

2.1 Defining Procedures

Procedures are documents containing step-by-step, chronological information for completing a task, or set of tasks. You can use procedures as a method of standardizing the way you complete tasks in the workplace. Having common office tasks available in written documentation helps you train or instruct new employees easily.

The following major components make up a procedure:

1. **Headings.** Each procedure requires a short, but informative, task-oriented heading.
2. **Overviews.** This is a short explanation providing an overview of how the audience would use the task.
3. **Steps.** These guide the audience through the task in a clear and numbered step-by-step format.
4. **Special Notices.** Special Notices include Notes, Warnings, Cautions, and Dangers.
5. **Illustrations.** These include tables, graphs, images, and screenshots to guide the audience through the steps of the procedure.

After you complete your task list (see Module 1.2), you can begin writing the steps to complete those tasks. Use this section as a guide for writing the overview, headings, and steps of your documentation. Also included are guidelines for using effective language and style for task orientation.