***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***