



Formatting and Content Development Guidelines



Objectives

After this module, you will be able to:

- Identify optimal formatting guidelines
- Describe effective information types
- Describe layering techniques



Formatting Guidelines

- Font size
- Table borders
- Scrolling and related topics links



Font Size

- 12-point type is significantly easier to read than 10-point type.
- Williams, S. and Scharff, L. "The effects of font size and line spacing on readability of computer displays." see <http://hubel.sfasu.edu/research/SWExp.html>



Table Borders

- Table borders have no significant effect on speed to locate information.
- Thacker, P., and Babu, A. J. (1988). "Effects of graphic boundaries in tabular displays: a human factors evaluation." *Computers & Industrial Engineering*, 14(3), 307-314.

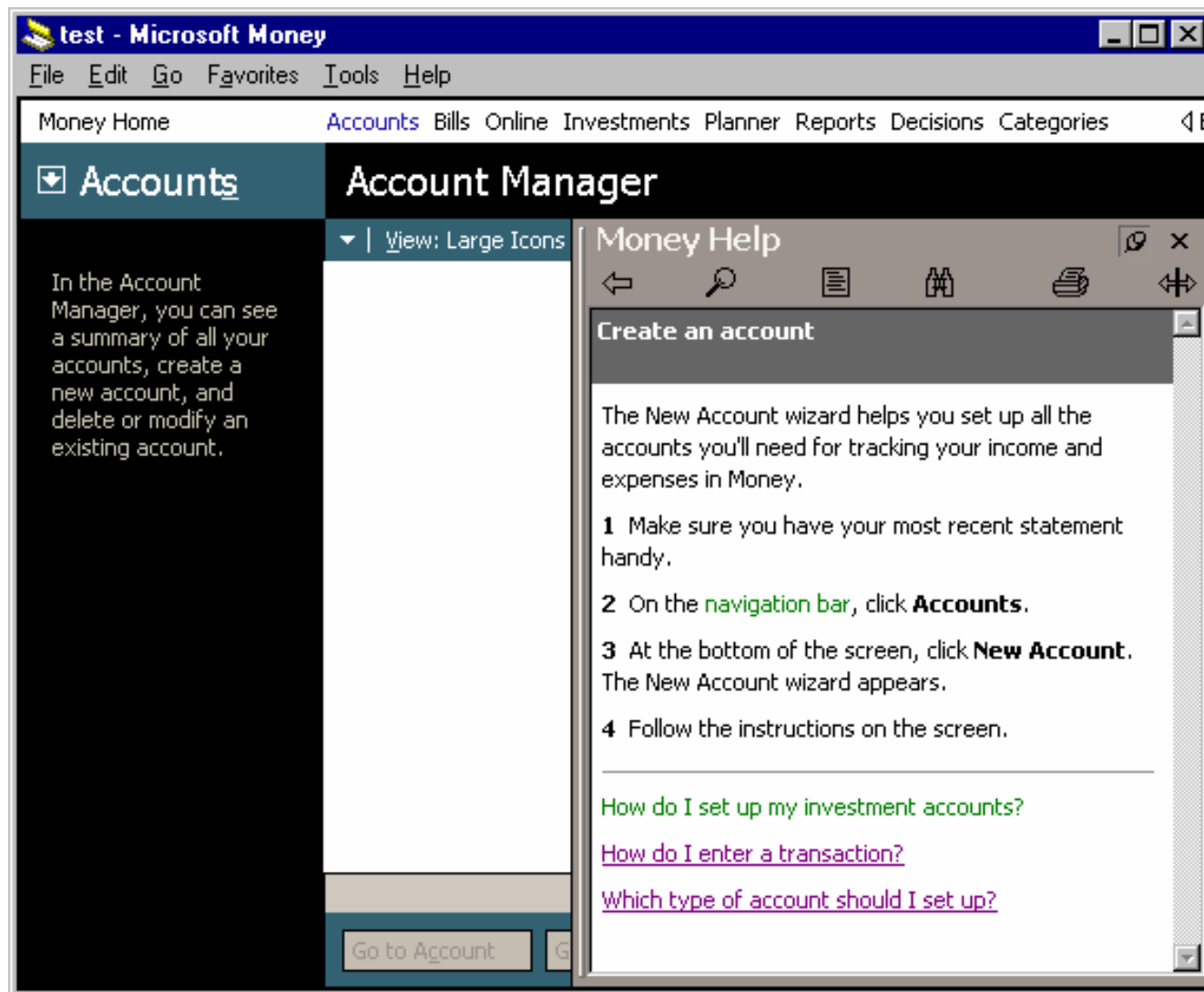


Scrolling and Related Topics Links

- Users prefer to scroll to the bottom of a page to press final buttons [or click links].
- Spool, J. M., Scanlon, T., Schroeder, W., Snyder, C. and DeAngelo, T. (1997). *Web Site Usability: A Designer's Guide*, North Andover, MA: User Interface Engineering.



Related Topics Example





Layering

- Supports the needs of new and experienced users
- Allows users to focus on tasks



Layering Tasks

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer window titled "Help - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar displays "C:\WINDOWS\Desktop\sss\help\Help.htm". The left sidebar contains a "Contents" pane with a tree view. The "401(k) Account" item is selected, and its sub-items are expanded. The main content area has a yellow background and displays the "401(k) Account" page. The page includes a "Hide TOC" button, a "Print" button, and a "Close" button. The text on the page explains the 401(k) account and provides instructions on how to change it. The task list includes opening the 401(k) Account page and entering the amount and limit of the contribution. The "Related topics" section lists links to "About Deferral Limits for your 401(k)", "About Defined Contribution Plans", "About Employer Matches for your 401(k)", and "Earnings Statements".

Help - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Refresh Home Search Favorites History Mail Print Edit Discuss

Address C:\WINDOWS\Desktop\sss\help\Help.htm Go Links >>

Contents Index Search

Help for Source Self-Service

- + Benefits
- + Benefits Administrator
- + Company Information
- + Manager Activities
- + Payroll & Tax Information
 - 401(k) Account**
 - Check Calculation Worksheet
 - Check Calculation Information
 - Changes to Direct Deposits
 - Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate
 - Earnings Statements
 - Earnings Statement Detail
 - About Defined Contribution Plans
 - About Deferral Limits for Your 401(k)
 - About Employer Matches for Your 401(k)
 - About Pay Grade Zones
 - About Pay Types
 - About Payroll Service IDs
 - About Form W-4
 - Contact for Payroll Questions
- + Personal Information

401(k) Account

Use the 401(k) Account page to review your 401(k) account information. With a [defined contribution plan](#) such as your 401(k), you can set aside pretax and after-tax dollars for investment purposes associated with retirement. Your employer can contribute [matching percentages](#) for your 401(k) account.

To change your 401(k) account

1. Open the 401(k) Account page.
How?
2. Enter the amount and [limit](#) of your contribution.

Related topics

- ▶ [About Deferral Limits for your 401\(k\)](#)
- ▶ [About Defined Contribution Plans](#)
- ▶ [About Employer Matches for your 401\(k\)](#)
- ▶ [Earnings Statements](#)

My Computer



Layering Tasks

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer window titled "Help - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar displays "C:\WINDOWS\Desktop\sss\help\Help.htm". The left sidebar contains a "Contents" pane with a tree view of help topics. The main content area has a yellow background and displays the "401(k) Account" page. The page includes a paragraph of text, a section titled "To change your 401(k) account" with a numbered list of steps, and a "Related topics" section with a link.

Contents | Index | Search

- Help for Source Self-Service
 - Benefits
 - Benefits Administrator
 - Company Information
 - Manager Activities
 - Payroll & Tax Information
 - 401(k) Account**
 - Check Calculation Worksheet
 - Check Calculation Information
 - Changes to Direct Deposits
 - Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate
 - Earnings Statements
 - Earnings Statement Detail
 - About Defined Contribution Plans
 - About Deferral Limits for Your 401(k)
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To change your 401(k) account

1. Open the 401(k) Account page.
How?
 - ▶ Click **Home** on the Self-Service page to return to the home page.
 - ▶ Under Payroll & Tax Information, click **Retirement Contributions**.
2. Enter the amount and [limit](#) of your contribution.

Related topics

- ▶ [About Deferral Limits for your 401\(k\)](#)



Layering Definitions

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer window titled "Help - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar displays "C:\WINDOWS\Desktop\sss\help\Help.htm". The left sidebar contains a "Contents" pane with a tree view. The "401(k) Account" item is selected, and its sub-items are expanded. The main content area has a yellow background and displays the title "401(k) Account" in large bold text. Below the title is a paragraph explaining the 401(k) account page and its features, including links for "defined contribution plan", "matching percentages", and "How?". Below this is a section titled "To change your 401(k) account" with a numbered list of steps. At the bottom of the main content area is a "Related topics" section with several blue hyperlinks. The status bar at the bottom shows "My Computer".

Help - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Refresh Home Search Favorites History Mail Print Edit Discuss

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Contents Index Search

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- + Benefits
- + Benefits Administrator
- + Company Information
- + Manager Activities
- Payroll & Tax Information
 - 401(k) Account**
 - Check Calculation Worksheet
 - Check Calculation Information
 - Changes to Direct Deposits
 - Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate
 - Earnings Statements
 - Earnings Statement Detail
 - About Defined Contribution Plans
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How?
2. Enter the amount and [limit](#) of your contribution.

Related topics

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- ▶ [About Employer Matches for your 401\(k\)](#)
- ▶ [Earnings Statements](#)

My Computer



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To change your 401(k) account information:

1. Open the 401(k) Account page.
How?
 - ▶ Click **Home** on the navigation bar to return to the home page.
 - ▶ Under Payroll & Tax Information, click **Retirement Contributions**.
2. Enter the amount and click **OK**.

Deferral limits

In accordance with federal law, Source Self-Service enforces Internal Revenue Service limits on the amount employees may contribute to their defined contribution plans (DCPs), such as your 401(k).

Related topics

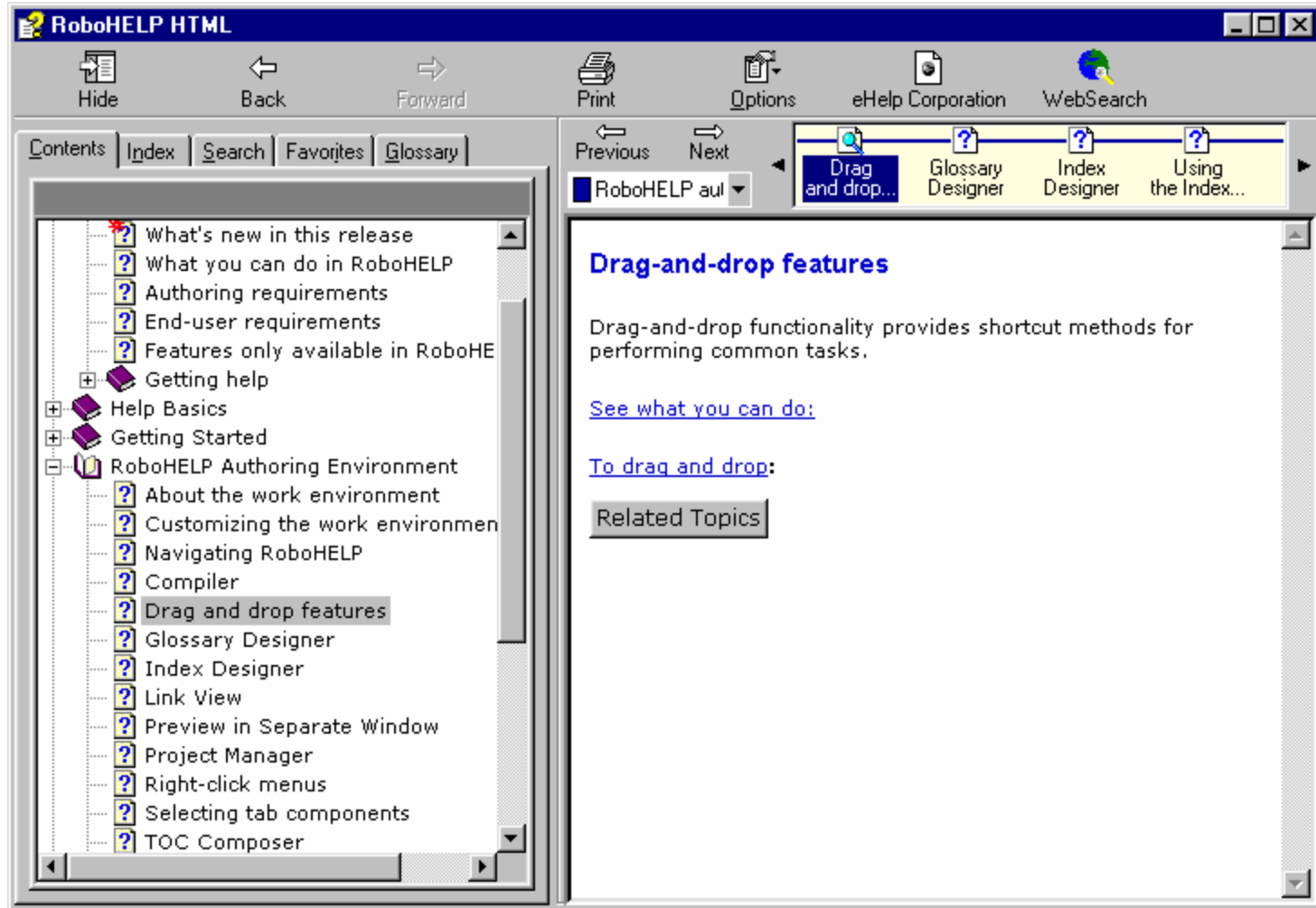
- ▶ [About Deferral Limits for Your 401\(k\)](#)

Print

My Computer



Layering Additional Information





Layering Additional Information

The screenshot shows the RoboHELP HTML interface. The title bar reads 'RoboHELP HTML'. The menu bar includes 'Hide', 'Back', 'Forward', 'Print', 'Options', 'eHelp Corporation', and 'WebSearch'. The left pane shows a tree view with the following structure:

- What's new in this release
- What you can do in RoboHELP
- Authoring requirements
- End-user requirements
- Features only available in RoboHE
- Getting help
- Help Basics
- Getting Started
- RoboHELP Authoring Environment
 - About the work environment
 - Customizing the work environmen
 - Navigating RoboHELP
 - Compiler
 - Drag and drop features**
 - Glossary Designer
 - Index Designer
 - Link View
 - Preview in Separate Window
 - Project Manager
 - Right-click menus
 - Selecting tab components
 - TOC Composer

The right pane displays the 'Drag-and-drop features' topic. The title is 'Drag-and-drop features'. The text reads: 'Drag-and-drop functionality provides shortcut methods for performing common tasks.' Below this is a section titled 'See what you can do:' followed by a list of six bullet points:

- Create links by dragging and dropping HTML files and URLs from the Project Manager into topics in the WYSIWYG Editor.
- Insert images and multimedia by dragging and dropping files from the Project Manager into topics in the WYSIWYG Editor.
- See how topics are linked to one another by dragging and dropping them from the Project Manager into Link View.
- Insert pages into the table of contents by dragging and dropping topics from the Topic List into the TOC Composer.
- Rearrange the order of books and pages by dragging and dropping them to different places within the TOC Composer.
- Associate topics with keywords by dragging and dropping topics from the Topic List into the Index Designer.



Layering Examples

The screenshot displays the RoboHELP HTML application window. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Top Bar:** Contains navigation buttons (Hide, Back, Forward, Print, Options, eHelp Corporation, WebSearch) and a search bar.
- Left Panel (Table of Contents):** A hierarchical list of topics. The 'Compiler' topic is highlighted, indicating it is the current page.
- Right Panel (Main Content Area):** Displays the content for the 'Compiler' topic. It includes a title 'Microsoft HTML Help compiler', a brief description, and a section titled 'Example:'.
- Bottom Panel (Related Topics):** A section for related topics, currently empty.

The 'Compiler' topic content is as follows:

Microsoft HTML Help compiler

High-performance tools are available for compiling and debugging Microsoft HTML Help projects, including a flexible compiler pane. While your project compiles, the program monitors the progress and provides instant feedback in the compiler pane. It reports information about missing topics, errors in the content of topics or in the index file, and broken links.

You can resize the compiler pane, open and close it from view and even turn it off by default — if you want to compile your project in the background and do other work at the same time.

Example:

Related Topics



Layering Examples

The screenshot displays the RoboHELP HTML application interface, which is a layered design. The main window is titled "RoboHELP HTML" and features a top toolbar with icons for Hide, Back, Forward, Print, Options, eHelp Corporation, and WebSearch. Below the toolbar is a navigation pane on the left with tabs for Contents, Index, Search, Favorites, and Glossary. The Contents tab is active, showing a tree view of the help topics. The main content area on the right displays the "Microsoft HTML Help compiler" page, which includes a title, a description of the compiler, and an example section. A smaller window titled "RoboHELP HTML - Caribbean" is overlaid on the main content area, showing a file list and a table of contents. The file list includes folders like HTML Files (Topics), Broken Links, URLs, Images, Multimedia, Windows, Style Sheets, Context Sensitive Help, and Baggage Files. The table of contents lists files like Anguilla.htm, Anguilla.htm, Antigua.htm, Aruba.htm, and Aruba.htm. The bottom of the Caribbean window shows a status bar with compile time, file size, and a message box indicating that compiler messages appear in the output pane at the bottom of the program.

RoboHELP HTML

Hide Back Forward Print Options eHelp Corporation WebSearch

Contents Index Search Favorites Glossary

Previous Next

RoboHELP HTML H... Drag and drop... Glossary Designer Index Designer Using the Index... Link View Preview in Separ... About the Proje... Right-click menus

Microsoft HTML Help compiler

High-performance tools are available for compiling and debugging Microsoft HTML Help projects, including a flexible compiler pane. While your project compiles, the program monitors the progress and provides instant feedback in the compiler pane. It reports information about missing topics, errors in the content of topics or in the index file, and broken links.

You can resize the compiler pane, open and close it from view and even turn it off by default — if you want to compile your project in the background and do other work at the same time.

Example:

RoboHELP HTML - Caribbean

File Edit View Tools Help

HTML Files (Topics)

- Broken Links
- URLs
- Images
- Multimedia
- Windows
- Style Sheets
- Context Sensitive Help
- Baggage Files

All Folders

File Name	Title
Anguilla.htm	Anguilla
Anguilla.htm	Anguilla#Christopher
Antigua.htm	Antigua
Aruba.htm	Aruba
Aruba.htm	Aruba#Scuba_diver

WYSIWYG TrueCode Link View Topics

Compile time: 0 minutes, 5 seconds

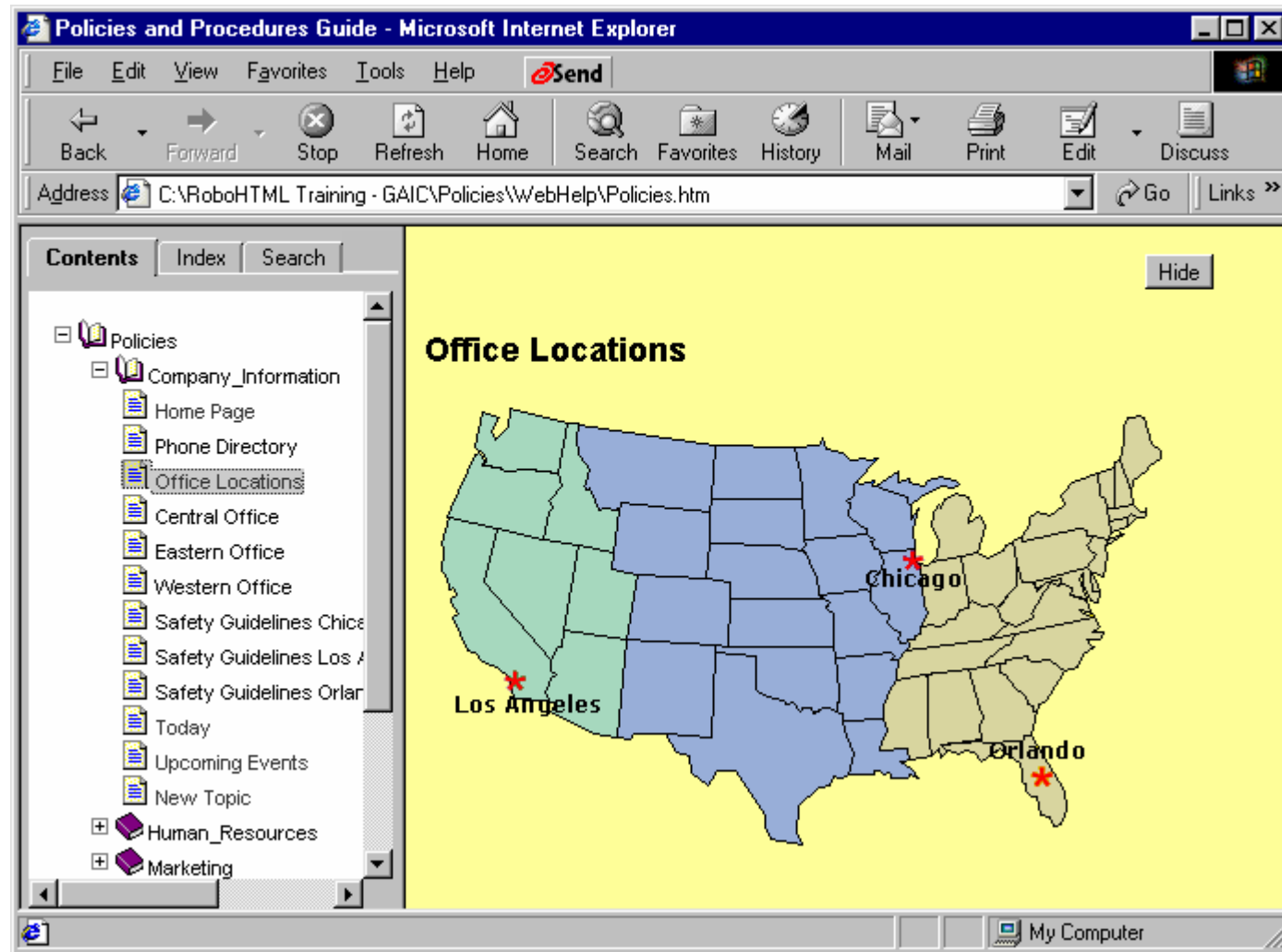
Topics
37
328 Local links
4 Internet links
22 Graphics

Created c:\User documentation\RoboHTML\CARIBBEAN\Caribbean.chm-temp, 572,346 bytes
Compression decreased file by 297,716 bytes.
Compilation complete.

Compiler messages appear in the output pane at the bottom of the program.

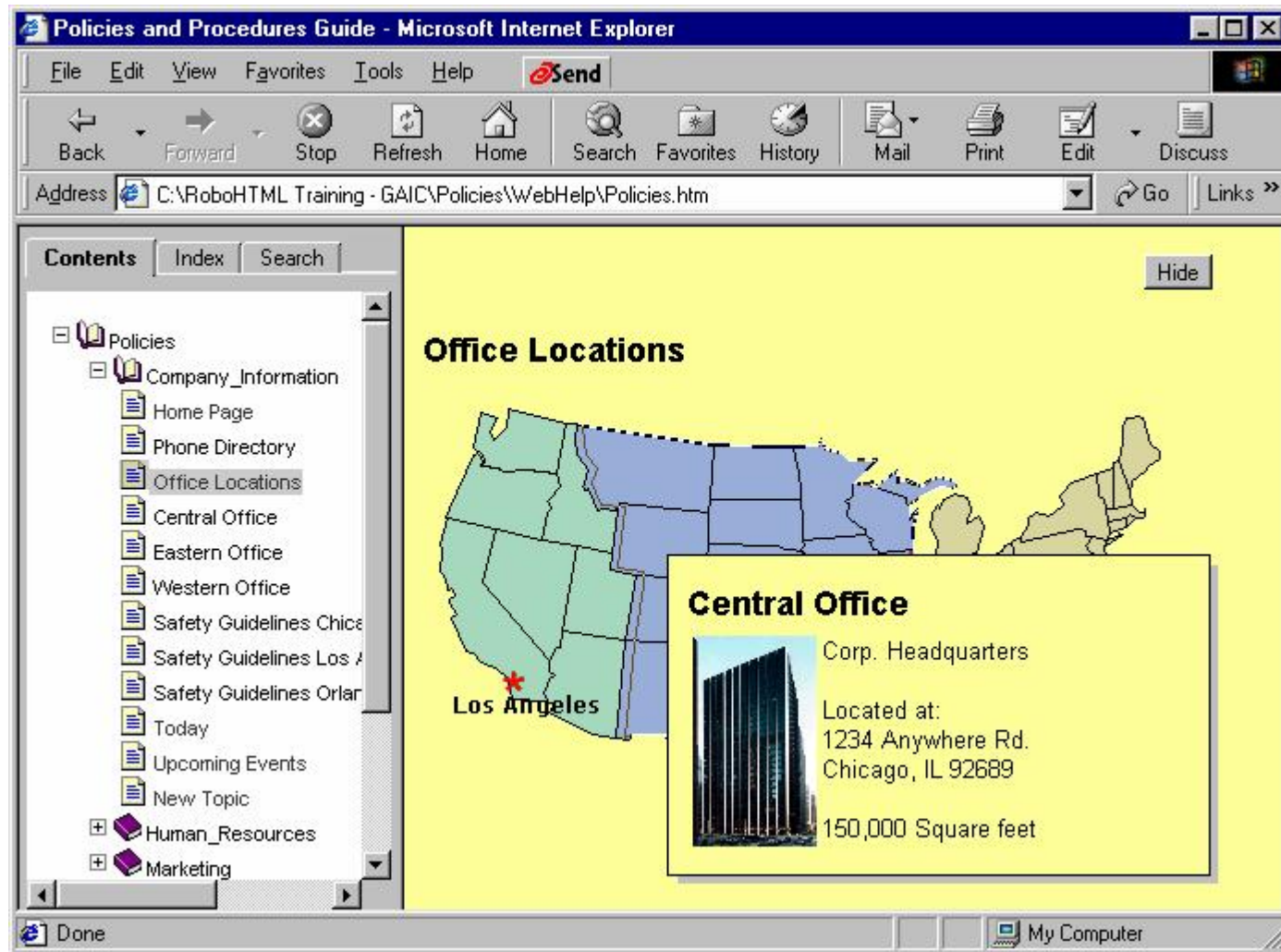


Layering Graphics





Layering Graphics





Discussion

How can these formatting techniques be used to improve the payroll planning topic?