



TIPS FOR SUCCESS

How to Create Great Publications

Newsletters and brochures should be designed to convey information in an attractive, uncluttered way. Here are some general guidelines.

Copy

- Less is better. Write short, punchy sentences. Keep paragraphs short.
- Write in terms of reader benefits and "What's in it for me?"
- Use positive language and active voice.
- Summarize the message to two or three key points.
- Use bullets to list key points.
- Use headlines that convey key messages.
- Use informative subheads to break up copy blocks.
- Include facts and figures.
- Use testimonials or quotes from customers or credible experts.

Layout

- Don't cram the page with copy; allow for plenty of white space.
- Organize layout from left to right and top to bottom. Most people read in this sequence; don't confuse them with another arrangement.
- Avoid large blocks of reverse type (white on black). It's difficult to read.
- Facing pages should be composed as two-page spreads; that's how readers see them.
- Use graphics and photos to balance blocks of copy.
- Make photos and illustrations as large as possible. Whenever possible, use action-oriented photos.

Type

- The best type size for text is 10 or 11 point with 2 points of leading. If the target audience is senior citizens, increase the type size to 12 or 14 point.
- Use serif type for text. It is easier to read. Headlines can be set in sans serif type.
- Use a minimum number of fonts and type families. A three-ring circus of type is poor design and just confuses people.
- Use boldface sparingly. Use for subheads and a few key words only. Don't use for an entire paragraph.
- Use italic type for emphasis sparingly, if at all.
- Avoid all caps in headlines. Caps and lower-case is more readable.

Color

- Use black ink for stories. If you use a second color, apply it as a highlight to frame a story, a quote (set in larger type), or an entire page.
- Headlines can utilize color, but the ink should be on the dark side.
- Avoid using extensive color on low-quality paper. Reproduction and clarity of images suffer.
- Eliminate complex screens. A color or graphic behind a block of copy often makes the type difficult to read. ■