1. Plan content
   1. Discuss and decide with group members on the main points for each section of the report.
   2. Identify the “creators” for particular components.
   3. Meet and discuss repeatedly as necessary.
2. Generate content
   1. Create and edit exhibits: graphs, figures, tables, etc.
      1. Sufficiently large and visible
      2. Uncluttered, intended observation clear
      3. All exhibits cited and discussed in the text
         1. content explained,
         2. observations noted, and
         3. interpretations discussed
      4. Descriptive titles (placed above tables, below figures)
      5. Consecutively numbered ( Figure 1. Title; Table 1. Title)
   2. Compose sentences and paragraphs
      1. Organize around presenting the exhibits
      2. Avoid sentence “fragment” and “run-on” sentences
      3. Technical writing should be objective, impersonal and avoid/minimize the first person – often the passive voice can be used to avoid the first person
      4. Use strong, descriptive, action verbs when possible
      5. Avoid excessive wordiness
      6. Appropriate tense:
         1. past tense for completed actions
         2. present tense for common knowledge
      7. Paragraphs develop one topic with three parts:
         1. introduction that presents the topic
         2. middle with substantive text developing topic
         3. ending for closure or transition
      8. Avoid paragraph “fragments” and “run-on” paragraphs
   3. Compose equations – special exhibits as part of a sentence.
      1. Use an equation editor
      2. Center justify equation with right justified number in parentheses
      3. Define all variables in terms of explicit physical or mathematical realities
      4. Use to present a relation among ideas and not as a formula
      5. Include physical interpretation/explanation in text
   4. Assemble for professional presentation
      1. Create cover page, abstract, table of contents, etc. as required
      2. Follow recommended section organization or strongly rationalized alternative
      3. Bind report securely and professionally **(no three-ring binders, no paperclips)**
3. Editing
   1. Modify, reorganize, rewrite to create a cohesive, readable document
   2. Check exhibits: appropriate format, units declared, all cited and discussed, descriptive titles, intended effect achieved
   3. Check equations: correct content, variable defined, numbered and referenced, explained.
   4. Check paragraphs: clear objectives addressing requirements, topic sentence, thoughtfulness - convey distinct, appropriate concepts
   5. Check sentences: impersonal – first person avoided/minimized, Active voice judiciously, no vague or subjective arguments, style – effective, concise, scientific, and efficient
   6. Check compiled report: Cover page, abstract, table of contents, complete and well organized, complete and concise closure, justified conclusions, effective communication, predefined variables/concepts, consistent definitions, exhibit numbering and referencing
4. Proofreading – grammar and spelling mistakes can be embarrassing
   1. Proofread the edited report for grammar and spelling errors
   2. Someone other than the editor should proofread
   3. Check for common errors like confusing “to, too, and two” or “its” and “it’s”
5. Final checks: Report dated and signed, securely bound

**References:**

Jeter and Donnell, Writing Style and Standards in Undergraduate Reports, College Publishing, VA, 2004. (ISBN: 0-9679121-7-2)

Haile, J. M., Technical Style: Technical Writing in a Digital Age, Macatea Productions, SC, 2001. (ISBN: 0-9715418-0-9) (http://www.macatea.com/)