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Introduction

These guidelines are for creating, editing, and maintaining External and In-App Help Center Articles. These guidelines are maintained by the Knowledge and Learning team at Deel.

The purpose of these guidelines and best practices is to:

- Create consistently clear and accessible content
- Promote self service in our Help Center
- Reduce maintenance needs
- Simplify updates

Writing Principles

Clarity: Your writing should be direct, precise, and unambiguous. You should aim for clarity not cleverness.

Accessibility: Everyone inside and outside of Deel should be able to understand your content. Avoid jargon.

Simplicity: Don't over complicate your writing. Link to existing content don't reproduce it.

Editorial Review: K&L content goes through a review process with editors from the K&L team. If you are unsure about something, make a note using the comment feature (in google docs) or red-text (in ZD) and keep writing. We will address it during the review process.

Inclusive Language

Deel is a global company. These tips will help you ensure that your writing reflects the diversity of our company, and the communities we serve.

- Use gender-neutral pronouns in English: *they, them, you, your*
- Avoid terms that contribute to stigma around disability and mental illness: *crazy, dumb, lame, insane, psycho, schizophrenic, stupid*
- Avoid terms that contribute to stigma around sensory disabilities: *blind spot, tone deaf* • Don't use references to women or older relatives as substitutes for *novice* or *beginner*. For example, don't say "so simple your mother can use it"
- Avoid *guys* as a way to refer to mixed-gender groups
- Don't make assumptions about family relationships. Use *spouse* or *partner* instead of *husband* and wife. Use *parent* instead of *mother* and *father*.
- Avoid US-centric language. *Americans* includes people from North and South America. **If you mean *US citizens*, say so.
- Don't make assumptions about how people identify themselves. Be aware of complexities within racial, ethnic, and religious identities. Remember that race and ethnicity are adjectives, not nouns: *a Hispanic person* not *a Hispanic*

Deel Specific Definitions

Employees: includes both full-time employees hired and paid through Deel EORs (Deel EOR Employees) and full-time employees hired by client entities and paid through Deel (Direct Employees).

Contractors: Independent contractors hired and paid through the Deel platform.

Freelancers: Workers hired on a per job or per task basis

Workers Full-time employees, Independent contractors, and freelancers Clients

Companies that use the Deel platform to manage their payroll

Company you perform work for	When referencing the client for
------------------------------	---------------------------------

The company you work for/your employer	Direct Employees
When referencing the client for EOR	

employees

Users Everyone that uses tools on our platform, collectively Deel Team Members

Everyone who works at Deel as a FTE or IC

Grammar

Second person narration

You should use second-person narration for all HelpDesk content and most other content. Second person narration means you refer to the reader directly with **you/your**.

Spelling

We use US spelling in all instances.

Resource: <https://www.lexico.com/grammar/british-and-spelling>

Specific spellings

- email (not e-mail)
- online (not on-line)
- "on-site" an adjective or adverb before a noun and "on site" after a noun.
- coworking (not co-working or co working)
- skillset (not skill-set or skill set)
- COVID-19 (not coronavirus, corona virus, corona, covid 19, covid-19, Covid 19, Covid-19, or COVID 19)
- web page (not webpage)

- the US (not U.S., USA, or U.S.A, the States, United States of America, etc.)
- healthcare (not health care)

Compound words and hyphens

- Hyphenate compound adjectives when they appear *before* the modified noun:
 - full-time employee
 - up-to-date information
- Do not hyphenate compound adjectives when they appear *after* the modified noun:
 - the employee works full time
 - the information is up to date
- Hyphenation gets complicated. When in doubt, leave a comment for the editor with your question and move along.

Capitalization

- Use APA title capitalization for titles. Use this [title capitalization tool](#) to check your titles •
- Use sentence case capitalization for headers
- Capitalize the first item in each bullet
- For all other sentences, capitalize according to APA standards

Punctuation

- We only use one space after periods, question marks, and exclamation points. Never use a double space.
- We use the Oxford Comma (or serial comma) for clarity in lists.
- We avoid commas in most other circumstances. Ask yourself if you can use **and** instead. Or make it two sentences.

Style & Formats

Numbers

- Spell out numbers between zero and ten
- Use numerals (e.g., 11, 999) for numbers above ten, including at the beginning of sentences

- Use commas every three digits from the right-most digit (e.g., 10,000, 99,999,999) for numbers above 1,000
- **Exception:** *if a number under ten and a number above ten appear in the same sentence, use numerals for both (e.g., I drink between 5 and 15 glasses of water per day)*

Currency

- Always specify the currency: many currencies use the same symbols (\$ is used by Canada, US, New Zealand, Australia; £ is used by Malta, UK, Egypt)
 - **On first mention:** use the symbol (\$, £, etc.) and the [three-letter code](#) (USD, CAD, etc.)

Ex: “Here’s how to send \$200 (USD) to your employees.”
 - **On subsequent mentions:** just use the symbol
- **Exception:** *if the piece discusses multiple currencies that use the same symbol (e.g., USD and CAD) use the three letter-code on each mention.*
- Use currency symbols, do not write out the names of currencies (“euros”, “yen”).

Dates

Correct Format Description

2005-06-15 YYYY-MM-DD

June 15, 2005 when writing the date put a comma between the day and year

June 2005 do not use a comma when writing out the month and year

June 1 never use ordinals for dates (e.g., June 1st) and never write out the date (June first).
the month in general

30th of each month

use ordinals when talking about a day of

2002 Always write out the year (never ‘02)

Times

- Use the 12-hour clock
- Include a.m./p.m. with a space after the digit
- Include the [three-letter time zone](#)
- Use numerals, not letter (e.g., don't say "three o'clock")

Correct Format Description

9:30 a.m. EST use numerals with am/pm and the three letter time zone

9 a.m. EST Do not use zeroes when describing a time on the hour



Names and Job Titles

- Capitalize job titles only if they come *before* the person's name: Vice President Smith •
- Do not capitalize job titles if they come *after* the person's name: according to Smith, vice president at Deel
- Use a person's full name (first and last) on first mention
- After first mention, refer to them only by their last name

Definitions

Always provide a concrete definition for new terms or ideas the reader might not be familiar with.

Follow this format when defining a term: "[Term] is [category] that [unique features.]"

-  *A car is something people drive.*
-  *A car is a road vehicle with four wheels, an engine, and space to carry one to six people.*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

- Avoid all abbreviations, initializations, and acronyms except the most commonly used (for example, acronyms related to states and state organizations (UN, US, EU). ● Do not use latin abbreviations or acronyms (eg., ie., NB.)
- When introducing an abbreviation or acronym for the first time, always spell out the word first and include the acronym parenthetically at first instance (this does not apply to commonly used acronyms for states and state organizations - see above).
 - *For example:* Employees may be eligible for a work authorization under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Bold, italics, underlines, and strikethroughs

- Use bolded text only for the target of an action
 - select **add new user**
 - Click **continue**
- Avoid using italics
- Avoid using underlines (except for HTML links)
- Avoid using strikethrough

Bulleted lists & Numbered lists

Bulleted lists are an efficient, visually appealing way to present information, especially when it would be too unwieldy in a paragraph.

- Use parallel sentence structures
 - Don't use non-parallel structures, like below:
 - Put trash in designated bins
 - Animals might be startled by loud noises
 - Yellow lines mark where you can stand
 - It's everyone's responsibility to keep the park clean
 - Instead, make it parallel:
 - Put trash in designated bins
 - Don't make loud noises
 - Stand inside areas marked by yellow lines
 - Pitch in to keep the park clean
- Only use bullets for lists of 3-8 items
- Avoid repeating the same word(s) at the beginning of each list item
- Use round, filled-in bullets for most lists
- Use numbered bullets only to describe enumerated steps in a process

- Introduce a list with a clear, descriptive sentence or phrase
- Write bulleted lists so each bullet has roughly similar line lengths
- Capitalize the first letter of each bullet
- Do not use periods at the end of bullets
- Do not use multi-sentence bullets

Titles and Headings

A title (T1) has two jobs:

- Clarify the purpose or value of the article
- Help the user find the article

Treat titles like promises to your readers. If a title is “*Why...*” then the article’s primary mission is to fully explain why something is true. If the title is “*How...*” then the article should provide a detailed process.

Other best practices include:

- Aim for short titles that ask or answer a question:
e.g., Why, What is, How to
- Use APA title capitalization (use [capitalization tool](#) to check)
- Avoid starting titles with -ing verbs
 - -ing verbs are vague. If the title is “Preparing tax forms for 2022,” it’s not clear whether the article will *list* all 2022 tax forms, explain *why* 2022 tax forms are important, or walk through *how* to complete 2022 tax forms*. * If the article covers each of those ideas, the title should be something like “the complete guide to,” or “everything you need to know about.”

Headers (H1)

Headers should divide your content into logical sections or chunks. They should make the content skimmable and help a reader find the information or steps they are looking for.

If your H1 asks a question, your H2 should be the answers:

- If the title is “How to...,” the H2s should be steps in a process.
- If the title is “Why...,” the H2s should be reasons.
- If the title is “X Tips...,” the H2s should be tips.

Example:

H1: Why are peanut butter and jelly sandwiches a great snack?

H2: They are nutritious

H2: They are quick and easy to make

H2: They are delicious

Other header best practices:



- Use sentence-case capitalization for headers
- Use question marks at the end of headers, when appropriate (but never periods or exclamation points)
- Strive for parallelism in headers:
 - If you have three H3s that are steps in a process, ensure **all** H3s start with a directive (e.g. *Do this*, *Avoid that*, *Create this*.)

Alignment

Always use left-justification alignment for text and screenshots.

Links

Always use descriptive, in-text clicks that tell the reader what they can find there. These improve searchability and simplify maintenance by making it easier to locate back-links.

-  For more information click [here](#).
-  To learn more about EORs read our article [What Is an Employer of Record](#).

Screenshots

Limit the scope of your screenshot to just the portion of the UI that shows the action, and with just enough surrounding detail to help the user locate the item

Use callouts: only boxes with rounded edges in Red (FF0000). Do not use arrows. Do not use circles.

If absolutely necessary in order to improve clarity in a complex single view, numbers can be added in arial 50pt and placed alongside the item. Number should correspond to an in-paragraph notation within the step.

Only use screenshots when necessary to help users identify or locate an item or to clarify an action or decision. Do not use screenshots for:

- Dialog boxes that are easy to understand or describe (such as dropdown lists)
- License agreements
- Confirmation boxes
- Progress bars

- Welcome windows
- Wizard pages

Actions

Review [platform taxonomy](#) above and make use of the following action words:

- We click **buttons**
- We select from **menus**, **tabs**, and **drop down lists**
- We locate **items** in sections
- We enter information in **fields**
- We toggle **an option** on or off