

TYPES OF AUDIENCES

LAY

The lay audience refers to anyone unfamiliar with the field.

- Keep it basic
- Give background information
- Define Terms
- Use simple visuals—graphics
- Provide human interest—consider title and purpose; catch the readers' attention by making it relevant to them and/or telling a story

EXECUTIVE

The executive audience is primarily concerned with issues related to decision-making.

- Be brief—but provide enough information to promote understanding
- Give bottom-line facts and figures/profit implications
- Emphasize consequences
- Write in plain English
- Avoid technical jargon and/or define technical terms
- Provide necessary background and interpret data
- Avoid theory and methods

TECHNICIAN/OPERATOR

Technicians and operators are intensely practical.

- Provide instructions
- Use technical terms
- Avoid background information, theory, and higher math

EXPERT

The expert audience has an advanced degree in the field.

- Use technical terms
- Avoid unnecessary background information
- Assume they have a lot of knowledge and want facts, figures, tables, and graphs
- Refer to references
- Provide theory, methods, and conclusions

COMBINED

The combined audience is the most difficult to address.

- Divide paper into sections
- Provide headlines
- Organize the work well and use numbers