

AUTHORs DON'Ts & DOs

Deborah Brungard

Invited talk to the MPLS WG by Anonymous Chair

July 2018

ACK: Adrian Farrel's MPLS WG talk (March 2014) "What makes for a quality RFC?"

DON'T

- Expect others in the chain (WG Last Call, Document Shepherd, Routing Area Directorate Reviewer, AD, IETF Last Call, other Area Reviewers, IESG, RFC Editor) to fix your document (technically or editorially). Maybe they do, maybe they don't.
- Expect IANA to clean up your IANA section.
- Hesitate to ask for help. If not sure of what to do/how to interpret/respond to a comment, ask your Chair, Doc Shepherd, AD for help.
- If an author, “go to sleep” after WG Last Call. There's much more to be done!


DOs

- Read your document line by line and check the figures. The document has evolved, and without surprise, sections and figures (acronyms, repetitive sentences, normative/informative references, possibly even the abstract/introduction, are incorrect). During chain reviews, it is surprising (dismaying), the number of nits determined on “reading” the document.
- Ensure one of the authors will hold the pen during the publication process. The designee can differ over time, just be sure someone is available to respond to comments. And someone will timely update the document.

DOs

- Review Edu Tutorial (March 2018) “What Makes a Good Internet Draft” (Adrian and Spencer)

<https://datatracker.ietf.org/meeting/101/materials/slides-101-edu-session-a-what-makes-a-good-internet-draft-01.pdf>

- Review again the above 

DOs – Essential tidbits

- Memorize RFC Style Guide (RFC7322)
- Ensure no. of authors is 5 or less
- Ensure abbreviations/acronyms are defined/expanded in titles and first use, best to expand on first use any/all:

<https://www.rfc-editor.org/materials/abbrev.expansion.txt>

Note: only the * may not require expansion – and there are very few!

- Ensure consistent use of key words and reference to [RFC8174] “The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "NOT RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in BCP14 [RFC2119] [RFC8174] when, and only when, they appear in all capitals, as shown here.”

D0s – More Essentials

- Verbose Security Considerations section – not 2-lines! If nothing new, say why.
- Verbose Management Considerations section
- Use of NPOV (Neutral Point of View) language:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Neutral_point_of_view
(Focus on technical vs. marketing. No need to bash other IETF technologies to sell your draft.)
- Run (very verbose) idnits and carefully review/fix

THANKS!