Writing for Busy Readers

SIX PRINCIPLES

1 Less Is More

1. Use fewer words
2. Include fewer ideas
3. Make fewer requests

2 Make Reading Easy

1. Use short and common words
2. Write straightforward sentences
3. Write shorter sentences

3 Design for Easy Navigation

1. Make key information immediately visible
2. Separate distinct ideas
3. Place related ideas together
4. Order ideas by priority
5. Include headings
6. Consider using visuals

4 Use Enough Formatting but No More

1. Match formatting to readers' expectations
2. Highlight, **bold**, or underline the most important ideas
3. Limit your formatting

Tell Readers Why They Should Care

1. Emphasize what readers value ("So what?")
2. Emphasize which readers should care ("Why me?")

5 Make Responding Easy

1. Simplify the steps required to act
2. Organize key information needed for action
3. Minimize the amount of attention required