***Before you start, check what other information exists on your topic. You may be able to use this instead of starting again.***

| **Principle** | **Tips** | **Examples and notes**  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Understand your target audience | * Write your document to suit your audience
* Be aware of and sensitive to Aboriginal, other cultural and religious sensitivities
* Translate into community languages
 | *Are you writing for adults, adolescents or children?* *Review your data to check the age, gender, culture, religion, disability status of your consumers* |
| Know your key messages | * Put key messages first, then follow with more detail
* Write clearly and concisely
* Put your information in a logical order
 | *Have a few key messages only**Add a summary at beginning of section or chapter in longer documents* |
| Keep sentences short | * Sentences should contain no more than 15 to 20 words
* Make sure the meaning is clear
 |  |
| Use everyday words | * Use words your reader will understand
* Aim for grade 6-8 reading level
* Use words of up to 3 syllables
* Avoid acronyms or jargon
* If you need to use acronyms or complex terms, explain them the first time you use them.
 | *Use this app to test readability:* [*http://www.hemingwayapp.com/*](http://www.hemingwayapp.com/)*Explain and educate like this: CEC (Clinical Excellence Commission); Thromboembolism (blood clot)* |
| Give direct instructions | * Break information into steps
* Be action oriented
* Explain why it is important
 | *“Tell your doctor about all the medicines you are taking. This will help him/her to work out how best to help you safely.”*  |
| Be personal  | * Use “you” and “we” to keep sentences short, clear and personal
 | *For example: “you can call us” and “we will let you know…”* |
| Be consistent | * Be consistent with terms or words throughout your document
 | *If you use the word ‘test’ in your document, it can be confusing if you use the word ‘check’ or ‘evaluate’ later on* |
| Be positive | * Use positive rather than negative words:
* ‘do’ instead of ‘don’t’
* ‘include’ instead of ‘don’t forget to’
 | *Say, “Give yourself plenty of time to get to the bathroom safely” instead of “don’t rush or you might fall”* |
| Use the active voice | * Give instructions in active rather than passive voice
* The active voice makes it clear who’s doing what
 | *“Drink one litre of water each day”, rather than “ensure that one litre of water is drunk each day”* |
| Avoid nominalisation | * Nominalisation is the practice of turning verbs (action words) into nouns (things, people or places)
* It is very complex language and conveys an impersonal tone. It is often used in academic writing
 | *Make these changes:**‘complete’ instead of ‘the completion of’;**‘develop’ instead of ‘the development of’*  |
| Use lists/questions | * Lists are a good way to break up long sentences, and can be used to explain what people need to do or bring
* Keep lists, and each item on the list, brief
* Put in a logical order with related points together
 |  |

***When the draft of your new resource is ready:***

* ***Test your new resource with at least five consumers similar to those who will use the final product***
* ***Alter if needed***
* ***Test again***
* ***Publish***