



Techniques for Producing Clear & Concise Documents


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In Search of First Class Documentation






About ACS Learning, Inc.


- **Founded 1993**
- **ID Professionals**
- **175+ Documentation Projects**
- **Trained 10,000+ students**
- **Pharmaceuticals, Technology, Financial & Service Industries**

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Through the Years...

- **Evolving Technologies**
- **Customer Base**
- **Print-based to Online**
- **Changes in Staff**
- **New Consultants**




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What is first class documentation?

Easy to:

- Use
- Read
- Understand
- Reference




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The Four C's of documentation

- Customized
- Clear
- Concise
- Consistent



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What Did We Need?

A system:

- To give a consistent look and feel to all ACS Learning projects
- To save time and streamline development process
- To provide a blueprint that we could train our consultants to use

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We found...

Information Mapping:

- A method of organizing information for optimal learning and retention
- Principles based on adult learning theories and cognitive science
- Information is broken down into basic elements
- Concepts are applicable to any content, regardless of platform



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We learned...

- **A client used information mapping as a standard for all communication**
- **Software tools support MS Word®, Adobe FrameMaker®, Corel WordPerfect®, Lotus Notes®**
- **Conversion to XML and HTML**
- **Customizable**


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Applying Information Mapping

- **Technical manuals**
- **Training materials**
- **Single source content using XML**
- **Web content**
- **Operating procedures**
- **ISO/QS-9000 or 14000**
- **Sales proposals**


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3 Components of Information Mapping

- 1. Analysis**
- 2. Organization**
- 3. Presentation**

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1st Component of Information Mapping

Analyze – What type of information?

- **Principle**
- **Procedure**
- **Process**
- **Structure**
- **Concept**
- **Fact**

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2nd Component of Information Mapping

Organize – How is information structured?

- **Chunking**
- **Relevance**
- **Labeling**
- **Consistency**

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3rd Component of Information Mapping

Presentation Modes

- **Text (Online/Print)**
- **Graphics**
- **Model**
- **Verbal**
- **Video/Film**


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Summary


- Information mapping is a set of principles and concepts that can be applied to optimize audience learning and retention.
- There are software tools available to assist in the application of information mapping principles.

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Learning Exercise






Chunking: On-line or Print-based

- **Group information into manageable units**
- **Print: The 7 ± 2 rule**
- **On-line: The 5 ± 1 rule**
- **Chunk information based on audience and complexity of information**

Continue



Relevance: On-line or Print-based

- **Information relates to one main idea**
- **Place like items together**
- **Exclude unrelated items**

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ACS Learning


Labeling: On-line or Print-based


- **Provide a preview of what's coming (an advance organizer)**
- **Provide a label for all content**
- **Make labels visible on each screen or page**

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ACS Learning


Learning Exercise

An illustration of a right hand holding a yellow pencil, writing on a white sheet of paper. The paper is slightly tilted and has some faint lines suggesting text or a diagram. The hand is rendered in a realistic style with shading.




Demo
Information Mapping
Template

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Topics

1. Customization of templates
2. Information Mapping terminology
3. Information Mapping template
4. Information Mapping document
5. Demo the ACS Learning customized template




Customization of Templates

- Styles
- AutoText
- Macros




Styles

- Formatting instructions
 - Pre-defined
 - User-defined
- Apply to either paragraphs or characters




AutoText

Allows you to save frequently used text and objects that can be easily inserted into your document.




Macros

A sequence of actions or steps that can be used repeatedly in any document.



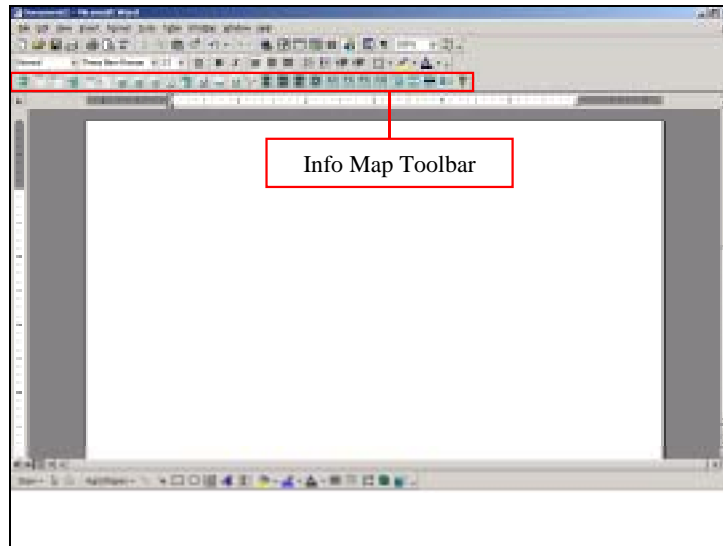
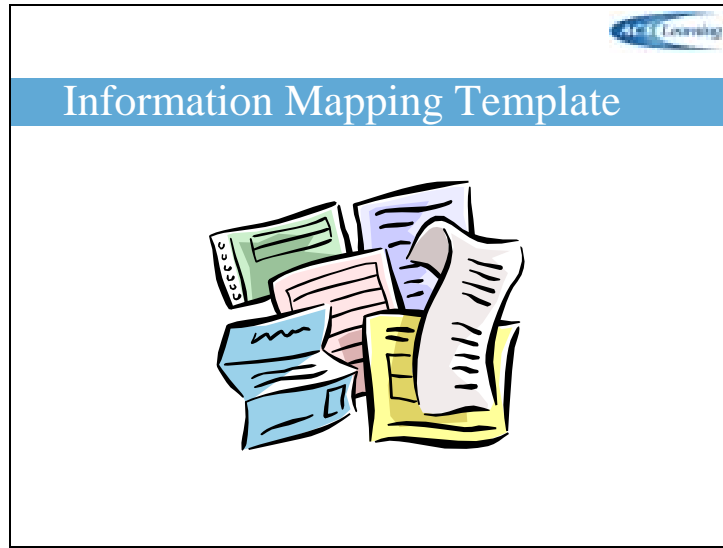
Benefits

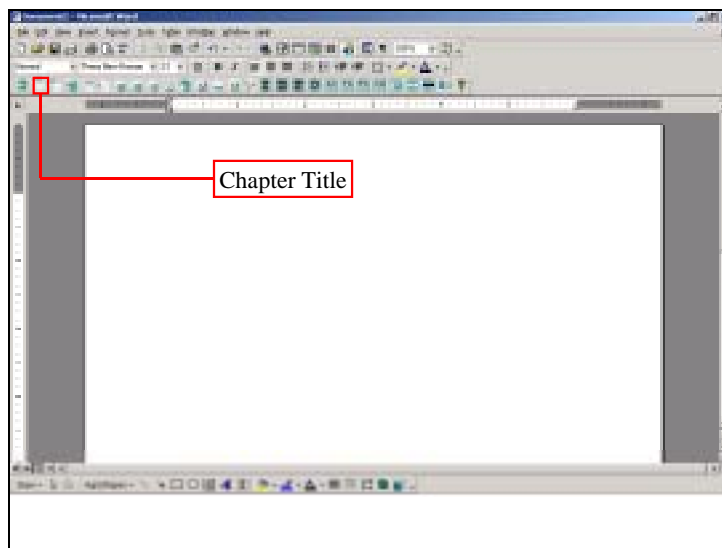
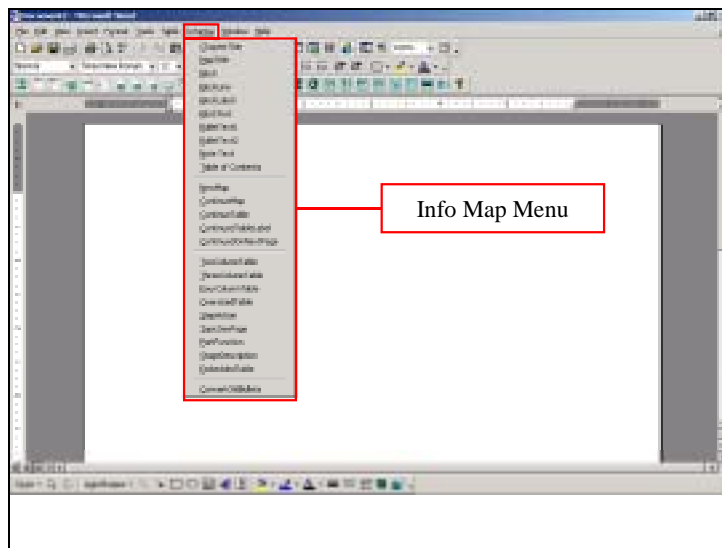
- Streamline processes
- Automate tasks
- Reduces manual effort and redundancy

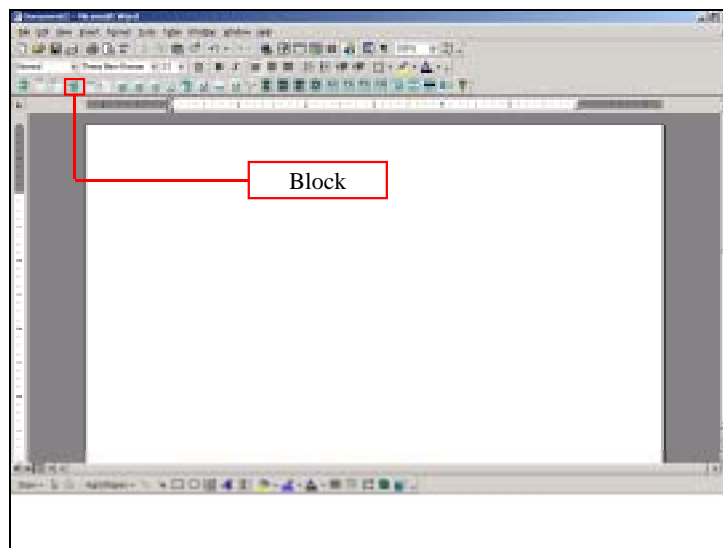
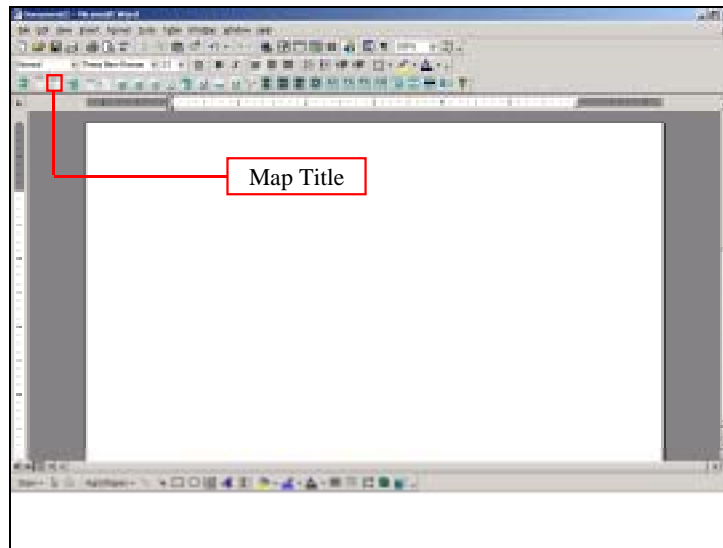


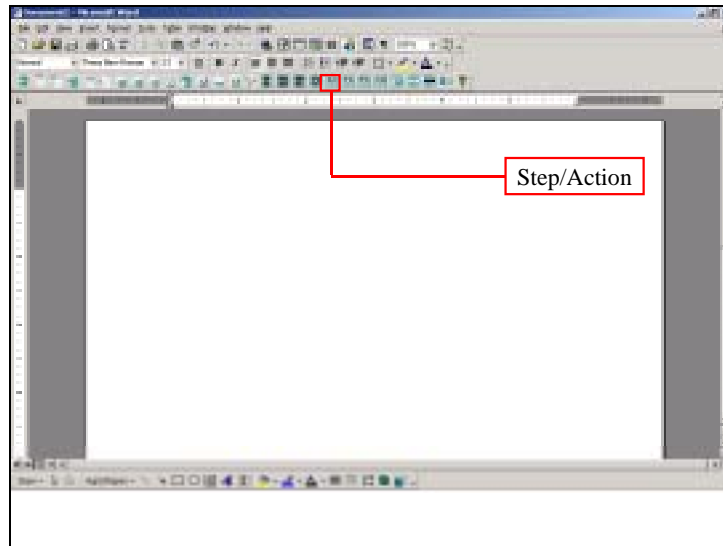
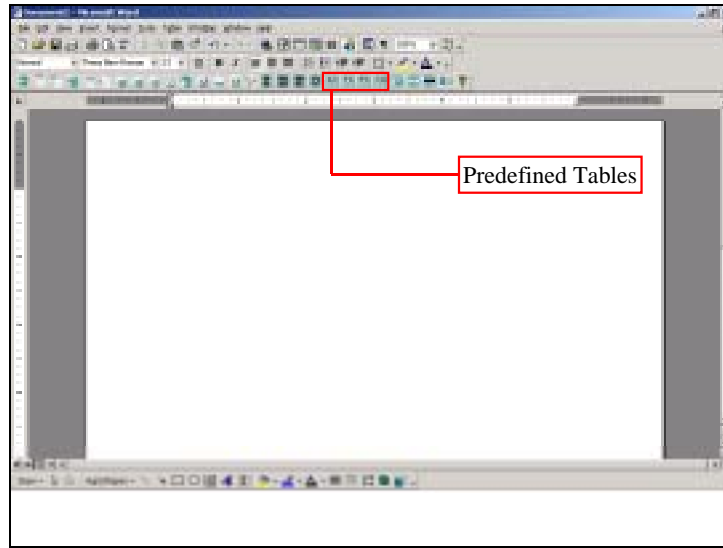
Terminology

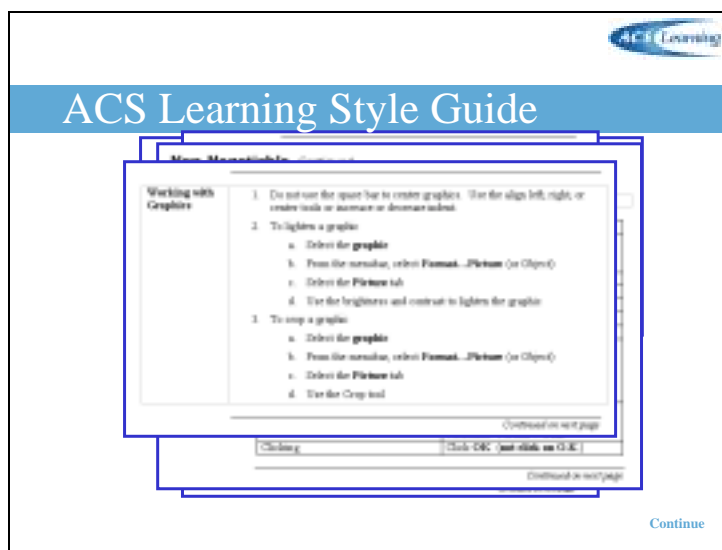
Information Mapping	Example
Chapter Title	Chapter Title
Map Title	Topic Headings
Block	Content/Paragraphs
Tables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Step/Action ▪ Topic See Page 	Tables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procedures ▪ Mini TOC

















Quality Control Checklist

Checklist: Complete the following checklist before turning over your documentation to your client.

#	Action
1	Search for the word bottom . Make sure the previous word(s) are bolded.
2	 True : Do not close the search window.
3	Search for the word area . Make sure the previous word(s) are bolded. Ex: The Search area .
4	Search for the word table . Make sure the previous word(s) are bolded.
5	Search for the word tab . Make sure the previous word(s) are bolded.
6	Search for the () characters to make sure they are bolded if they indicate a keyboard key.
7	Search for "" (double quotes).
8	Search for "/ (slant in a bolded context). Make sure that periods are not have bolded periods at the end of paragraphs.
9	Search for a comma followed by a space followed by another comma.

Continued on next page.

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Lessons Learned

- **Platform Issues**
- **Review Process**
 - ✓ **WinZip/Adobe Acrobat**
 - ✓ **Proofing and Keystroking**
- **SME takes ownership**
- **Working with system engineers**
- **War Stories**

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