



EASY LANGUAGE

We share here an English introduction to “Easy Information” principles adapted from the publication Information for all - European standards for making information easy to read and understand - www.life-long-learning.eu (brochure ISBN 2-87460-110-1).

General standards for easy to understand information

Before you start producing your information

1. Always find out as much as you can about the people who will use your information and about their needs.
2. Choose the best format for your information. For example, information on a CD or DVD may be better for some people than written information.
3. Always use the right language for the people your information is for. For example, do not use language for children when your information is for adults.
4. Remember that the people who will use your information might not know much about your subject. Make sure you explain the subject clearly and also explain any difficult words to do with that subject.
5. Always involve people with intellectual disabilities when making your information. For example, they can take part in making decisions about the subject, about what to say on a subject and about where to make the information available. They can also take part in checking the information to see how easy it is to understand.

Words

6. Use easy to understand words that people will know well.
 7. Do not use difficult words. If you need to use difficult words, make sure you always explain them clearly.
 8. Use examples to explain things. Try to use examples that people will know from their everyday lives.
 9. Use the same word to describe the same thing throughout your document.
 10. Do not use difficult ideas such as metaphors. A metaphor is a sentence that does not actually mean what it says. An example of a metaphor is “it is raining cats and dogs”.
 11. Do not use words from other languages unless they are very well known like the French word “voilà” in the English language.
 12. Avoid using initials. Use the word in full where possible. Initials are the first letter of every word. If you have to use initials, explain them. For example, if you write “EU”, explain that it stands for “the European Union”.
 13. Percentages (63%) and big numbers (1,758,625) are hard to understand. Try not to use percentages and big numbers. Instead, use words like “few” and “many” to explain what you mean.
- *Sport and Inclusion for an Healthy lifestyle – final booklet. Written by Associazione Uniamoci Onlus and Diakonie Bremen, co-funded by the European programme Erasmus+



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Sentences

14. Always keep your sentences short.
15. Speak to people directly. Use words like “you” to do this.
16. Use positive sentences rather than negative ones where possible. For example, say “You should stay until the end of the meeting” rather than “You should not leave before the end of the meeting”.
17. Use active language rather than passive language where possible. For example, say “The doctor will send you a letter” not “you will be sent a letter by the doctor”.

How to order your information

18. Always put your information in an order that is easy to understand and follow.
19. Group all information about the same topic together.
20. It is OK to repeat important information. It is OK to explain difficult words more than once.

Standards for written information

When you are preparing written information, use the 20 standards in section 1 as well as the following standards.

Design and format

1. Use a format that is easy to read, follow and photocopy. For example, A4 or A5.
2. Think about the size of your document. A book of 100 pages is too long. People could feel they are not able to read such a long book. In this case, it would be better to write 3 smaller booklets.
3. Never use a design or layout that will make your document hard for people to read and understand. The most important thing is that your document is easy for people with intellectual disabilities to understand.
4. Never use a background that makes it difficult to read the text. For example, never use a picture or a pattern as a background.*
5. Use the font ARIAL or THAOMA and character size 14 and never use italic font.
6. Start a new line after each phrase.
7. Create a left justified document.
8. Be sure to leave adequate line-spacing

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