

tts performance suite

# Background Knowledge



PERFORMANCE SUPPORT CATEGORIES

## Performance Support Categories – just the right amount

Performance Support can come in the form of software or a different resource (e. g. printed or technical) which is made available exactly at the moment of need and offers just the right amount of workplace support and assistance to ensure that the user's current task can be completed successfully. Thanks to its context-sensitive QuickAccess, **tts performance suite** has always been a trailblazer when it comes to supporting users at just the right moment. However, the right amount of support, i. e. the right level of detail is also covered with the help of the Performance Support Categories. The use of these categories will be outlined in this paper.

### Introduction

Everybody who's involved in the field of Performance Support (PS) is well aware that PS goes hand-in-hand with formal learning. While the latter is indispensable when it comes to general motivation and business-critical or compliance-related topics, Performance Support involves offering direct workplace-based assistance in completing a particular task or solving a specific problem. When designing Performance Support measures, we strongly recommend adopting a much different approach than when designing formal learning activities. Just because a particular component is correct and essential for formal learning doesn't necessarily mean that the same applies for Performance Support, and it may, in fact, be totally unsuitable. One of the most frequently asked questions during PS projects is whether it's possible to specify the order in which the various Help elements appear in QA. Based on our experience, such a question often stems from a pattern of thought better suited to compiling traditional learning curricula, and is entirely at odds with the Performance Support philosophy. After all, when it comes to professional know-how, only the employees themselves know the amount and level of detail they require for their respective positions.

### The required amount of information depends on the individual concerned and the nature of the situation

The particular work scenario is the first factor that needs to be considered when trying to identify the right amount of workplace support: *Why do employees require support?* If, for example, an experienced employee encounters a change in the user interface of a particular software due to a release upgrade, they will probably just need step-by-step instructions to familiarize themselves with the new interface. Whereas a new employee may possibly require a complete course aimed at providing an in-depth introduction to the software. And yet another employee suddenly realizes that their fundamental business processes have changed – be it due to restructuring or legal changes, meaning that this employee faces the challenge of having to relearn familiar activities. This is why direct access to a process flow chart is so helpful in the latter case.

All three employees start looking for assistance that is geared toward their individual context: One of the employees turns to the intranet in their search for a process description which is possibly not even available due to the fact that process modeling is done with a separate tool. The new employee turns to the Learning Management System to try to find a course dedicated to their application, while their experienced colleague is frustrated by the fact that they got four different answers from the three different people they asked about the sudden disappearance of a particular button from the application, and how on earth they're supposed to complete their task without it.

Employees therefore don't just require different types of information, but above all easy access to this information. PS Categories were developed to take account of these highly different circumstances. They allow companies to individually define the groups toward which the content in their QuickAccess is specifically targeted. The standard categories are "Field help", "Step-by-step", "Detailed information", "Self-learning units", along with "Concepts and processes".

Needless to say, companies are free to also define their own categories. If, for example, a company often requires forms for the recording of particular processes (e. g. during stocktaking), it's a good idea to make them available within a corresponding category in QuickAccess. The order in which the categories appear can also be modified – with the exception of field helps which, as the most minute of all information units, are always found at the very top.

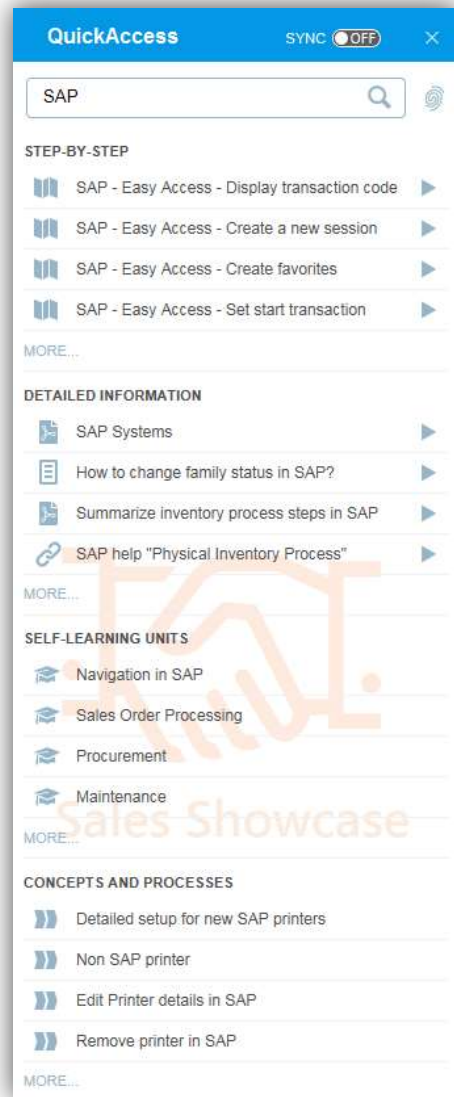


Illustration 1 - QuickAccess

## Procedure

Content is assigned to the individual categories via default values, but the assignment can be subsequently modified via the Properties dialog. This means that instructions, which were created with the help of Word and screenshots prior to the introduction of **tts performance suite**, can be easily assigned to the "Step-by-step" category next to the step lists created with **tts performance suite**. While on the other hand, a Word template for entering stocktaking figures (as mentioned above) would be best suited for a category called "Templates and forms".



Illustration 2 – Properties dialog for assigning Performance Support Categories

Thanks to Performance Support Categories, you will find it much easier to provide your employees with just the right level of detail when it comes to workplace assistance. All this in a context-sensitive manner and directly accessible within their workflow.

## **Imprint**

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