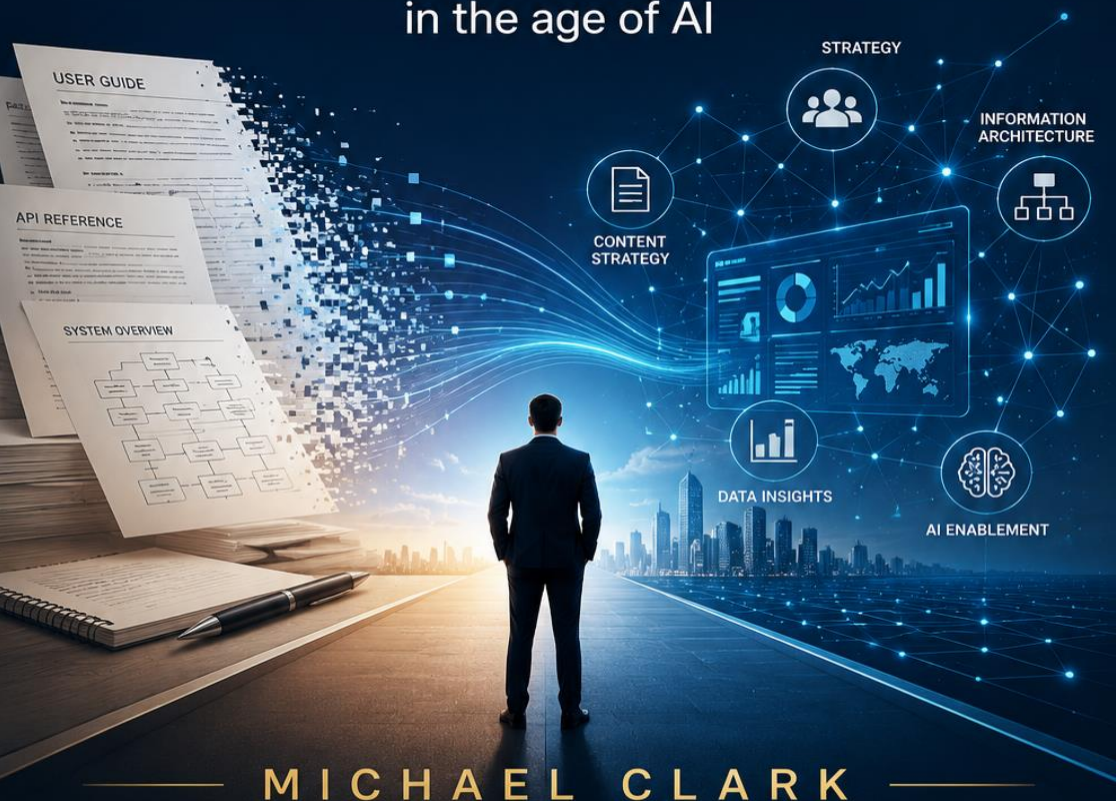


From Technical Author to Information Consultant

How to move your career forward
in the age of AI



- Use AI without becoming dependent on it
- Turn documentation skills into business skills
- Build a consulting offer around information management
- Move from document production to advisory work

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Draft ebook for technical authors, documentation managers,
knowledge managers and information-minded specialists

About this ebook

This ebook is written for technical authors who can see their role changing and want to move before they are moved. It is also for those who are worried that artificial intelligence will reduce the value of traditional documentation work, and for those who know they need stronger basic skills before they can credibly move into advisory, management or consulting roles.

The central argument is simple: AI can produce words, summaries and drafts. It cannot take responsibility for information governance, stakeholder alignment, organisational memory, audit readiness, document control, taxonomy, accountability, or the business consequences of bad information. That is where experienced technical authors can move up the value chain.

Core message

A technical author who only waits for finished information to arrive is vulnerable. A technical author who can find, test, structure, govern and improve information is valuable. A technical author who can advise leaders on how information should work is moving towards consultancy.

This is a practical working draft. It is designed to be edited, expanded with examples from your own experience, and converted into a PDF, Kindle file, workbook or training product.

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Note: update page numbers in Word if you convert this draft into a final print or Kindle edition.

Introduction: the job is moving, not disappearing

Every few years someone announces the death of technical writing. First it was help authoring tools. Then wikis. Then agile. Then video. Then chatbots. Now it is generative AI. Each announcement misses the same point. The output changes, but the need for reliable information does not go away.

AI changes the economics of first drafts. It lowers the cost of producing words. That is both useful and dangerous. It is useful because technical authors can use AI to summarise messy material, challenge structure, generate examples, test readability and produce starter drafts. It is dangerous because organisations may mistake speed for accuracy, fluency for knowledge, and volume for value.

The technical author who survives and progresses is not the person who clings to document production as a protected craft. Nor is it the person who treats AI as a magic vending machine for wisdom. The technical author who progresses is the person who understands where the human value sits: judgement, context, governance, information architecture, stakeholder management, quality control and accountability.

This ebook gives you a route out of narrow document production and into broader roles. Some of those roles already exist. Some sit between job titles. Some may become consultancy offers. The common theme is this: move closer to the business problem, not further away from it.

The noise principle

When information works, there is silence. People find what they need, use the right version, follow the right process, and

make decisions without drama. When information stops working, there is noise: duplicate files, wrong templates, failed audits, angry managers, contradictory procedures, support tickets, rework, missed handovers and meetings about meetings.

How to use this ebook

- Read Part 1 if you need the honest reality check about AI and technical authoring.
- Use Part 2 to identify what you already know and what you can sell into another role.
- Use Part 3 to choose a realistic transition pathway rather than applying for random jobs.
- Use Part 4 to build an AI-enabled working practice without sacrificing professional judgement.
- Use Part 5 if your basic skills need attention before you move role.
- Use Part 6 if you want to become a consultant in information management, documentation governance or knowledge systems.
- Use the appendices as checklists, interview preparation and service-pack material.

Part 1: The reality check

1. What AI changes for technical authors

AI changes the technical author role by attacking the visible part of the work first. The visible part is writing: sentences, summaries, headings, drafts, introductions, emails, release notes and how-to material. That is the part many organisations already misunderstand. They see the document and assume the job was typing.

The invisible part is where the profession retains its value. Before a useful document exists, someone has to decide what problem the document solves, who will use it, what the source of truth is, what the process actually is, what risk the document controls, what must be reviewed, who owns the information, how it will be maintained, and where it will live. AI can help with these tasks. It cannot own them.

AI can help with...	The technical author still owns...
Summarising long source material	Checking whether the summary is true, complete and safe to use
Producing a first draft	Determining whether the draft reflects the business process, standard or system
Rewriting content in plain English	Knowing when simplified wording changes meaning or removes necessary control
Generating examples	Selecting examples that match the audience, domain, risk and compliance context
Creating outlines and headings	Designing the information architecture and deciding what belongs where
Comparing versions at a surface level	Judging material change, impact, ownership and approval route
Answering routine questions from approved content	Maintaining the approved source content and preventing hallucinated answers

AI can help with...	The technical author still owns...
Drafting training scripts	Ensuring the training reflects actual working practice and does not teach fantasy process

2. The dangerous middle ground

The dangerous middle ground is where a technical author has enough skill to produce documents, but not enough business, system or governance knowledge to move upstream. AI will put pressure on that middle ground because many managers will think the tool can perform it cheaply.

This does not mean the author has no future. It means the author must stop treating the document as the whole job. The future sits in diagnosis, structure, control, assurance and advice.

A blunt test

If your role can be described as "I wait for people to send me information, then I make it look tidy", AI and cheaper labour will threaten you. If your role can be described as "I find out how information should work, fix the gaps, create the controls and help the organisation use the information properly", you have a future.

3. The five moves that protect your career

1. Move from writer to investigator. Ask better questions than the people who own the process.
2. Move from document formatter to information architect. Design structure, relationships, metadata and findability.

3. Move from production support to governance support. Define ownership, review cadence, approval routes and lifecycle rules.
4. Move from passive recipient to adviser. Tell managers what the information system needs, not only what the paragraph needs.
5. Move from AI user to AI quality controller. Use AI to accelerate work, then apply human judgement to protect the organisation.

Part 2: What technical authors can take with them

4. Your transferable skill set

Technical authors often undersell themselves because they describe their work as writing. Writing is the output. The transferable value sits in analysis, structure, governance, communication, quality and delivery.

Technical author skill	What it becomes in another role	Where it transfers
Audience analysis	Stakeholder and user needs analysis	Business analysis, content design, service design, training, change management
SME interviewing	Knowledge elicitation and discovery	Consulting, process improvement, knowledge management, audit preparation
Process mapping	Operational analysis	Business analysis, service management, change/problem/incident management
Plain English writing	Executive communication and decision support	Programme reporting, policy, governance, customer communication
Template control	Information standardisation	Document control, information management, quality management
Version control	Configuration and lifecycle discipline	DMS/CMS administration, regulated documentation, ISO systems
Review management	Quality assurance and approval governance	Audit, compliance, project controls, PMO support

Technical author skill	What it becomes in another role	Where it transfers
Information architecture	Taxonomy, metadata and findability	Knowledge bases, SharePoint, Confluence, Asite, content operations
Editorial judgement	Risk-aware communication	Compliance documentation, policy, assurance, executive reporting
Training material creation	Enablement and adoption	Learning design, change management, internal communications

5. The skill stack for the next role

Career transition works best when you build a stack, not a wish list. A stack combines what you already know with adjacent skills that make you useful in a different setting.

Layer	What it means	Minimum evidence
Foundation	You can create clear, accurate, controlled documentation using standard tools.	A clean procedure, guide, template, review log or document plan.
Business understanding	You understand why the document exists and what decision, control or task it supports.	Purpose statement, audience notes, process scope, risks and ownership.
Information management	You understand storage, metadata, lifecycle, ownership, versioning and retrieval.	DMS/CMS structure, naming rules, archive rules and review cadence.
AI literacy	You can use AI responsibly to accelerate work without outsourcing judgement.	AI workflow, prompt examples, human QA checklist and data handling rules.

Layer	What it means	Minimum evidence
Advisory capability	You can diagnose problems, recommend options and influence managers.	Discovery questions, findings report, improvement plan and implementation roadmap.
Commercial thinking	You can package your work as outcomes, not hours spent typing.	Service packs, pricing logic, scope boundaries and client-ready proposal language.

6. The roles technical authors can move into

The best move depends on your experience, appetite for ambiguity and tolerance for politics. Some technical authors prefer structured delivery. Others prefer analysis, governance or advisory work. The transition pathways below are not rigid. Many organisations blur these job titles, often while pretending they have a fully mature operating model. They usually do not.

Possible role	Why a technical author fits	Skills to strengthen
Information Manager	You already think about ownership, control, structure, document lifecycle and findability.	Metadata, DMS governance, retention, access control, ISO 19650 or sector-specific standards.
Knowledge Manager	You understand how to capture expert knowledge and make it reusable.	Knowledge base design, taxonomy, article governance, metrics and community adoption.

Possible role	Why a technical author fits	Skills to strengthen
Content Strategist	You can plan content as a managed asset rather than a pile of pages.	Content models, customer journeys, publishing workflows and analytics.
Business Analyst	You ask questions, map processes and identify gaps.	Requirements methods, user stories, acceptance criteria, stakeholder mapping.
Process Analyst	You can reveal what people actually do, not what the policy says they do.	BPMN basics, swimlanes, RACI, controls, failure points and improvement methods.
Change Manager	You create the material people need to adopt new systems or processes.	Impact assessment, communications plan, training plan, adoption metrics.
Documentation Operations Specialist	You can design how documentation is produced, reviewed, published and maintained.	Workflow design, content tooling, automation, dashboards, governance.
AI Content Governance Lead	You understand source quality, approval, risk and what happens when generated content goes wrong.	AI policy, prompt libraries, human review, data classification, audit trail.
Quality or Audit Support Specialist	You know that uncontrolled documents cause audit pain.	Evidence trails, non-conformance handling, corrective actions and control design.
Trainer or Enablement Specialist	You can turn complex work into usable guidance.	Learning objectives, exercises, assessments, facilitation and learner feedback.

Possible role	Why a technical author fits	Skills to strengthen
PMO Documentation Lead	You can support governance, reporting, templates and project information flow.	Project controls, RAID logs, reporting cadence, decision logs and stakeholder packs.
Independent Consultant	You can advise companies on how information should be created, controlled and improved.	Commercial offer design, discovery, proposal writing, client management, delivery playbooks.

Part 3: Choosing a transition pathway

7. Do not run from AI. Run towards higher-value work.

A career transition should not be a panic move. Panic creates poor choices: applying for jobs you do not understand, claiming skills you cannot evidence, or trying to become an AI expert after watching three videos and frightening yourself on LinkedIn.

The better approach is to pick a direction based on evidence. What work do you already do? What problems do people bring to you? What annoys you because you can see the fix? What do managers misunderstand? What parts of your current role would survive even if AI drafted every first version?

8. Four transition tracks

Track	Best for	Typical next role	First move
The Governance Track	Authors who like control, standards, templates, audit trails and lifecycle rules.	Information Manager, Documentation Governance Lead, Quality Documentation Specialist.	Create a small governance pack: document lifecycle, ownership, review schedule, template rules and archive policy.

Track	Best for	Typical next role	First move
The Analysis Track	Authors who like asking questions, mapping processes and finding gaps.	Business Analyst, Process Analyst, Service Improvement Analyst.	Build examples of process maps, requirements notes, problem statements and recommendations.
The Content Operations Track	Authors who like systems, publishing workflows, taxonomies and reusable content.	Content Operations Specialist, Knowledge Manager, CMS/DMS Lead.	Audit a content set and propose taxonomy, metadata and publishing workflow improvements.
The Advisory Track	Experienced authors who can challenge managers without turning every meeting into a small war.	Consultant, Information Management Adviser, AI Documentation Governance Consultant.	Create a consulting service offer and a discovery checklist for information problems.

9. The portfolio problem

Many technical authors do not have a portfolio. Some work in defence, finance, healthcare, government, engineering, regulated operations, or directly inside systems where taking copies would be impossible or inappropriate. This does not mean they have nothing to show. It means they need a safe evidence strategy.

Instead of showing...	Show this safely
Client documents	A recreated sample using fictional content and the same structural principles.

Instead of showing...	Show this safely
A real procedure	A generic before-and-after procedure showing how you improve logic, warnings and steps.
A confidential template	A clean template framework with sample headings, fields and governance notes.
A process map from a project	A fictional swimlane with realistic roles, decision points and handovers.
A knowledge base article from a system	A model article with metadata, related articles, review date and escalation details.
A sensitive audit pack	A blank audit readiness checklist and evidence matrix.

Interview line

"Much of my work is confidential, so I cannot share client material. What I can show you is how I structure information, manage review, control versions and turn unclear inputs into usable, governed content."

Part 4: AI skills technical authors must learn

10. AI literacy is now a professional baseline

You do not need to become a machine learning engineer. You do need to understand what AI tools can do, where they fail, and how to use them without contaminating the organisation with plausible nonsense.

At a minimum, a technical author should be able to use AI for structured drafting, summarisation, comparison, readability testing, option generation and review prompts. They should also know when not to use it: confidential material, unapproved source data, regulated claims, legal commitments, safety-critical instructions, or anything where an error could harm people, finances, security or compliance.

11. Practical AI workflows

Workflow	How to use AI	Human control
Source summary	Ask AI to summarise a meeting note, transcript or long source text into topics, decisions and open questions.	Check every claim against the source and flag assumptions.
Structure challenge	Ask AI to propose headings, ordering and reader journeys.	Choose the structure that reflects the process, audience and risk.
Plain English rewrite	Ask AI to simplify wording for a named audience.	Check that technical meaning, obligations and controls remain intact.

Workflow	How to use AI	Human control
Gap analysis	Ask AI what questions remain unanswered after reading a draft.	Separate useful questions from generic filler.
Consistency check	Ask AI to list inconsistent terms, abbreviations or role names.	Confirm against the glossary or source of truth.
Review preparation	Ask AI to produce SME review questions by section.	Remove irrelevant questions and add domain-specific checks.
Training conversion	Ask AI to turn guidance into learning objectives and exercises.	Validate against the task people actually perform.

12. The AI quality checklist

- What source did the AI use, and is that source approved?
- Has the output invented facts, roles, sequence, responsibilities or terminology?
- Has the output removed important warnings, preconditions or exceptions?
- Does the output match the organisation's style guide, template and document conventions?
- Does the content need SME review, legal review, safety review, security review or document control?
- Is any confidential, personal, commercial or security-sensitive information being exposed to a tool that should not receive it?
- Is there an audit trail showing who reviewed and approved the final version?
- Would you be willing to defend the content in front of a client, auditor or incident review board?

13. Build an AI prompt library

A prompt library should not be a drawer full of clever incantations. It should be a controlled set of repeatable

instructions aligned to real documentation tasks. Treat prompts as working tools that need testing, versioning and ownership.

Prompt type	Purpose	Example instruction
Audience translation	Convert technical content for a non-technical reader.	Rewrite this for a project manager who needs decision points, risks and next actions. Keep technical terms only where they affect the decision.
SME questions	Prepare for knowledge capture.	Read this draft and list the questions I should ask the SME before this can be approved. Group by process, roles, systems, risks and exceptions.
Review checklist	Create targeted review criteria.	Create a review checklist for this procedure. Include accuracy, sequence, ownership, warnings, exceptions, glossary and version control.
Executive summary	Extract decisions and action.	Create an executive summary that states purpose, key finding, business impact, recommendation, owner and date required.
Gap finder	Identify missing information.	List what a new starter would still not know after reading this. Do not rewrite the document. Identify missing content only.
Governance check	Test document control readiness.	Assess whether this document has clear purpose, owner, version, approval route, review date, related documents and archive trigger.

Part 5: If your basic skills are weak

14. The uncomfortable truth

Some technical authors want to transition because AI worries them. Some should transition because the role has changed. Some should first repair basic professional skills. There is no shame in that, but there is danger in pretending.

If you cannot control headings in Word, manage numbered lists, structure a procedure, use a DMS properly, interview an SME, create a simple process map, or explain version control, you are not ready to sell yourself as an information consultant. You may still become one, but you need a foundation plan first.

Cheeky but true

Do not call yourself a documentation strategist if the table of contents frightens you, numbered lists collapse when you look at them, and the template has started a support group.

15. The baseline technical author toolkit

Skill	Minimum standard	How to build it
Microsoft Word styles	Use heading styles, body styles, lists, captions, cross-references and tables without wrecking the document.	Create a 10-page sample guide using styles only. Break it. Fix it. Learn why it broke.
Plain English	Write instructions people can follow without translation.	Rewrite one poor procedure each week. Track before and after.

Skill	Minimum standard	How to build it
Procedure writing	Create steps with prerequisites, warnings, decisions, exceptions and completion criteria.	Take a household or work process and document it properly.
SME interviewing	Ask structured questions and extract facts, decisions, risks and gaps.	Practise with colleagues. Prepare questions, record gaps and send follow-up notes.
Process mapping	Create a simple swimlane showing roles, systems, decisions and handovers.	Learn basic flowchart symbols and produce three sample maps.
DMS/CMS use	Understand versioning, permissions, metadata, approval workflow, archive and search.	Use SharePoint, Confluence, Asite or a similar system. Build a small controlled library.
Basic Excel	Use tables, filters, review logs, document inventories and simple status trackers.	Create a document register with owner, version, status, next review and risk.
Presentation basics	Explain a documentation problem to managers in five slides.	Create a short deck: problem, impact, options, recommendation, next steps.
AI literacy	Use AI to support work without trusting it blindly.	Create prompts for summary, rewrite, review and gap analysis. Check every output.
Information governance	Explain ownership, review, approval, retention and source of truth.	Write a one-page document lifecycle policy.

16. The 30-day foundation repair plan

Week	Focus	Deliverable
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Week	Focus	Deliverable
1	Word, styles and document structure	A clean sample guide with headings, TOC placeholder, tables, bullets and version table.
2	Plain English and procedure writing	Before-and-after rewrite of a poor procedure, with notes explaining each change.
3	Process and information management basics	A simple process map and document register with owner, status, review date and location.
4	AI-assisted workflow and portfolio pack	Three AI prompts, three checked outputs and one safe portfolio sample.

17. What not to do

- Do not hide behind AI tools if you cannot judge the output.
- Do not apply for senior advisory roles using only document formatting evidence.
- Do not describe every tool as a skill. A tool is useful only when you can explain what problem it solves.
- Do not confuse being busy with being strategic.
- Do not build a portfolio from client material unless you have explicit permission.
- Do not wait until redundancy before learning the skills your next role requires.

Part 6: Becoming an information management consultant

18. Why companies need this advice

Most companies do not notice information management when it works. Nobody congratulates the document library because the right file appeared in search. Nobody applauds a review cycle because the policy remained current. Nobody sends flowers to metadata. Good information systems produce silence.

Then something fails. The wrong procedure is used. A contract references an obsolete appendix. An auditor asks who approved a policy and nobody knows. Three teams maintain three versions of the same guide. SharePoint becomes a digital attic. A new starter cannot find the process. A project manager discovers that the only person who understood the system left six months ago. Suddenly information becomes noisy.

The consultant's opening line

"You do not have a documentation problem. You have an information flow, ownership and governance problem that is showing itself through documents."

19. The consultant mindset

A consultant does not begin by offering to write everything. A consultant begins by diagnosing what is broken, why it matters, what must change, who must own it, and how the organisation will maintain the improvement after the consultant leaves.

Employee mindset	Consultant mindset
What document do you want me to write?	What business problem is this information meant to solve?
Who will send me the source material?	Where is the source of truth and who owns it?
When is the deadline?	What risk exists if this information is late, wrong, duplicated or uncontrolled?
I will tidy the content.	I will design the content, controls, workflow and ownership model.
I will follow the template.	I will test whether the template supports the organisation's governance needs.
I will upload the file.	I will define where the file should live, how it is found, who can change it and when it is reviewed.

20. Your consulting offer

Do not sell "technical writing" if the client problem is information chaos. Sell outcomes. Managers buy reduced risk, cleaner handovers, audit readiness, faster onboarding, fewer support questions, better reuse, clearer ownership and fewer surprises.

Service pack	Problem it solves	Typical deliverables
Document Estate Audit	The organisation has too many documents, duplicates, obsolete files and no clear ownership.	Inventory, risk rating, duplicate analysis, archive/delete recommendations, ownership matrix.
DMS/CMS Governance Setup	Documents live in a system, but the system is not managed.	Folder/taxonomy design, metadata model, naming convention, permissions model, approval workflow.

Service pack	Problem it solves	Typical deliverables
Template and Style Governance	Teams create inconsistent documents and templates mutate in the wild.	Template set, style guide, usage rules, quality checklist, training notes.
Knowledge Base Build or Recovery	Knowledge exists in heads, chats and old files instead of reusable articles.	Article model, categories, metadata, review cadence, sample articles, publishing workflow.
Process Capture and Simplification	Processes are unclear, undocumented, duplicated or dependent on tribal knowledge.	Discovery interviews, process maps, RACI, procedure set, improvement recommendations.
Audit Readiness Documentation	The organisation cannot prove how policies and processes are controlled.	Evidence matrix, document control register, approval trail, review schedule, gap report.
AI Documentation Readiness	The organisation wants to use AI but lacks trusted source content and governance.	AI use policy, source quality audit, prompt library, human review checklist, risk controls.
Training and Adoption Pack	People ignore the system because they do not understand it or trust it.	Training deck, quick reference, FAQs, adoption messages, manager briefing.

21. The consulting method: Diagnose, Design, Stabilise, Govern, Improve

Stage	Purpose	Activities	Output
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Stage	Purpose	Activities	Output
Diagnose	Find the real information problem.	Interview stakeholders, inspect repositories, sample documents, review workflows, identify risk.	Findings report and priority list.
Design	Create the target model.	Define taxonomy, templates, metadata, ownership, lifecycle, review and approval model.	Information management design pack.
Stabilise	Stop the immediate noise.	Fix critical documents, remove duplicates, assign owners, create temporary controls.	Stabilisation plan and corrected priority set.
Govern	Make the improvement sustainable.	Set policies, review cadence, quality checks, escalation routes and reporting.	Governance framework and operating rhythm.
Improve	Measure and refine.	Track adoption, search failures, overdue reviews, audit findings and user feedback.	Improvement backlog and metrics dashboard.

22. Discovery questions for information management consulting

- What information causes the most noise when it is missing, wrong or hard to find?
- Which documents are business critical, and who owns them?
- Where is the approved source of truth?
- How do people know they are using the latest version?
- What is duplicated across SharePoint, Teams, email, DMS, CMS or local drives?
- What must be retained, archived or deleted?

- Which documents support audits, contracts, safety, compliance or customer commitments?
- How are documents reviewed, approved and withdrawn?
- What metadata is mandatory, useful or missing?
- What training do users receive on the system?
- What does leadership currently measure?
- Where do people go when search fails?
- What happens when a document owner leaves?
- Could AI answer questions safely from the current information estate? If not, why not?

23. Consultant credibility

Credibility comes from the questions you ask and the evidence you produce. A consultant who arrives with slogans will be treated as a motivational poster with a day rate. A consultant who finds duplication, risk, ownership gaps, failed search behaviour and poor lifecycle control becomes useful quickly.

You need evidence of...	Show it through...
Diagnostic skill	A short anonymised information audit with findings and recommendations.
Structure	A taxonomy, document lifecycle model or knowledge base article model.
Governance	A review workflow, approval route, owner matrix and document control rules.
Commercial awareness	Clear links between information problems and cost, risk, delay, rework or audit exposure.
AI judgement	An AI use case that includes source control, human review and risk limits.
Delivery discipline	A phased plan with scope, assumptions, risks, dependencies and acceptance criteria.

24. Positioning statement

Use this as a starting point

"I help organisations turn noisy, duplicated and uncontrolled information into reliable working knowledge. My work covers document governance, DMS/CMS structure, knowledge capture, templates, process documentation, audit readiness and AI-ready source content."

Part 7: Your 90-day transition plan

25. Month 1: Audit yourself and repair the foundation

- Complete the skills audit in Appendix A.
- Choose one transition track: governance, analysis, content operations or advisory.
- Create one safe portfolio sample that does not use client material.
- Build or repair core tool skills: Word styles, Excel register, process map, DMS/CMS basics.
- Write a one-page summary of your current role as business value, not document output.

26. Month 2: Build evidence

- Create a fictional document estate audit with recommendations.
- Create a process map and a procedure from the same process.
- Create a knowledge base article model with metadata and review rules.
- Create three AI-assisted examples and show how you checked them.
- Rewrite your CV around outcomes: governance, clarity, adoption, risk reduction, audit readiness and knowledge reuse.

27. Month 3: Move into the market

- Update LinkedIn with a transition statement that reflects your chosen track.

- Write two short articles showing how information failure creates business noise.
- Speak to recruiters using role language: information management, content operations, knowledge management, governance, business analysis.
- Prepare interview answers for AI use, confidentiality, portfolio limitations and stakeholder challenge.
- If moving into consultancy, create three service packs and a discovery call script.

28. CV language that works

Weak wording	Stronger transition wording
Wrote user guides and procedures.	Created controlled operational documentation that supported process adoption, knowledge transfer and audit readiness.
Updated documents.	Managed document lifecycle updates, review cycles, version control and stakeholder approvals.
Used SharePoint.	Supported controlled information storage, retrieval, metadata discipline and document governance in SharePoint.
Worked with SMEs.	Elicited, tested and structured expert knowledge from SMEs to remove ambiguity and capture working practice.
Made templates.	Designed and governed templates to standardise documentation, reduce rework and improve consistency.
Used AI.	Used AI-assisted drafting and review workflows with human validation, source checking and risk controls.

29. Interview questions to prepare for

- How do you use AI in your documentation work?
- What tasks would you never delegate fully to AI?

- How do you manage confidential work when asked for a portfolio?
- How do you identify the source of truth?
- How do you handle SMEs who disagree or do not engage?
- How do you prevent documents becoming obsolete?
- How would you improve a chaotic SharePoint or DMS environment?
- How would you prepare documentation for an audit?
- How do you measure whether documentation or knowledge content is working?
- What would you do in your first 30 days in this role?

Appendix A: Skills audit

Use this audit honestly. It is better to identify weak skills privately than have them discovered publicly by a hiring manager, client or auditor.

Skill area	Beginner	Competent	Consultant-ready
Writing and editing	Can improve sentences but may not control structure.	Can create clear task, concept and reference material.	Can define writing standards and coach others.
Information architecture	Can organise a single document.	Can organise a document set or knowledge base.	Can design taxonomy, metadata and source-of-truth model.
Stakeholder management	Can take instructions.	Can interview SMEs and manage reviews.	Can challenge, advise and align senior stakeholders.
Tools	Uses Word and basic collaboration tools.	Uses templates, registers, DMS/CMS and diagrams effectively.	Advise on tool governance, workflows and adoption.
AI literacy	Can ask AI for drafts.	Can use AI in controlled workflows and validate outputs.	Can advise on AI documentation governance and source readiness.
Governance	Understands version numbers.	Manages review, approval and ownership.	Designs lifecycle, policy, evidence and audit controls.

Skill area	Beginner	Competent	Consultant-ready
Commercial value	Describes tasks performed.	Describes outcomes delivered.	Packages services around risk, cost, adoption and assurance.

Appendix B: Mini templates

One-page information audit template

Field	Prompt
Business area	Which team, function, project or service owns the information?
Information type	Policy, procedure, guide, record, template, knowledge article, form or report.
Current location	Where does it live now? Include system, folder, site or repository.
Owner	Who is accountable for accuracy and review?
Users	Who uses it and what task or decision does it support?
Risk	What happens if it is wrong, missing, duplicated or obsolete?
Lifecycle	Creation, review, approval, publication, archive and deletion rules.
Findability	Search terms, metadata, naming convention and related content.
Recommendation	Keep, merge, rewrite, archive, delete, control or escalate.

Consulting discovery call structure

1. Confirm the visible problem: what noise are they experiencing?

2. Confirm impact: cost, delay, risk, audit exposure, customer friction or operational confusion.
3. Confirm scope: systems, teams, document types, critical processes and timeframe.
4. Confirm ownership: who can make decisions and who must approve change?
5. Confirm evidence: what can you inspect before recommending action?
6. Confirm next step: audit, workshop, pilot, improvement plan or proposal.

Appendix C: Further reading and source context

This draft uses a practical career and information-management lens. The following sources are useful background reading when refining the AI and workforce sections:

Sou rce	Useful for	Link
World Eco nomi c Foru m	The Future of Jobs Report 2025	https://www.weforum.org/publications/the-future-of-jobs-report-2025/

Sou rce	Useful for	Link
Worl d Eco nomi c Foru m	New Econo my Skills: Unlocki ng the Human Advant age 2025	https://reports.weforum.org/docs/WEF_New_Economy_Skills_Unlocking_the_Human_Advantage_2025.pdf
Micr osoft	2025 Work Trend Index: The Frontier Firm Is Born	https://blogs.microsoft.com/blog/2025/04/23/the-2025-annual-work-trend-index-the-frontier-firm-is-born/
tcwo rld / teko m	AI in Technic al Commu nication	https://www.technical-communication.org/ai-in-technical-communication
IST C	Purpos e of technic al commu nication	https://istc.org.uk/

Final thought

The future technical author is not merely a writer with a better tool. The future technical author is an information professional who can use tools, people, structure and governance to make

knowledge work. AI will increase the amount of content organisations can create. It will also increase the need for people who know which content should exist, where it should live, who should own it, and how the organisation knows it can be trusted.

That is the career move. Not away from technical authoring, but beyond the narrowest definition of it.