

Step 5: Get help

Before you start your plain language project you (and your team members) might need some training in how to plan, write, and test plain language documents.

In our Washington state agencies, many people now managing plain language projects are former journalists, public information officers, or communications professionals from the private sector.

If this is your professional background, you've learned how to write clearly, but you will want to learn more about:

- Specific technical writing skills that dramatically improve the clarity of, for example, instructions, web pages, and administrative rules.
- How to analyze the type of person you want to reach with your document, then figure out what information they most need – and at what reading level.
- Page design, which, is a critical element for both documents and web pages.

Resources

- **Letting Go of the Words -Writing Web Content that Works**, by Janice (Ginny) Redish.
- **User and Task Analysis for Interface Design**, by JoAnn T Hackos and Janice (Ginny) Redish,
- **Dynamics in Document Design: Creating Text for Readers**, by Karen A. Schriver
- [Check out this excellent list of recommended reading.](#)