider on a specific topic.
- Generate income.
- Share
  - Ideas
  - Experiences.
  - Knowledge.
  - Innovation.
  - New technologies.



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# Why document

- Capture indigenous knowledge.
- Institutional learning.
  - Embed values and wisdom in the institution.
- For advocacy
  - Policy analysis
  - Part of a campaign



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# Before you start

- WHY am I documenting this?
  - To inform. [Das Kapital]
  - To persuade. [The communist manifesto]
  - A call to action. [‘Workers of the world unite!’]



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# Before you start

- WHAT do I want to say?
- WHO is the intended reader?
  - A real person.
  - Gender.
  - Age.
  - Education.
  - Rural or urban.
  - Interests.
  - Income.
  - ...and what else she reads.



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# Before you start

- WHEN is the document needed?
- WHERE is the document going to be used?
  - Internal.
  - In libraries.
  - In the field.
  - How long does it have to last?



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# The ABCs

All documents should be:

- Accurate.
  - *Facts are sacred, but comment is free.*
- Brief.
  - *Be short, be sweet, be gone.*
- Clear.
  - *Songs that `people can hum on the way back from the movie, and whistle during work the next day.'*
  - Short sentences.
  - Simple words.



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# 'Rules'

- Proximity.
- Pegging: intellectual judo.
- Humour.
- Contrasts.
- Human interest.
- Explain.
  - Illustrations.
  - Photographs.
  - Tables.
  - Data.



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# The 3 R's

- Responsible.
- Right information.
- Read.



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# Be sensitive

- Political correctness.
  - ‘Challenged’ or abilities.
  - Dalit.
- Keep the different perspectives over time.
  - Lower caste
  - Scheduled caste
  - Harijan
  - Dalit
  - Productive caste
  - Caste name doesn’t matter [?!].
- Unbiased.
  - Gender.
  - Ethnic.
  - Language.
  - Age.
  - Culture
- Short-hand codes.
  - Merit.
  - Uniform civil code.
  - No dowry.
  - Conversion
  - Dharma.



# Statistics

- Add authenticity to your position.
- Are useful only if you have complete data.
- Put what is important into tables.
- Give a self-explanatory title to the table.
- Give from where you got the figures. [Source.]
- Explain figures in the text.
- Figures are words. They need to be arranged into sentences and paragraphs.
- What do the figures actually mean?
- People can relate only to figures between 1–100.



# Statistics

## If you did your own research

- Be careful of the methodology.
- Recheck and explain any abnormality.
- Mention the limitations and strengths of the data.
- Why is your data more authentic?
- Have complete data.



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# Case study

Case studies are:

- To tell of the impact in the lives of ordinary people.
- To illustrate a point in 20 to 30 words.
- A person affected in about 100 to 200 words.
- A composite [or fictional] case study.
- A quotation from an affected person.



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# Case study

The story should cover

- The situation before the intervention.
- The person and her:
  - Struggles.
  - Triumphs.
  - Emotions.
  - Support and hostility.
  - Who, when, where, why...
  - Feelings.
- The changes that the intervention made.
- In the life of the one person and family.
- The number 'replicated' in the community.
- The tasks ahead.



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# Case study

## The WH rules

Have this as specific as possible, as soon as possible in the text—preferably in the first paragraph itself.

it is a good practice to start with the name of the person as the first word.

- Who (give as many details as possible—children etc)
- When (at least one specific date)
- Where (and the closest 'recognisable' place)
- What
- Why
- How



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# Make documents attractive

- Vary the styles to
  - Highlight.
  - Emphasise.
  - Keep reader interest.
- Use.
  - **Bold.**
  - Underline.
  - *Italics.*
  - ... *just a little bit **only.***



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# Text design

- Headings and subheads
- Indicate the transition of ideas.
- Use of white space.
- Balance pictures and text.
  - Too much text: intimidating.
  - Too little margins make the book difficult to open and read.
  - Too much white space is a waste of
    - Paper
    - Postage.



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