

Message Guidelines

Abstract

Supported Versions

- All products, all versions

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Overview

Informatica messages provide feedback about user tasks and service operations. An error message notifies users of a problem that prevents the user from completing a task or a service from completing an operation. The error message describes the problem, and, where possible, shows a way to fix the problem.

Most Informatica products are localized. To support localization, product messages are stored in message files. The localization team sends these files to a vendor to be translated.

The doc and dev teams work together to provide clear and concise messages for Informatica product users and translators. A message must communicate information to users in a way that they can understand. That means a message must use terminology that users recognize and present solutions that users can do. A message must also provide clues to translators to assist them in translation, especially to determine what values are expected in message parameters.

The most useful messages are self-documenting. Error messages that clearly tell the user what the problem is and how to solve the problem save users from having to look up messages in the Message Reference or calling GCS.

Message Guidelines for Customer Understanding

Consider the following guidelines for writing messages that help users understand the issues:

Provide as much information as possible.

Provide as much information as possible in a message so that users do not need to look up the explanation and resolution in the documentation. Explain what happened and let the user know what action to take. If either the explanation or user action is complicated, or if the message has multiple explanations or resolution, provide the most probable explanation and best action to take in the message.

Tell where the error occurred.

If it is useful for the user to know which component generated the error, include this information as part of the message. Components can be a service or a component within a service. The error could also happen in a repository. If the component is understood and is the subject of the message, you can write the message with an implied subject.

For example:

```
The Repository Service cannot promote the local repository {0} to a global repository because it cannot connect to the repository.
```

Note: PowerCenter messages and Mercury messages are often shared. Use "Integration Service" to collectively refer to the PowerCenter Integration Service and the Data Integration Service. Use "Repository Service" to collectively refer to the Model Repository Service and the PowerCenter Repository Service.

Tell what type of error occurred.

Indicate what type of error occurred. This includes errors such as connection errors, read errors, initialization errors, fetch errors, conversion errors, parse errors, and internal errors. If an error is an internal error, include "Internal error." at the beginning of the message and add "Contact Informatica Global Customer Support." at the end of the message.

For example:

```
Internal error. An error occurred while deleting the connection. Contact Informatica
Global Customer Support.
```

Use a neutral tone.

In log messages, do not address the user as "you," as this can offend users. The person reading the message may not be the person who performed the action described in the message. For example, instead of saying "You configured the session..." say "The session is configured...."

Note: This rule does not apply to messages within the user interface. For user interface messages, the messages should address the user. For example: `You must select a connection before you add source objects.`

Message Guidelines for Readability

Consider the following guidelines for writing messages that are easy to read:

Use U.S. English spelling.

Use U.S. English spelling. For example, use "authorize" instead of "authorise." Use "behavior" instead of "behaviour."

Use simple tense.

Use simple present and simple past tense. Do not use perfect present tense, perfect past tense, or future tense. For example, instead of saying "The Integration Service will fail the mapping if...", say "The Integration Service fails the mapping if...." Instead of saying "The mapping has failed because...", say "The mapping failed because...."

End each message with a period.

Do not leave out ending punctuation or end the text with an exclamation mark (!). Do not end with an ellipsis (...) unless it is a label that appears on the UI.

For example, the original message has the following text:

```
The PluginId Offset generated cannot be zero! Pod Repository not correctly initialized!
```

Remove the exclamation mark to avoid alarming the user:

```
The PluginId Offset generated cannot be zero. The pod repository is not correctly
initialized.
```

Do not use quotes or capitalization to emphasize words.

A message does not require additional capitalization or quotes to call out a word or emphasize a point.

For example, the original message has the following text:

```
Please remove the PowerCenter Task {taskName} as you do not have 'Run' permission on it.
```

You can use lower case and no quotes for the word "run":

```
Remove the PowerCenter task {taskName}. You do not have run permission on the task.
```

Message Guidelines for Translation

Consider the following guidelines for writing messages that can be translated:

Do not hardcode error messages.

Messages for products that are localized are sent to translation. Any message that is written to a log or can be seen by users in any way must be translated. That means you must put the message in a message XML file or in a properties file so that it goes to translation. Do not embed messages in code. We do not send code to translation, so there is no way for a hardcoded message to be translated.

Even if your product is not currently localized, there is always the chance that it will be localized in the future. So when you create a message, it is best to add it to a message file and be ready for localization.

Define the message parameters.

When you define the parameter sequence, include the parameter name in the notes. Translators need this context when they translate the messages. Writers need this context when they edit the messages.

For example, in the following message, there is no information about what the parameters represent:

```
text="Cannot connect port to its input. [{0}]/[{1}]">
  <param seq="0" template="%s" notes="TODO" />
  <param seq="1" template="%s" notes="TODO" />
```

With no parameter description, there is no way to know what the parameters are and what they are doing in the sentence. Writers will not know how to edit the message and translators will not know how to translate it.

Qualify all message parameters.

If the message text includes a parameter value, always include the name or object type before the parameter. Translators require this information to understand the context of the parameter.

Do not start a message with a parameter. Always qualify a parameter, even if it is at the start of the sentence.

For example:

```
Service {0} is not available on node {1}.
```

Do not use terms that are used only within Informatica.

Terms that are used only within Informatica or among engineers include words such as "Mercury," "DI Service," "MRS," "DSQ," and "transform" (in place of "transformation"). Customers and translators often do not know these terms and will not understand them in messages. Before you use a term in a message, make sure that it is a term that customers would be familiar with.

In some cases, a message might be clearer with a different term or even without the term. Instead of using internal terms in a message, choose terminology that is used in the product documentation. For example, instead of using the term "CADI orchestrator", use "the orchestrator component."

Do not use abbreviations or contractions.

Avoid abbreviations such as "DB," "init," and "thru." Use the full words instead: database, initialize, and through. Contractions are shortened words that use an apostrophe in place of missing letters, such as "can't" and "don't." Use "do not" instead of "don't." Use "cannot" instead of "can't."

Verify acronyms.

If you use an acronym, verify that it is not already being used to represent a different phrase or name. Make sure that it will not be problematic in languages other than English.

Avoid extraneous words.

Be concise and direct. Avoid words that are ambiguous or are not essential to the message. For example, do not use the words "please" or "sorry." We do not ask favors or apologize for anything.

Avoid vague words such as "quickly," "should," and "normally." These words can mean different things to different people. They can also be difficult to translate.

Include articles with count nouns.

Include articles, such as "a," "an," and "the" to qualify all count nouns.

Do not add (s) at the end of a noun to indicate the possibility of one or multiple occurrences. Use the plural noun instead.

For example, the original message has the following text:

```
The package {package} is assigned to organization(s) {orgids}. Edit the organization(s) to remove it from their package lists, then try to delete the package again.
```

Change the text to use the plural noun:

```
The package {package} is assigned to the following organizations: {orgids}. Edit the organizations to remove them from their package lists, and then delete the package.
```

Do not use semicolons.

Avoid semicolons in message text. Semicolons tend to make a sentence longer and can increase translation costs. Combine into one sentence or create two sentences.

For example, the original message has the following text:

```
The maximum sub-organizations number is invalid. Enter a positive integer value if the Org Hierarchy license is enabled; enter 0 otherwise.
```

Use a period instead of a semicolon:

```
The maximum number of sub-organizations is not valid. If the Org Hierarchy license is enabled, enter a positive integer value. Otherwise, enter zero.
```

Use correct capitalization.

Use sentence capitalization. Capitalize the first word and proper nouns in the sentence. For example, words such as "user name," "target," and "transformation" are all common words and do not need to be capitalized.

Avoid using CamelCase and underscore chains.

Text is in CamelCase when the first letters of the words in a compound word start with a capital letter, such as masterTemplateld or LogoutRequest. An underscore chain is text that contains underscores (_) in the middle of a compound word, such as master_template_ID or logout_request.

It is hard for translators to determine what to do with text in CamelCase or with underscores. They have to verify with the Informatica localization team how to translate them or whether they should even be translated

Use regular words in place of text with CamelCase underscores. For example, use master template ID instead of masterTemplateld or master_template_ID, and logout request instead of LogoutRequest or logout_request.

Embedded error messages

Many messages trap other error messages. Write the message to include the trapped message at the end of the sentence. Introduce the embedded message with the phrase "because of the following error:" Enclose the message parameter with square brackets ([]) to separate the embedded message from the current message and make both messages easier to read.

For example:

```
The refresh cache operation for data object {doName} cannot be canceled because of the following error: [{errMsg}].
```

Avoid concatenating text to create an error message.

Do not create a message with text from a series of separate messages. Translators do not know how to translate a message that consists of half a sentence. It is hard for writers to edit and hard for translators to translate messages in bits and pieces.

For example, at some point, the following two messages are concatenated into one message:

```
repgroup.availobjs.line1=Select a source connection  
repgroup.availobjs.line2=from the above list.
```

Message Writing Examples

The examples in this section show messages that have been rewritten to follow the message writing guidelines.

The following table shows original and edited messages and the guidelines used for the rewrite:

Original Message	Edited Message	Guidelines for Rewrite
Attachment file {filename} not found.	Cannot find the post-session email attachment file {filename}.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provide as much information as possible.
Error executing stored procedure...	An error occurred while executing the stored procedure for transformation {transformationname}.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- End each message with a period.- Provide as much information as possible.- Qualify all parameters.
NULL external procedure name.	The External Procedure transformation {transformationname} failed because the name of the external procedure is null. Specify the name of the external procedure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provide as much information as possible.- Qualify all parameters.- Tell where the error occurred.
Getting free block from exchange failed!!	Internal error. The Integration Service encountered a fatal error while getting a block from the buffer pool. Contact Informatica Global Customer Support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- End each sentence with a period.- Provide as much information as possible.- Use words that the customer will understand.
ERROR: Field name used in join not found in transform definition.	Internal error. The Integration Service cannot find the port {portname} used in the join condition for the Joiner transformation {transformationname}. Contact Informatica Global Customer Support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provide as much information as possible.- Tell where the error occurred.- Qualify all parameters.- Spell out words.
Pushdown optimization is not supported because you enabled row error logging. To use pushdown optimization, disable row error logging.	Pushdown optimization is skipped because session {sessionname} has row error logging enabled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Avoid offending the user.- Provide as much information as possible.
{transformationname} cannot be pushed to the target database because it is connected to both {targetname1} and {targetname2}. No transformation can be pushed to more than one target.	The transformation {transformationname} cannot be pushed to the target database because it is connected to multiple targets: {targetname1}, {targetname2}	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provide as much information as possible.- Be concise and direct.- Do not start a message with a parameter.

Original Message	Edited Message	Guidelines for Rewrite
Object content is malformed {errormsg}.	The Service Manager cannot parse the message because of the following error: {errormsg}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use words that the customer will understand. - Provide complete information. - Use the square brackets ([]) for embedded messages.
Closing connection {{connld}}.	The SQL Service Module is closing connection {connld}.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the product component that performed the operation.
A transform encountered fatal error. Terminating session.	The Integration Service encountered a fatal error processing the transformation {transformationname}. Terminating the session. See the service logs for more information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use words that the customer will understand. - Provide as much information as possible.
Failed to init connection, status code [code], error message {message}.	Failed to initialize the connection to the Web Services Hub. Status code: {{code}}. Error message: {{message}}.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spell out words. - Provide as much information as possible. - Use the square brackets ([]) for embedded messages.
Error: The FK field {fieldname} for the XML derived group {groupname} in XML Target {targetname} is not projected. No output rows for the group can be generated due to missing base type information.	An error occurred while generating output rows for the group {groupname} because the base type information is missing. The foreign key field {fieldname} for the XML derived group in the XML target {targetname} is not projected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spell out words. - Use correct capitalization. - Provide complete information.
SQL Data Service {{dsname}} is named as {{dbname}}.	SQL data service {dsname} is named {dbname}.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use correct capitalization.
Implicit data type conversion is not supported.	The SQL statement contains implicit datatype conversion that the SQL Service Module does not support. Use the CAST function or a 'TO_' function to perform the datatype conversion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide as much information as possible. - Provide information to help the user diagnose and fix the problem.
A scalar sub-query cannot have more than one column of output.	The subquery is a scalar subquery that returns multiple columns. A scalar subquery can return only one column. Change the SQL statement so that the subquery returns only one column.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide as much information as possible. - Provide information to help the user diagnose and fix the problem.
Transformation Parse Fatal Error; transformation stopped... Lookup update dynamic cache condition did not evaluate to a numeric value.	An error occurred while parsing the Lookup transformation. Verify that the update dynamic cache condition of the Lookup transformation evaluates to a numeric value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use correct capitalization. - End each sentence with a period. - Provide information to help the user diagnose and fix the problem.

Original Message	Edited Message	Guidelines for Rewrite
<p>The persistence store for the Model Repository Service will be deleted, all the data stored in it will be lost. The command would fail if the persistence store doesn't exist.</p>	<p>Deletes content from a Model repository. The command fails if the content does not exist. Note: This type of message appears in the command line help text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use simple tense.
<p>Failed to refresh cache for data object {{doName}}. Reason: {{errMsg}}".</p>	<p>The cache for data object {doName} cannot be refreshed because of the following error: {{errMsg}}.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow standard wording guidelines. - Use the square brackets ([]) for embedded messages.

Author

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