

Western vs. East-Asian Document Design

A reference sheet for the technical communicator

A few general tips and guidelines to consider when writing for multicultural audiences.

Western

1. Organize information **deductively**. Begin with a general idea, then move to more specific ideas.
2. Use graphics that emphasize **task instruction**. Diagrams and tutorial images fall under this category.
3. Use an **analytical** style. Present your central point or argument, then, step-by-step, follow this with examples and evidence.

East-Asian

1. Organize information **inductively**. Begin with specific ideas, then move towards the general idea.
2. Use graphics that emphasize **contextual information**. Photos of relevant users, environments, or objects fall under this category.
3. Use a **relational** style. Arrange ideas in relation to one another, with focus on a holistic view of the topic of the document.