



A Global View of Plain Language

Editors
Canada
Conference
2018

Bridging
Communities

Saskatoon, SK
May 25-27

By Kate Harrison Whiteside

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+ What in the world is going on?

- **Norway:** plan for the people, hosting PLAIN 2019
- **Sweden:** focus on user testing, working with UX colleagues
- **Switzerland:** tackling the financial services sector
- **Austria:** rewriting over 1000 laws from civil code
- **UK:** [Gov.UK](#) leading mandatory government Plain English
- **Ireland:** public sector priority, Plain English Style Guide ([NALA](#))
- **Portugal:** [Claro](#) leading [PLAIN](#) international research project

+ What in the world is going on con't

- **Chile:** set up Plain Language Network, hosting 2018 event
- **South Africa:** focus on clear Indigenous languages
- **Australia:** movement driven by middle organizations
- **New Zealand:** government launching plain language web kit
- **USA:** Plain Writing Act (2010), plainlanguage.gov resource
- **Canada:** Federal Government and sector strategies (health, law)
- And, many more....

+ Organizational leaders must be

- **Educated**
- **Motivated**
- **Committed**



We need their support to be successful.

Image courtesy of bigstock

+ What can writers and editors do?

Start the plain language conversation.



- **Gather feedback**
- **Record it**
- **Act on it**
- **Share it**

Image courtesy of Pexel

+ Be a learner. Be a leader.

■ Learn

- Start or join a plain language professional development group
- Take a course, share your knowledge
- Enhance resources: style guide, books, videos, training

■ Lead

- Get it on your organization's agenda
- Do a project that includes many people
- Collaborate to integrate plain language



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+ Be legitimate: follow process steps

1. **Define plain language:** within your project goals
2. **Know your audience:** use interviews, personas
3. **Use a plain language style guide:** for consistency
4. **Make clear design a priority:** integrate it
5. **Test:** test and test some more

Add “*with input from the audience*” after each point.

+ Language and design work together

- **Work** for and with the people receiving it
- **Focus** on theory of info design
- **Think** strategic reading
- **Use** graphics to improve

Dr. Rob Waller, UK and International Institute for Info Design

+ PLAIN International Public Sector Survey

- **Three perspectives:** central government, public sector agencies, public
- **Three pilot countries:** Portugal, New Zealand, USA
- **Two project partners:** PLAIN and Claro, Portugal
- **One great report:** Full report on plainlanguagenetwork.org
- **Join Canadian survey:** email kate@keyadvice.net

+ Get involved

- **Join PLAIN:** Plain Language Association International
plainlanguagenetwork.org \$60.00
- **Attend a conference:**
 - Clarity – Montreal, Oct 25-27, 2018
 - PLAIN 2019 – Oslo, Norway Sept 25-27, 2019
- **Celebrate IPlainDay Oct 13** – plan now
- **Participate in Canadian survey: 2018**
- **Go for it:** Take a course, join a webinar, share #plainlanguage on social media, host an event, plan some training, start a project.
- **Celebrate successes.**

+ Thank you so much...

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