



top tips for producing
clear, accessible information

writing, using pictures, type
and layout checklists

5 tips for writing

- Use short sentences – 5-10 words usually.
- Use easy words – not ‘in the event that’ but ‘if’; not ‘terminate’ but ‘end’; not ‘value for money’ but ‘cheap’.
- Use active not passive verbs – not ‘this matter will be considered by our team in due course’ but ‘we will think about it soon’.
- Leave out what you don’t need – just write the core idea. In most documents people don’t need to know all the side issues or supporting information.
- Use bullet points to separate out a jumble of ideas into an easily understandable list.

In the event that the Purchaser defaults in the payment of any instalment of purchase price, taxes, insurance, interest, or the annual charge described elsewhere herein, or in the performance of any other obligations set forth in this Contract, the Seller may: at his option: (a) Declare immediately due and payable the entire unpaid balance of purchase price, with accrued interest, taxes, and annual charges, and demand full payment thereof, and enforce conveyance of the land by termination of the contract or according to the terms hereof, in which case the Purchaser shall also be liable to the Seller for reasonable attorney’s fees for services rendered by any attorney on behalf of the Seller, or (b) sell said premises or any part thereof at public auction, in such manner, at such time and place, upon such terms and conditions, and upon such public notice as the Seller may deem to be in the interest of all concerned, consisting of advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties in which the security property is located at least once for Three (3) successive weeks or for such period as applicable law may require and, in case of default of any purchaser to re-sell with such postponement of sale or resale as may be necessary, such public notice thereof as the Seller may determine, and upon compliance by the Purchaser with the terms of this Contract and upon judicial approval as may be required by law, to convey said land and premises in fee simple to and at the cost of the Purchaser, who shall not be liable to see to the application of the purchase money; and from the proceeds of the sale of the

using pictures

- **plain English first....**
- Text can seem intimidating without a picture.
- Illustrations shouldn't just be for decoration, they have to serve a purpose.
- Illustrations can make the message:
 - **stronger** – words are the core of a message but a picture can reinforce the central idea.
 - **friendlier** and **funnier** - for example a picture of a cat on someone's lap or a shark in a goldfish bowl can make a strict instruction about 'no pets without permission' less threatening.
 - **more lively** – for example, a picture of someone in a comfortable home is livelier than the words 'comfortable home'
- one picture can be worth a page of words – for example, the word 'community' which can mean so many things can be summed up by a drawing of someone coming out of a local shop, while a passer by calls out hello.
- Illustrations can show a range of different people – of different ages, with disabilities, from various ethnic backgrounds.
- Simple symbols that are easily recognised – no smoking sign, for example– can be useful. But avoid routine use of symbols. They often don't aid understanding.
- You don't have to be an artist to illustrate your documents – stick figures which are drawn to fit the text are much more expressive than slicker clipart which is so general as to be only decorative.

type and layout

- **plain English first....**
- sans serif not serif
- use upper and lower case not all caps
- bold or colour not italic
- keep text size to a 12 pt minimum
- no tight letter spacing, 10% extra
- leading 1.3 minimum, try 14/20
- wide margins and column spacing
- a line space between paragraphs
- keep paragraphs short
- align left **without** hyphenation
- try short line lengths 8-10 words or 50-60 characters
- keep headings clear wth space before and after
- try not to use light coloured text
- try not to use low contrast colours
- don't use images in the background
- embed images in text where possible
- use captions to floating images
- print out and check your pages, don't rely on your screen

www.in-control.org.uk