

Documentation Reading Method

Read a controlled document for purpose, obligations, evidence, and unresolved questions.

USE THIS WHEN

Use this when a procedure, specification, policy, or contract is too important to skim. Work from the current controlled copy and distinguish what the document says from your interpretation.

THE METHOD

- 1

Identify the copy
Record title, owner, version, effective date, and source location before reading.
- 2

Map the structure
Find purpose, scope, definitions, required actions, exceptions, and referenced documents.
- 3

Extract duties with trace
For each action, capture actor, trigger, required result, and page or section; quote sparingly.
- 4

Resolve and apply
List ambiguity or conflict, ask the document owner, and do not silently fill a gap with an assumption.

WORKED EXAMPLE	
Document	12-page intake SOP, version 1.2, effective September 1
Requirement	Section 3.2: coordinator logs request on receipt
Evidence	Log record and receipt timestamp; see section 4.1
Question	Section 3.2 names no backup; ask owner before assigning one

WHEN THE METHOD BREAKS

If two instructions conflict or an attachment is missing, mark the exact sections and pause the affected action until the owner resolves it.

Documentation Reading Method

Working sheet / Fill it during the task; keep the source record alongside it.

Name / date / work period

Document title / version / effective date

Owner, source link or file location

Purpose and scope in your own words

Required action 1: actor / trigger / section

Required action 2: actor / trigger / section

Evidence or records required / section

Exception, definition, or linked document

Ambiguity or conflict with page/section

Documentation Reading Method

Closeout / Check the result, name the gap, and set the next action.

Which conclusion is directly supported by the text?

Which statement is your interpretation?

Question for the document owner and due date

Decision received / controlled update needed

COMPLETION CHECK

- ☐ Current copy checked
- ☐ Sections traced
- ☐ Open questions logged

NEXT USE

Keep page or section references with notes so another reader can verify each conclusion.