



Collaborative Writing

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About the Tutorial

Collaborative Writing is used to describe those written work projects which involves multiple writers participating together in writing and completing the work. It is different from shared writing in the manner of its execution, i.e. in shared writing, people divide the respective areas of work among themselves and focus on those areas itself.

The future of organizations is in producing documents with shared authorship. They need to trust one another with sensitive, proprietary materials, so that they can work together in the future. The unique nature of collaborative writing will ensure that they develop greater cultural sensitivity and multiple viewpoints of drafting a document.

In this tutorial, we will discuss in detail about the nuances of collaborative writing and how it benefits various business sectors.

Audience

Collaborative Writing is now being used in many fields ranging from education to remote-learning. This is because it has been observed that people pay more attention to a text, when they are given the powers to edit the text, if they don't agree to it. It brings out a healthy debate as the original writer is made to share reliable sources to support his claim. This improvement of content based on mutual interaction makes the final product agreeable to all.

Learning the skills of writing a project in a collaborative manner in a team is considered as an invaluable asset in today's world. This tutorial is meant for all those professionals who want to learn the art of handling collaborative writing assignments.

Prerequisites

Before proceeding with this tutorial, you are expected to know the basics of writing projects in teams and the concept of remote learning.

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1. Collaborative Writing – Introduction

Collaborative Writing is used to describe those written work projects that involves multiple writers taking participation in writing and completing the work. It is different from shared writing in the manner of its execution, i.e. in shared writing, people divide the respective areas of work among themselves and focus on those areas itself.

What happens in collaborative writing, though, is that multiple writers are employed to complete the task and these writers have overlapping domains of responsibilities. This means that writers have the authority to go through the content you have written and suggest changes that you may or may not implement.



A day-to-day example of this could be the Wikipedia entries, which are written by people, edited by admins and changes are suggested by readers. In a truly collaborative writing environment, each writer has equal abilities and authority to engage in tasks of writing, editing, suggesting changes, removing text, and adding some more.

This makes the best product come out in the end as multiple recursive processes run on a written text before it is published. Collaborative writing encourages a series of changes in written text, so that a consensus emerges on accuracy of text.

Scope of Collaborative Writing

Professional writing is one such requirement that can be found in a variety of professions, organizations and department. Because of the quick availability of high-quality task, Collaborative writing is now being used in many fields ranging from education and remote-

learning, because it has been observed that **people pay more attention to a text** when they are given the powers to edit the text if they don't agree to it.

This brings out a healthy debate as the original writer is made to share reliable sources to support his claim. This improvement of content based on mutual interaction makes the final product agreeable to all. While some of these documents are planned, drafted, revised and edited by a single author, most business reports and significant shorter communications are either formally written in groups or are reviewed by key readers in a company.



Industry experts reportedly state that about **87% of workplace writers submit** their task through collaboration instead of isolated writing stretches. A professional collaborative writer needs to have the competency in language, skills and knowledge on the subject that provides him the ability to engage in collaborative writing.

2. Collaborative Writing – Lowry’s Theory

Collaborative writing and its effects have been studied by researchers and business experts for years now. Depending on the observation of these researchers, numerous theories and working models have come up. According to **Paul Benjamin Lowry**, a common vocabulary must be conceptualized that different people working in a team or teams, can use to communicate in Collaborative Writing.

He says that in the absence of this common vocabulary, teams put into collaborative processes and left to themselves to get the work done will make a heavy waste of resources like time, efforts and money. Keeping these factors in mind, he propounded five collaborative writing strategies, which are:

- Single Author Writing
- Sequential Single Writing
- Parallel Writing
- Reactive Writing
- Mixed Mode Writing

Let us now discuss each of these collaborative writing strategies in detail.

Single Author Writing

Single-author writing occurs when one person represents an entire team writing collaboratively. This type of writing is usually practiced in law firms, when the lawyer employs a team to do all this research and paperwork, while he himself bears responsibility for the accuracy or fallibility of the mentioned facts.

Sequential Single Writing

In Sequential single writing, a group of writer’s work on individual areas of a writing project, but in a sequence. It means that the responsibility of writing is shared by the members of a team in a numerical sequence. The writer who is supposed to start with the writing, will complete his part and then pass the document to the second in sequence.

Parallel Writing

Closely resembling shared writing in method and implementation, parallel writing involves employing a group of people who are handed different portions of the document and are asked to work on their areas at the same time. There are two kinds of parallel writing, one where the document is divided into smaller sections and different members handed writing responsibilities of these sections.

The other one is where the team-members involved in the writing process are handed different roles. For example, proofreading, fact-checking, typo-correction, etc.

Reactive Writing

Reactive writing involves different team-members or various teams going through one another's output and "reacting" to the content by suggesting changes, proof-reading, fact-checking, editing, etc. This is considered a healthy practice and ensures a credible written document.

Mixed Mode Writing

In the mixed mode of writing, some or all the above modes are incorporated into the writing process. For example, a team may have its team-members arranged in a sequence of writing, so while the first writer will be writing his part of the document, the rest might engage in reactive writing on it. When the first few writers are done with their tasks, they can become reactive writers in turn.

End of ebook preview

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