

Re: Comments on some of the explanations here...

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Source: <http://sci.tech--archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.basics/2007-09/msg00366.html>

- *From:* Grouchy <zoagria@xxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Thu, 13 Sep 2007 10:32:29 -0700
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On Sep 12, 1:55 pm, et...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx (Michael Black) wrote:

ObamaOrHillary2008 (jgra...@xxxxxxxxxxx) writes:

Though explanations posted here to questions are very appreciated.

I want to suggest that, instead of a rambling massive paragraph lumping the entire circuit theory together with volts and amps and such, to take some time to break everything out with a couple diagrams here and there. I often don't come out of a massive explanation in one giant paragraph understanding any more than when I started.

But realistically, if people are having problems with the explanations here, and even maybe before that, they should be reading books rather than asking questions here.

When someone here tackles a basic question, they are in effect writing a subset of one of those books. But, they are doing it in an immediate medium, so any answer suffers from the lack of publishing process, ie rereading and proofreading and even giving second thought to what they've written.

It is far simpler for the poster asking the question to read some books in the first place, where they'll find lots of explanation, and in the context of everything else, and likely that material has been written for the long term and has been read and rewritten before it gets published.

And too many times, people aren't asking for understanding, they are asking to do something specific. And that's a very narrow view of things.

If it isn't abuse, it's close to abuse to ask a basic question here where the poster could simply read a book.

Note that doesn't preclude people asking questions here. But they

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should be about reinforcing what they've read, or filling in some detail that they can't grasp. "I want to know how batteries work" is vastly different from "I was reading about batteries and they said XXX and I still don't get how YYY does its thing". IN the latter case, the poster has read first, and even points that out, and is having trouble grasping a concept, and hence any answer is to address the poster's specific need, be it a badly formed explanation in the book, or the fact that everyone has different ways of learning and a different person's help may be what's needed for the original poster.

It also doesn't preclude opinion questions. "Where can I buy a soldering iron?" seems a tad obvious to be worthy of an answer, but "I'm in XXX, does anyone have any experience with the local electronic part stores? I went to YYY, but I had the feeling they didn't want me there..." is looking for more than information.

Michael

Michael,

Here is a link farm that should provide a reference for electrical engineering/electronics sources.

<http://www.musser.com/snm/ee/>

The best others can do is to point people who are interested in increasing their knowledge of electronics in productive and reputable directions. We can't offer shortcuts that we ourselves don't possess. Obviously, many people who are moderately well versed in electronics have a tendency to forget that there was a time when they themselves were as ignorant and uneducated as many of the posters they scoff at on these boards... but that's their karma, no?

Otherwise, there are grades and shades of answers to questions like: "how do batteries work?" Often the most accurate explanation isn't the Mr. Wizard version many people are looking for, nor are the mid-grade answers very comfortable for experts in other disciplines that rely on electronics to support their own meta-physical or political views... In my opinion the best option is to provide reputable and/or official authorities re a particular area, in addition to the shorthand/offhand explanation (that's in no way authoritative).

Anyway...

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