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PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY TIPS & TRICKS

1

DEPENDENT ON AUDIENCE

Audience should define what is plain, not readability formulas.

2

REFRAIN FROM USING JARGON

Steer away from scientific and technical jargon. If it is used, make sure to define terms.

3

REFRAIN FROM USING ACRONYMS

If acronyms are used, make sure to write out the words first.

4

REMOVE DISTRACTING INFORMATION

Flag and omit extra information that distracts from core message.

5

USE A CONVERSATIONAL TONE

Use personal pronouns (i.e. we, you) and write in a formal, but conversational tone.

6

USE PEOPLE-FIRST LANGUAGE

Do not define someone by their illness, disability or characteristics (i.e. Person with depression, not depressed person).

7

SIMPLE & RELEVANT EXAMPLES

Provide easy examples to explain research findings.

8

USE APPROPRIATE DESIGN ELEMENTS

Use headings, bullet lists, and visuals to make summary more aesthetically pleasing.

9

MAKE THE CONTENT FLOW

Structure content to be readable and digestible. Include headings to break down sections.

10

GET SOMEONE TO READ OVER WORK

Have others in different disciplines read your summary to ensure it is understandable to a non-expert non-academic audience.