

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>		<i>xi</i>
<i>Author Note</i>		<i>xv</i>
<i>Introduction</i>		<i>xvii</i>
PART 1	Plan	1
Chapter 1	Learning to Run	3
Chapter 2	What Is an Explanation?	7
	<i>What Is Not An Explanation</i>	8
	<i>Defining Explanation</i>	9
	<i>Explanations Require Empathy</i>	10
	<i>Act and Art</i>	11
	<i>Look at Your Fish</i>	12
	<i>Explanation Lowers the Cost of Understanding</i>	13
	<i>An Explanation Is a Way to Package Ideas</i>	14
	<i>Explanations Answer the Question “Why?”</i>	16
	<i>Explanations Make People Care</i>	16
Chapter 3	Why Explanations Fail	23
	<i>All About Confidence</i>	24
	<i>Assumptions Cause Failure</i>	24
	<i>Words Can Hurt</i>	26
	<i>We Lack Understanding</i>	27
	<i>We Want to Appear Smart</i>	28

	<i>The Direct Approach—No Context</i>	30
	<i>Summary</i>	32
Chapter 4	Planning Your Explanations	33
	<i>Identifying Explanation Problems</i>	34
PART 2	Package	43
Chapter 5	Packaging Ideas	45
	<i>Stepping Outside the Bubble</i>	46
	<i>What Goes into the Packaging?</i>	48
Chapter 6	Context	51
	<i>Forest then Trees</i>	53
	<i>Solving the Context Problem</i>	56
	<i>Context in Explanation—We Can All Agree</i>	61
	<i>Context and Pain</i>	63
	<i>Example: Google Docs</i>	63
	<i>On the Explanation Scale</i>	65
	<i>Summary</i>	66
Chapter 7	Story	67
	<i>Stories Versus Facts</i>	68
	<i>But I'm Not a Storyteller</i>	69
	<i>Common Craft and Stories</i>	71
	<i>The Simple Ingredient: People</i>	73
	<i>Using Stories in Explanation</i>	74
	<i>Basic Story Format</i>	75
	<i>When Does Storytelling Not Work?</i>	77
	<i>Personification and Story</i>	79
	<i>On the Explanation Scale</i>	81
	<i>Summary</i>	81
Chapter 8	Connections	83
	<i>Connecting Your Long Lost Uncle—Old Versus New</i>	84
	<i>Building-on Versus Establishing</i>	87

<i>Analogy</i>	89
<i>Common Craft Videos</i>	90
<i>On the Explanation Scale</i>	92
<i>Summary</i>	92
Chapter 9 Description	93
<i>Explaining Web Browsers</i>	95
<i>Explanation Is Not a Recipe</i>	97
<i>On The Explanation Scale</i>	99
<i>Summary</i>	99
Chapter 10 Simplification	103
Chapter 11 Constraints	113
<i>Common Craft and Constraints</i>	115
<i>Constraints and Your Explanations</i>	117
<i>Summary</i>	119
Chapter 12 Preparing for and Writing an Explanation	121
<i>The Common Craft Writing Process</i>	122
<i>Big Ideas</i>	123
<i>Research and Discovery</i>	123
<i>Script Writing</i>	125
<i>The Real Thing</i>	128
Chapter 13 Bringing an Explanation Together	131
PART 3 Present	147
Chapter 14 Common Craft's Lessons Learned	149
<i>Common Craft Gets Started</i>	149
<i>Ten Lessons Learned from Common Craft Explanations</i>	151
Chapter 15 Right Medium for the Message	157
<i>A Transformation</i>	158
<i>Media Options</i>	159
<i>Presentation Modes</i>	161

	<i>Recording and Distribution Options</i>	164
	<i>Constraints Come to the Rescue</i>	165
	<i>Summary</i>	171
Chapter 16	Visuals	173
	<i>You Can Use Visuals</i>	178
	<i>Dan Roam's 6 × 6 Rule</i>	178
	<i>Common Craft Visual Metaphors</i>	186
	<i>Noise and Simplicity in Visuals</i>	188
	<i>Infographics</i>	191
	<i>Creating Digital Visuals</i>	193
	<i>Summary</i>	193
Chapter 17	Emma and Carlos	195
	<i>Epilogue</i>	202
Chapter 18	Explanation Culture and Your Life as an Explainer	203
	<i>Your Life as An Explainer</i>	206
	<i>Acknowledgments</i>	209
	<i>Links to Common Craft Videos</i>	211
	<i>About the Author</i>	215
	<i>Bibliography</i>	217
	<i>Index</i>	219