YOUR READING MAP

Instructions that earn use

An SOP should help someone do a task, not decorate a folder.

Your mission

Choose one recurring task. Watch how it is done, write clear instructions and test them with the intended user. Add useful checks and a way to handle exceptions. Publish one current version where people need it.

03–04 — **Understand and write clearly**
Meet Maya and replace vague wording with actions.

05–06 — **See a complete example**
A fictional packing SOP and a practical user test.

07–09 — **Create, publish and improve**
A reusable template, draft prompt and review routine.

10–11 — **Explore 10 business ideas**
Documentation services with a practical first test each.

12–14 — **Make your first SOP useful**
Seven-day plan, worksheet and source notes.

01 / UNDERSTAND IT

Maya rewrites the manual

Fictional example: a gift shop’s instructions nobody opens.



“Pack it nicely” is not enough

Maya’s new assistant finds a long document with no clear packing steps. Each order needs another question. Maya watches a real pack, records the actions and adds a photo of a correct box. The assistant tests the new draft before it becomes the shop standard.

SOP, in simple English

SOP means standard operating procedure: instructions for carrying out a recurring task consistently. A policy sets a rule. An SOP explains how to do the work. A checklist helps confirm key actions; it may sit inside the SOP rather than replace it.

☺ Maya’s first rule

“Write for the person doing the job.” Include what they need to start, the actions to take, how to check the result and when to ask for help.

02 / MAKE STEPS CLEAR

Replace vague with visible

Use an action, a specific object and a checkable result.

VAGUE INSTRUCTION	CLEARER INSTRUCTION
Check the order.	Compare the item codes and quantities with the confirmed order record.
Save it properly.	Save the approved file in the client’s project folder using the agreed filename.
Tell someone if needed.	If the address is incomplete, mark the order Waiting and notify the order coordinator.
Finish the job.	Record the completion date and your initials in the task log.

Keep actions in the order they happen

Start steps with verbs such as open, compare, record or send. Split a long step when it hides several decisions. Define unfamiliar terms and show an example when words alone are not enough.