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Summary of Technical Edits

Sexual Harassment Training Manual

Ohio Attorney General's Office
Authored by: Olivia

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Sexual Harassment Training Manual

Olivia

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INTRODUCTION

After reading the document in need of copyediting, I understand that it is a manual guide that accompanies a training session for the employees of the Ohio Attorney General's Office. This guide is intended to inform the employees of the policy and repercussions of sexual harassment in the office. Overall, the document includes a lot of detailed information that is crucial to serving its purpose of preventing sexual harassment. There are many technical edits that can be made to enhance and enrich this document that will allow the employees an easy reference guide.

The document can be made more effective with such things as a table of contents, page numbers, a consistent typeface, and reorganization and design. Within the category of reorganization and design, I suggest edits that will give the document a more pleasing appearance, attracting the reader's eye and forming a document that flows. As is, the document has many abrupt breaks that distract the eye from the information at hand.. The following are the edits, accompanied by explanations for why they are necessary to generate the most successful document possible.

METHODS

Table of Contents

First and foremost, the first major change that would greatly increase the usability of this document is the creation and insertion of a table of contents. It is important to provide a table of contents with a document of this size. The Sexual Harassment Awareness Training manual in its entirety is forty-one pages. Users of this guide will be using it as a reference from time to time. Instead of reading all forty-one pages every time he or she has a circumstance in question, the user can refer to the table of contents to easily pin-point and locate the section that contains the information needed. Simply go through the manual and locate the sections based off the headings, and format them into a table of contents. It may also be helpful to include the subheadings in

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the table of contents, as well to make the information search even easier for the users.

Page Numbers

During the presentation of the information contained within the training session, I was quick to notice that it was difficult for the employees to follow the trainer. This problem can easily be resolved by the simple addition of page numbers to each page. In following the guidelines of Bowling Green State University's "Thesis and Dissertation Handbook," we must place page numbers at the top right-hand corner, excluding the title page and copyright page. These pages are not numbered. Providing numbers on each page will allow for easy reference to information on a specific page—by the trainer or for the purposes of the table of contents.

Headings and Subheadings

The Sexual Harassment Awareness Training manual uses a consistent system of headings and subheadings; however, there are so many different levels of headings and subheadings that the information becomes jumbled and confusing. I suggest using the system contained in the "Thesis and Dissertation Handbook" for this, as well. This will create a regular system that allows for easy flow from one topic to the next; the reader's eyes will be guided through the various matters.

According to the "Thesis/Dissertation Handbook," major headings, should be entirely capitalized, including its reference in the table of contents. This handbook suggests the APA style book as a reference for headings. This style requires that the first and second level headings be centered and the third level headings be left aligned and flush to the side of the margin. It does not matter which stylebook you use, as long as it is consistent throughout the document, and throughout corresponding documents.

This manual contains many different levels of information that relate to the topic of sexual harassment. If the document were to clump the information into separate groups that classified a few broad subject headings, including the subheadings, the process of locating the information would be simplified.

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I would also like to see the heading and subheading titles shortened. A shortened heading or subheading requires the title to be more specific and easier for the audience to find the information needed, instead of having to read lengthy titles.

In addition to the formatting of the levels of headings, it is also important to keep a consistent typeface throughout the headings. I suggest using the Myriad san-serif font that follows the labeling guidelines of the Ohio Attorney General's Office for all headings.

Typeface

Most of the typeface throughout the document follows the Ohio Attorney General's Office labeling guide and uses Garamond font. In the boxes of information and a few of the bulleted lists, Myriad font is used. I suggest that the Garamond font be used for the text that is not a heading to keep consistency of the idea of a "heading" or "non-heading" font established in the labeling brochure created by the office. This will help the audience to browse through the document and easily decipher between the headings and the body-text.

Images

This document uses a variety of images. Some of the images are used to show examples of the type of sexual harassment that is being discussed, and others are simply for visual effect. Some of the images are labeled as example, and others are simply placed at random on the page. I suggest that a consistent form of displaying the examples be installed because some of the images are accompanied by a bulleted list that represents what the image portrays, and other images are labeled as example with an explanation. It does not matter which of these forms is used, but one must be chosen and used consistently throughout the document.

Also, images must have a purpose for being displayed on a page. Unnecessary images simply provide clutter and distraction. One image that I recommend

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be considered is the image on page six. The size of the image is too big for the information that is representing. The image needs to be re-sized so that it is smaller, and it will then fit nicer on the page. Page eight also possesses an awkward positioning of images. The text seems to be interrupted by the images, and is distracting to the eye. If these images were displayed in the form that labels them as examples, the interruption of the information would no longer be an issue. If the other form of bulleted lists is chosen, then the pictures should be displayed before or after the information so that it does not interrupt the flow.

It is important to consider the necessity of an image and its relevancy to the information when deciding what kind and where the image should be displayed. Pages eleven, fourteen and twenty-three contain images that should be considered under these qualifications. Are they really necessary in order to get the point across? Are they relevant to the information being discussed?

Organization

The overall organization of this document is very confusing. The manual includes a slight introduction of the information contained within it on pages two, three and four. The later explanations of these topics, however, do not follow the order in which it is introduced. In order for the users of this manual to effortlessly locate the information needed, the document should contain the same order of information throughout—the table of contents, the introduction and the detailed explanation—of the information.

Whitespace

At the end of each section, the document uses a page break to separate the information. While breaking up the information is good to show the completion of one section and that there is a new topic being introduced in the next section, it seems to be more of a distraction in this case. White space, or blank space, has to be used wisely, and we have talked in class about too much white space being a distraction. In order to keep the document flowing,

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other options can be looked at for the breaking up of text. Examples include a boxed heading, a bigger font for the heading of a new section, etc.

Bulleted Lists

It is important to keep the same system of displaying related information. For instance, in the section of Examples of Unacceptable Behaviors on pages eight, nine and ten, the “Policy Prohibits” boxes use two different styles of relaying the information—bulleted lists and sentence form. I suggest the bulleted list form be used in these boxes because it is an easy, quick reference that the employee can skim through to refresh their mind about these policies. Be sure to use this bulleted list for each of these boxes within this section because the information is all related to one another.

Spelling and Grammar

This is a publication of the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and therefore, represents the office. All spelling and grammar should follow the guidelines of a style guide, and maintain consistency throughout the document and all other corresponding documents. In following the BGSU “Thesis and Dissertation Handbook,” it is established that all documents should be free of error prior to its submission and publication.

This manual contains a spelling error in the title on the front cover of the publication. “Sexual Harassment Awarness Training” The underlined word, Awarness, is missing an “e” between the “r” and “n”. Such a simple error poorly represents the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and should have been caught and changed prior to its publication.

RESULTS

The technical edits made to this document seek to enhance the usability of the document for the employees of the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Because of previous misconduct, sexual harassment awareness has become a

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major issue in the office. It is important for the administration of the Ohio Attorney General to inform all of its employees of the new policy and procedures that have been installed to prevent future misconduct. Providing technical editing advice to the client will help them to reach their goals of supplying its employees with the most information in a way that will be easily accessible and comprehensible. The client expressed great appreciation for the helpful edits of the Sexual Harassment Awareness Training Manual, and she and I are working together to implement the changes and create a new draft of the document for future use.

DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION

Throughout the efforts of this project, I attempted to meet each of your needs that we discussed early in the process. These needs included the usability of this document for the audience receiving it—the employees. I was able to address this need with recommendation methods that I have learned throughout my experiences in the Technical Writing and Editing class in which I am currently enrolled.

The advice provided in this summary of edits approaches to change the document so that the employees of your office can effortlessly locate the information that is needed. I looked at aspects that go beyond the spelling and grammar edits. I used various methods of organization and design that have been proven to advance the usability of manuals.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Working with the client has given me hands-on experience and introduction to the “real-world” of technical editing. This experience has allowed me to see the process of a technical editing job. Working with actual documents that could potentially be projects that I could be assigned in a future career augments more opportunity to learn new things—not every circumstance or project will be the same. This hand-on experience provides the chance to

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apply the knowledge that we have attained through the many readings that we have discussed in class.

The only recommendation that I would make to further the development of this project is implementation of different due dates of the "business correspondence" throughout the course of the project. This will help the students to keep on track, and ensure them that they are progressing in the right direction.