

Publication: Heartline, a publication of the Society for Technical Communication Illinois Heartland Chapter
Date: May 2004

The Power of Word

Take advantage of styles

by Julie Tarr

Using styles in long documents with recurring elements, such as headings, can eliminate nightmarish formatting tasks. A style is a set of pre-determined formatting commands that can quickly be applied to the contents of your document. These formatting commands can range from font type, size, color, and style to indents, borders, shading, bullets, line spacing, character spacing, and everything in between. For example, you can create a first-level heading style in the following manner:

Heading 1 = Font: Arial, Font Size: 16, Font Style: Bold and Small Caps, Border: Double line, Shading: Gray 20%, Character Spacing: Expanded.

Result:

HEADING 1

Benefits of utilizing styles:

- Saves you time by eliminating the repetitive application of multiple formats to document contents.
- Styles can be easily modified and applied to all contents assigned to that style.
- The use of styles can enable you to perform powerful automation/organizational tasks, such as creating a table of contents.

For instructions of how to create, modify, and apply styles to your Word documents, choose Microsoft Word Help under the Help menu, and search for *style*.