remarks that such books "are too long and that the information could just as well be published as an article" (p. 330). The university presses, for the most part, want to move away from the highly specialized research dissertation-turned-monograph at a time when most research institutions are still pressuring their tenure-track faculty to publish books.

The irony, of course, is obvious. Jones's book itself is a dissertation-turned-book. However, her situation is unique: Before, during, and after her dissertation, Jones worked as the controller for the Edwin Mellen Press. Her position and experience offer valuable insight into why university presses are struggling and what they are doing to adjust to financial pressure and changing markets.

Another influence on university press restructuring is library budgets and acquisition. As university libraries suffer increased budget cuts, the resources they tend to cut first are books. Why? Because librarians feel pressured to maintain subscriptions to certain journals, and these journals, especially in the sciences, have increased exponentially in price. Since the libraries must carry the established and expensive journals even in a budget crisis, there is less demand for university presses to publish specialized academic books. Besides, online journal issues are easier to store in cyberspace than a bunch of hardcover books collecting dust on library shelves.

To combat the reduction in demand for research monographs, some university presses are exploring electronic publishing. Because interlibrary loan departments have all but eliminated many research professors' need to buy academic texts, some publishers, including university presses, have turned to on-demand purchasing of electronic texts. Although not a university press, STC offers access to articles through online purchase. For example, you can download a copy of Jo Mackiewicz and Kathy Riley's "The Technical Editor as Diplomat: Linguistic Strategies for Balancing Clarity and Politeness" from the February 2003 issue of *Technical Communication* for just $5.95 from Amazon.com. In addition, to combat the purchasing fatigue of research monographs, some university presses make up to a third of their list trade books. Custom publishing, particularly in the textbooks, also has created increased revenue for some university presses.

In terms of approach, Jones's book gets off to a slow start. She repeats her hypothesis and research question several times in the first 30 pages. Although this repetition may be an element of the dissertation or study format, I find the loss in momentum almost staggering at times. Some parts of the table of contents are mismatched with the text itself or have erroneous repetition (for example, 3.2.6 and 3.2.7 have the same title). Despite some cosmetic and stylistic issues in the beginning, however, what Jones offers in the remaining 400 pages is indeed a rigorous and eye-opening study that reveals not only exactly what is causing the downturn in scholarly book publishing with university presses but also how university press directors feel about the shift and the steps they have taken, are taking, and plan to take to survive in a changing publishing market.

Nicole Amare
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How to Write, Publish, and Present in the Health Sciences: A Guide for Clinicians and Laboratory Researchers

Thomas A. Lang. 2010. Philadelphia, PA: American College of Physicians. [ISBN 978-1-934465-9-4. 383 pages, including index. US$59.95 (softcover).]
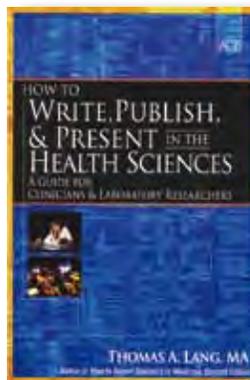
Thomas Lang has written the book I would have written.

When I began teaching technical writing in 1971, I couldn't find a textbook that discussed audience, nor was there one that provided authentic examples from industry. By 1987 I decided that the only solution to providing my students with a textbook that included the information I believed they needed was to write my own book. In fact, I wrote two.

When I began teaching medical writing in 2008, I thought I might have to do it again. Almost all the medical writing texts have been written by health professionals (doctors and scientists) or academicians

rather than writers, and they lack a professional writer's perspective.

Then Thomas Lang published his book—the book I would have written. This was the book I needed to teach my course.

A former technical writer and academician, Lang has taken the research results from a quarter century of communication studies and adapted them to the medical world with which he has become familiar as a consultant the past 20 years.

The book is aimed at anyone who will be writing and presenting in the health sciences, including nurses, clinicians, medical technicians, biomedical scientists, physicians, and medical writers. It is specifically focused on writing proposals and research article results. Lang divides the book into three parts: (1) writing in the health sciences in general, (2) publishing in the health sciences, and (3) presenting in the health sciences.

The opening chapters provide a framework for anyone engaged in some form of technical communication, not just in the health sciences. The first chapter is unique among medical writing texts: Lang provides a historical overview of the discipline, going back to the earliest known Egyptian medical text in 1700 BCE. He goes on to include the Greek development of idiographic script, Johnson's publication of the *Dictionary of the English Language*, the Royal Society's first scientific journal, the first medical library in Philadelphia, and the introduction of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (now *JAMA*). Bringing the overview up to date, he lists such recent (2009) guidelines as the CONSORT, QUOROM, and TREND statements, and such reporting standards as the Minimum Information for Biological and Biomedical Investigations (MIBBI). In addition, he provides a section on the latest technological innovations, such as e-prints, open-access publishing, and self-archiving. I find this chapter fascinating, as I think others will.

The chapter "How to Write Effectively: Making Reading Easier" describes how the reader relates to a text rather than how the writer relates to a reader, as is found in most technical writing books. Lang explains what academicians mean by writing reader-based prose and, more importantly, why writers need to write this kind of prose. He delineates four features—comprehensibility, recallability, "referenceability," and usability—that readers need to strive for in a medical document if they are to effectively make a decision or

follow a procedure, the two major purposes of technical documents. He continues in this and the following chapter to provide recommendations for successfully implementing these features. While he discusses many of the techniques usually suggested in technical writing texts—use familiar words, make sure phrases and clauses in a list are parallel, and don't nominalize verbs—he adds some clarifications from his own experience as a writer that are supported by linguistic research. While he recommends short sentences in most cases, he says it is not length but syntactic complexity that impairs comprehension and clarity. In terms of using active rather than passive voice, as most texts do, he adds a caveat (with examples) that the passive is sometimes more appropriate.

Lang devotes three chapters to graphic display. He focuses on the writer's purpose in displaying data or images and then provides recommendations for using the appropriate visual form, thus invoking Louis Sullivan's axiom "form follows function." Providing full color, myriad examples, and appropriate alternatives, he goes into detail on such matters as how to help readers analyze data in tables and graphs, perceive patterns in data, and compare data; how to prepare drawings and photographs with the desired quality; and how to document biomedical images. Some of this discussion is specific to particular specialties, such as MRI scanning and genetic sequencing.

The book provides excellent discussions of abstracts, grant proposals, and research articles. The chapter on abstracts is one of the most detailed I have ever encountered—it delves into descriptive, informative, and structured abstracts. Best of all, Lang suggests ways to reduce word count, an extremely important but frustrating aspect of writing an abstract. The excellent advice on grant proposals includes a list of characteristics of successful and unsuccessful grant proposals, as well as an explanation of how funding agencies and grant/contract offices evaluate proposals. Finally, the chapter on journal articles includes tips on such topics as budget, equations, measurements, references, and statistical methods.

The section on publishing includes discussions of ethics and the process of publishing a journal article, from submission through the peer process to production. Only an experienced writer could give neophytes such helpful advice as the following: "FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

EXACTLY!" (p. 269) and "If you do not hear from the journal within 60 days after submitting your manuscript, contact the editor" (p. 275).

The section on presenting looks at creating posters and slides. It offers useful advice on, for example, limiting the amount of text, avoiding three-dimensional images in graphs, using sans serif type, developing tabletop posters, and selecting font size and display orientation. This section, like the first, applies to anyone involved in presenting a technical topic.

Lang offers explanations and information to assist anyone who is interested in writing and presenting medical/scientific information. I am only sorry he doesn't include patient education materials. Perhaps he could add an addendum in the future.

Carolyn Boiarsky
Carolyn Boiarsky is a professor of professional communication at Purdue University Calumet. She has written two textbooks, *Technical Writing: Contexts, Audiences, and Communities* and *Writings From the Workplace*. She formerly consulted with the nuclear power industry for her firm, Effective Communication Associates. She began as a United Press International correspondent.

The Graphic Designer's Guide to Portfolio Design

Debbie Rose Myers. 2009. 2nd ed. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. [ISBN 978-0-470-18476-9. 262 pages, including index. US$45.00 (softcover).]
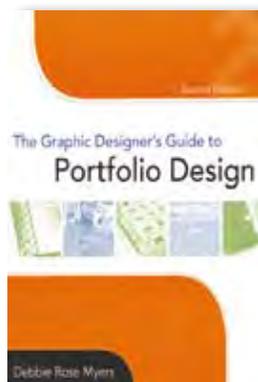
Can a book titled *The Graphic Designer's Guide to Portfolio Design* be useful to a technical communicator? The answer is "Yes!" This compact, friendly book offers value to a technical communicator who's starting out or hasn't put together a portfolio in a while.

Debbie Rose Myers's style is welcoming, as if she's leading a small tutorial session in designing a portfolio, overcoming your initial reaction that you don't need help. I now see that I *do* need help, or at least tweaks, to update my portfolio. The book focuses mainly on designing an electronic, 21st-century portfolio.

Each chapter gives real-life examples from Myers's experience or that of her students. In the valuable "Interview" section of the chapter, practicing graphic designers answer honest and informative questions about the interview process, such as "What qualities do you look for in an applicant?" and "What makes a successful interview?" They're most blunt and practical in their answers to "What are the five best things job candidates say that impress you during an interview?" and "What are the five worst?" You can use chapter exercises ("Designer's Challenges") to create a portfolio.

Myers argues well that "a designer will always be judged by the weakest pieces in the portfolio" (p. 10), a theme she emphasizes throughout. The chapter "Planning Your Portfolio" includes a checklist of pieces you might include, with specifics for each category. Obviously, you will adapt the list to your specialties. The chapters on the traditional paper portfolio include a list of action verbs, a great tool to use in writing your résumé. Myers's examples of display options gave me suggestions for updating my paper portfolio. The summary checklists on interviews and the examples of thank you notes show reflect her experience.

Many details on digital portfolios will appeal mainly to readers with less experience. Graphic design students and experienced technical communicators, for example, will find the material on page layout programs, clip art, and construction of a Web site too elementary. Myers' section on creating an "artist's statement," however, challenged me to work on my own writer's statement, a new element that I'll include in my updated portfolio.

One annoyance is a design miscue that is not Myers's fault. The color bleeding on the edges of the pages has no function, because the edges aren't staggered to correspond to the chapters.

In all, this is a good reference book for recent graduates as well as experienced professionals.

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Beth Lisberg Najberg is an instructional designer based in Chicago. She develops technical training for frontline workers, incorporating graphics and job aids so procedures, processes, and concepts are easy to follow. She is principal of Beginnings, an information design consulting firm.