

Logistics & Admin

- Survey used www.surveymonkey.com/
- Initial email invitation sent out 26 January 2005 to 399 members using most recent email list.
- Follow-up email request sent out 30 January 2005 to 329 members who had not responded.
- Survey closed 7 February 2005.
- 134 responses out of 399 for an overall response rate of 34%

Format

The survey was arranged by pages and then by questions within each page.

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Results

- Please access the SurveyMonkey generated report at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/Report.asp?U=82460640865> for the majority of the results.
- The online SurveyMonkey report details all questions that had non-open-ended responses.
- This document presents the results of questions with open text responses and provides commentary on the results.

Comments & Observations

Critical?

Page/ Question	Comments
P2 Q5&6	Professional society dues reimbursement rose from 35% to 42%; this still means 58% of your members have to pay for their dues out of their own pocket..
P2 Q5&6	Seminar/conference reimbursements rose marginally from 36% to 37%; this still means 63% of your members have to pay for seminars and conferences out of their own pocket.
P4 Q1&2	Lack of newer, younger members.
P7 Q1	LSC meetings are ranked 9 th in terms of overall value to LSC members.

Interesting?

Page/ Question	Comments
P2 Q1&2	In the past 12 months, the underemployed (i.e., less than 30 hours per week) component has gone away.
P2 Q1&2	In the past 12 months, the unemployment rate has dropped from 9.7% to 5.2% - a 46% decrease in unemployment.
P2 Q5&6	Significant decrease in members who receive no benefits. Health insurance coverage rising.
P5 Q1&2	Healthcare seems to be increasing as a vertical industry
P5 Q2	“Software” is still the most common industry followed by “telecom”; together these represent 56% of the respondents “most experience” industries.

Detailed Results

This section provides details on open-ended text questions.

Page 2: Your Job Status

Question 5. What kind of organization do you work for?

Answer "Other", 3% ticked this. Answers were:

- Consultant for a consulting co.
- W2 - contractor
- partnership
- medical (state)

Page 3: Your Pay and Benefits

Question 1. What is your current base salary?

Question 2. What was your base salary twelve months ago?

All answers annualized; hourly amounts * 2000.

- **Average salary, this year: \$60,227**
- **Average salary last year: \$58,142**
- **Average salary increase, 2004-2005: 3.6%**

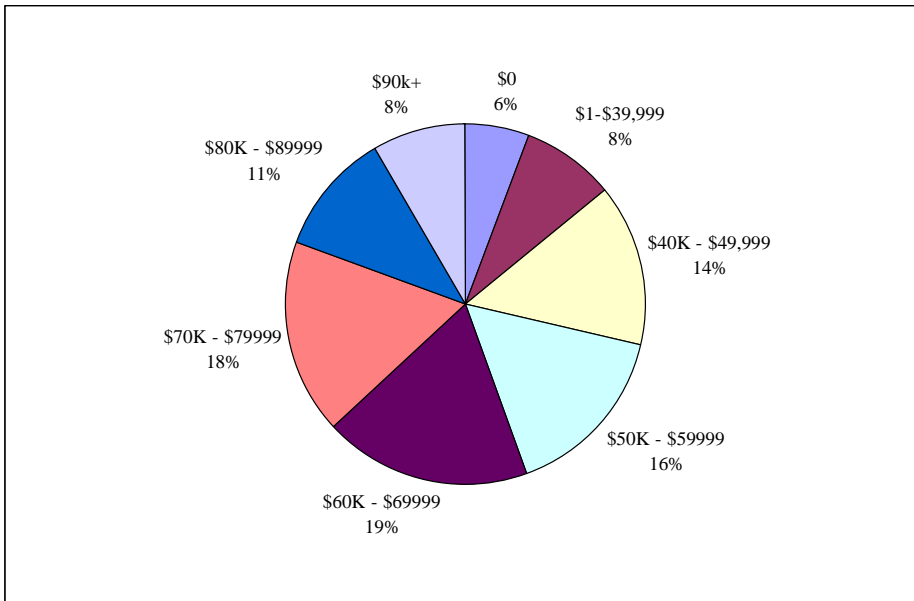


Figure 1 - Pie Chart Look at Salary Distribution

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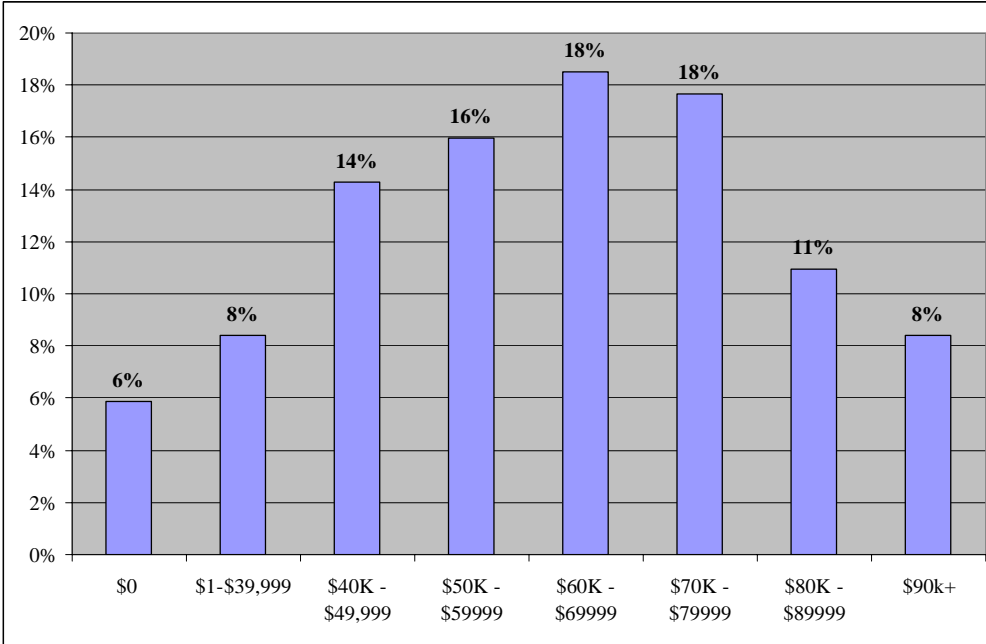


Figure 2 - Histogram Look at Salary Distribution

Page 3. Your Pay and Benefits

Question 3. What bonuses or commissions do you expect to earn this year (as a percentage of your base salary)?

- Average bonus was 3.1%, but with a very skewed distribution.
- 64% received no bonuses.
- 7% showed they did not read the question and gave an answer in dollars instead of a percentage.

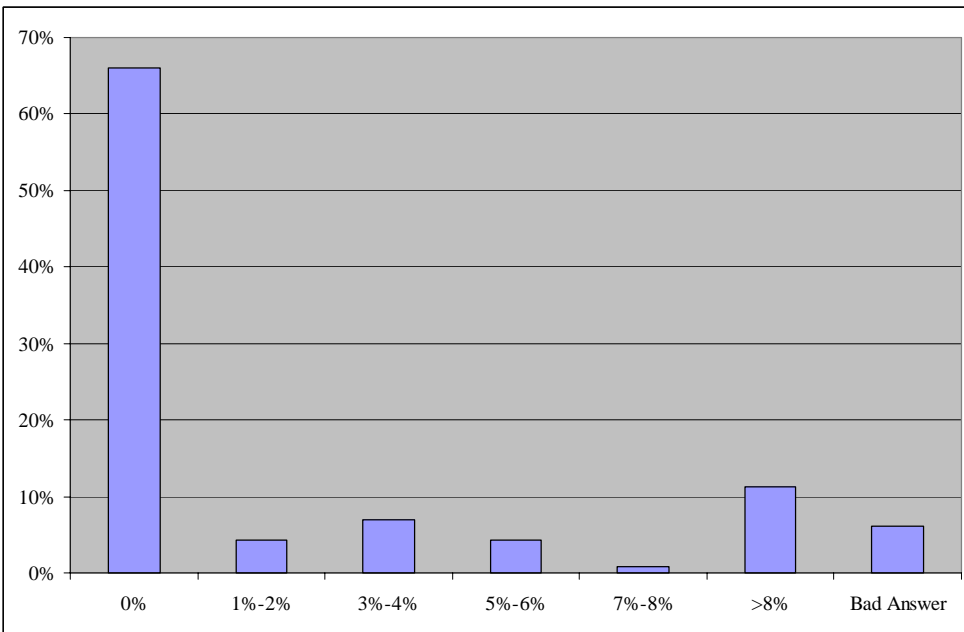


Figure 3 - Histogram Look at Bonus Distribution

Page 5. Industries

Question 1. Indicate all the industries in which you have worked.

33 additional listings:

- Airline, Nonprofit (museum)
- airline, real estate, employment counseling, wholesale distributor
- computer hardware
- Computer hardware & scientific
- Defense, Semiconductor
- Distribution, retail
- E-Services for Print and Mail
- editing
- Health care
- Health care and insurance
- Health services
- HealthCare
- Healthcare IT
- Healthcare, Drug (lab)
- Healthcare, Hospitality
- Insurance
- journalism
- legal, insurance
- Medical
- MEDICAL
- Newspaper, freelance curriculum and feature writing, oil field technical writing, airline technical writing, software technical writing
- Nonprofit
- Nonprofit Association
- Outsourcing (embedded systems design firm)
- Print services
- Retail/Health
- Semiconductor
- Transportation
- Transportation
- transportation
- Transportation, Utility (Gas)
- Travel
- Travel

Page 5. Industries

Question 2. In which one industry do you have the most experience?

12 additional listings:

- Airline
- airline
- Defense
- Equal time in marketing/advertising and education/teaching
- Healthcare
- Insurance
- legal
- library
- Semiconductor
- Transportation
- transportation (software)
- travel

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Page 6. Your Work

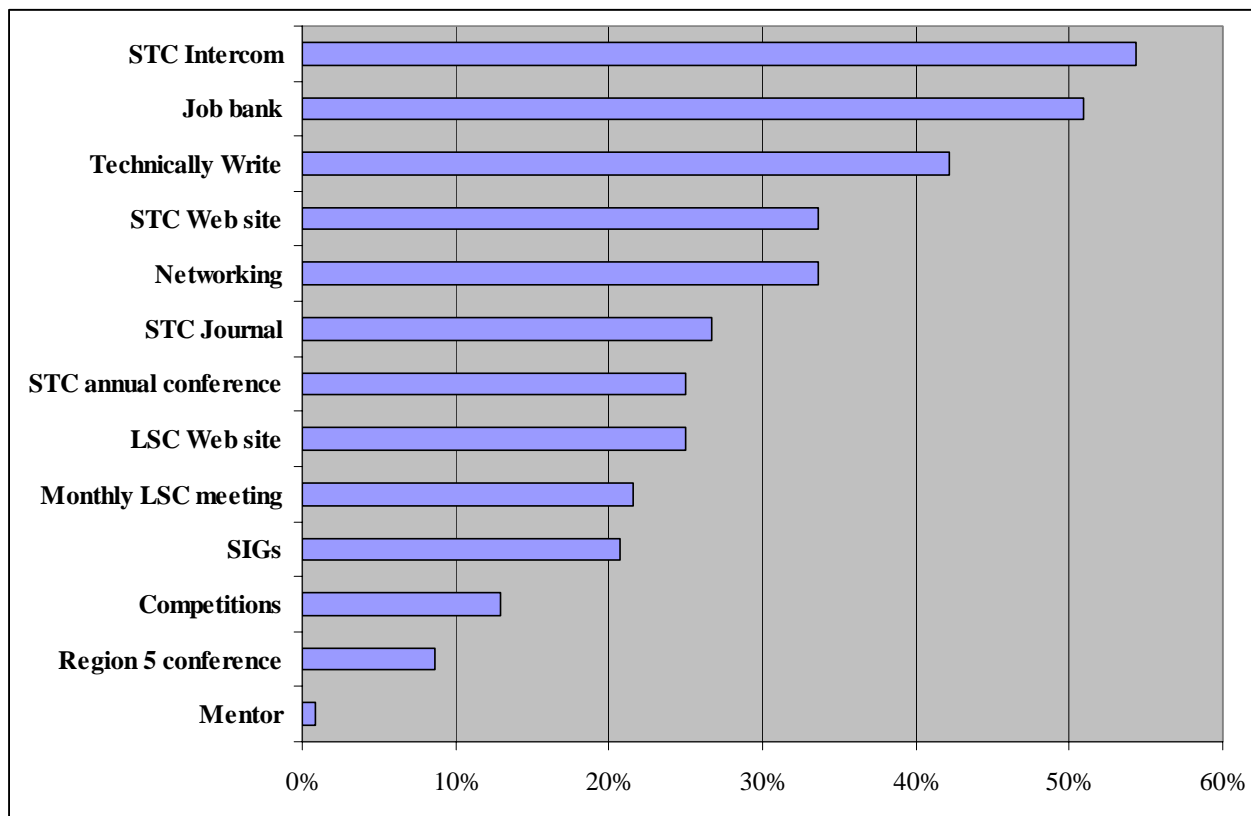
Question 1. What is your current job title?

117 responses

- (21 occurrences) Technical Writer
- (16) Senior Technical Writer
- (6) Program Manager
- (3) Contractor
- (2) Instructional Designer
- (2) Documentation Specialist
- (2) Technical Writer III
- Assistant Department Chair
- Assistant Professor
- Associate Director, Client Assurance
- Business Analyst
- Business Analyst, Usability
- Communications Department Manager
- Communications Manager
- course developer/instructional designer
- Courseware Developer
- Creative Marketing Manager
- Curriculum developer
- Curriculum Manager
- Director of Media Communications
- Documentation Manager
- Documentation Principal editor
- Information Architect
- Instructor
- Instructor of Tech. Comm and Environmental Comm.
- ISO 9001 Mgmt Rep
- Knowledge Analyst
- Lead Technical Writer
- Lead Web Content Developer
- Library Technician
- Manager Technical Publications
- manager, customer documentation
- Manager, Documentation Group
- Manager, Information Design
- Manager, Online Communications
- Manager, Technical Publications and Training
- Marketing coordinator
- None - self-employed
- Product Information Manager
- Professor
- Program Advisor/Project Manager
- Program/Project Coordinator
- Proposal Manager
- Publications Architect, President
- Publications Developer, Ground Operations Training
- Publications Manager
- SAP Training Consultant
- senior business analyst
- Senior Consultant
- Senior Documentation Specialist
- Senior Editor
- Senior Manager, Documentation and Training Development
- Senior Specialist - Tech Writing
- Senior Technical Communicator
- Senior Technical Writer/Editor
- Student
- Supervisor
- Technical Communications Manager
- Technical Communications Specialist I
- Technical Communications Supervisor
- Technical Communicator
- Technical Editor
- Technical Editor/Writer
- Technical Lead/Senior Technical Writer
- Technical Writer 4
- Technical Writer II
- Technical Writing Specialist
- Training Developer
- Unemployed
- Unemployed; but my work recent work was writing policies and procedures for executive leadership
- Vice President, Client Services

Page 7. LSC Community

Question 1. Which Lone Star Community and STC programs provide you with the most professional value on a regular basis?



Page 7. LSC Community

Question 2. Which additional services could the Lone Star Community provide you that it is not doing today?

- A job bank for the DFW area would be great.
- As a new member, I'm looking forward to finding out exactly what the LSC offers!
- Can't think of any at this time.
- Certification program. I think employers -- many of whom don't know what they're looking for -- would find it assuring.
- classes on SME interviewing skills, and writing style
- Classes on how to become a business analyst 2. REAL advice on how to work in an environment that is hostile or indifferent to writers. The STC needs to deal head-on with this reality. Yes, some writers need to be more assertive. But we need to take a more systemic approach, as shown in Item #3. 3. Grants for studies providing evidence that writers increase profits (Of course, it is possible that writers do not really make corporations more profitable; however, we all have to begin a study with a premise and I believe that clarity always increases profitability. We just need to show it in "hard" numbers).
- Educational advice? This is the only thing i could think of in my wildest imagination. I think the STC (and the services the LSC offers) are already an unimaginable bargain.

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- Enjoy technical writing and editing programs, which is the heart of technical writing. Tools and techniques are important ways to bring information to the user, but the written word is still the heart of the profession.
- I am a newcomer to STC. Some kind of outreach to newcomers might be helpful.
- Less on free-lancing, more advanced topics, less getting started
- Make meetings shorter and more fun
- more technical programs with hands-on practice
- More training, such as the winter conference LSC had on a Saturday.
- n/a
- None
- None; you are doing a good job
- Nothing that I can think of
- Offer interactive/online workshops: - building management skills - conducting effective needs analysis - conducting Level 3 analysis - showing your value to your client via metrics
- Online Forum
- Provide a good, affordable insurance program
- Provide secondary meetings or on-campus alternatives for TW Students who are members but have classes on Thursday nights.
- Reinstate the FrameMaker SIG
- Relevant web courses about emerging technologies (Longhorn help, for example) for senior-level user assistance advocates. I've been developing documentation from a users perspective for so long that I know how to investigate, research, write edit, produce and deploy user assistance tools. I wouldn't be successful if I didn't have those skills.
- Satellite chapter in NW Louisiana!
- Software SIGs (Framemaker, Word, Acrobat, HTML/XHTML/XML etc.)

Page 7. LSC Community

Question 3. Any additional comments or suggestions you believe are relevant?

- Considering the monthly meeting attendance is down, perhaps its time to revisit moving the meetings from the hotel. I wouldn't mind paying \$25 if the food selections were better.
- Great job with everything you do -- and thank you for all your hard work. I would not be able to say I am employed full-time if it were not for the STC. EVERY ONE of the jobs I have found as a professional technical writer is because of the STC job bank. It is also thanks to the STC that I am making the salary I make.
- I am not an active member in the Lone Star Chapter because meetings are held too far from my home and workplace.
- I am very new to LSC (have not attended a meeting yet.) I plan to start in February. I think the Mentor program sounds like a good idea and may be interested in that.
- I enjoy keeping in touch with friends and hearing the speakers at the monthly LSC meetings.
- I think George Hayhoe should resign as editor of the STC journal. I will not pay \$135 of my hard earned money to hear a national STC leader say, "We have only ourselves to blame if we are not respected." If Hayhoe wants to show corporate leaders that we writers increase profitability, then he needs to appeal to think tanks for funding of studies that will provide evidence of our value. Instead of trivializing the "respect" issue, the STC needs to understand that the "nerd" culture of engineering will never respect a more humanities-oriented discipline until it changes its worldview. The STC needs to stop thinking that the problem with technical writing lies in technical writers' personalities. Nonsense! This is a systemic problem

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which demands systemic answers. Of course, some writers need to be more assertive. However, the true solution to our problem rests in a multifaceted politically-oriented advocacy.

- I truly enjoy being a part of this community
- I would attend more monthly meetings if there was a student member discount for the meeting/food cost.
- I would value some kind of orientation to STC. And to working in technical communications on the client side. (I come from an ad agency background, writing mostly marcom, and the experience of most STCers seems quite different from my own. I need some coaching in how to adapt my portfolio and my approach to getting business/getting a new job client side.
- Keep up the great work with the scholarship program. It's a great way to get students involved in STC!
- LSC does a wonderful job. I miss the meetings, but live too far away to make it practical to attend.
- n/a
- None
- Nothing - thanks
- Our monthly meetings run too late in the evening.
- stop offering the job bank and other resources to those who do not pay the annual membership dues.
- Suggestion for clarification of survey question re: age discrimination - you might want to specify that you're asking about *job-related* discrimination. Otherwise, my answer would have been different. Also, I believe 'gender' is a grammatical term. Humans are one sex or the other.
- Thanks for the monthly meeting reminders delivered via email.
- The meeting I have been to so far was really helpful. It was nice to get to talk to people who thought like me and who were going through the same things as me at their jobs so I will begin to get into the swing of going to the meetings because I think they offer me valuable information and support that we all need.
- The STC membership price increases stink!
- This survey assumes too much. Much of it does not apply to me because a) I was a student for the last two years, b) I was in the military prior to that, and c) I have served functions within the field of TW but without the title for the last 10+ years.
- Until recently, I traveled extensively and could not take advantage of many STC/LSC offerings. I look forward to attending more meetings and participating more fully this year.
- We need more substantive feedback on competition entries.
- Would appreciate programs that cut through all the buzz words in the field today. When presenting info about new tools, techniques, or concepts, cut through the marketing jargon and get down to the basics of explaining who, what, where, when, why, or how the info relates to a day in the life of a regular tech writer. Examples include content management, single-sourcing, etc. Would also appreciate a program on usability vs. what tech writers already do or need to do to best meet customer documentation needs.