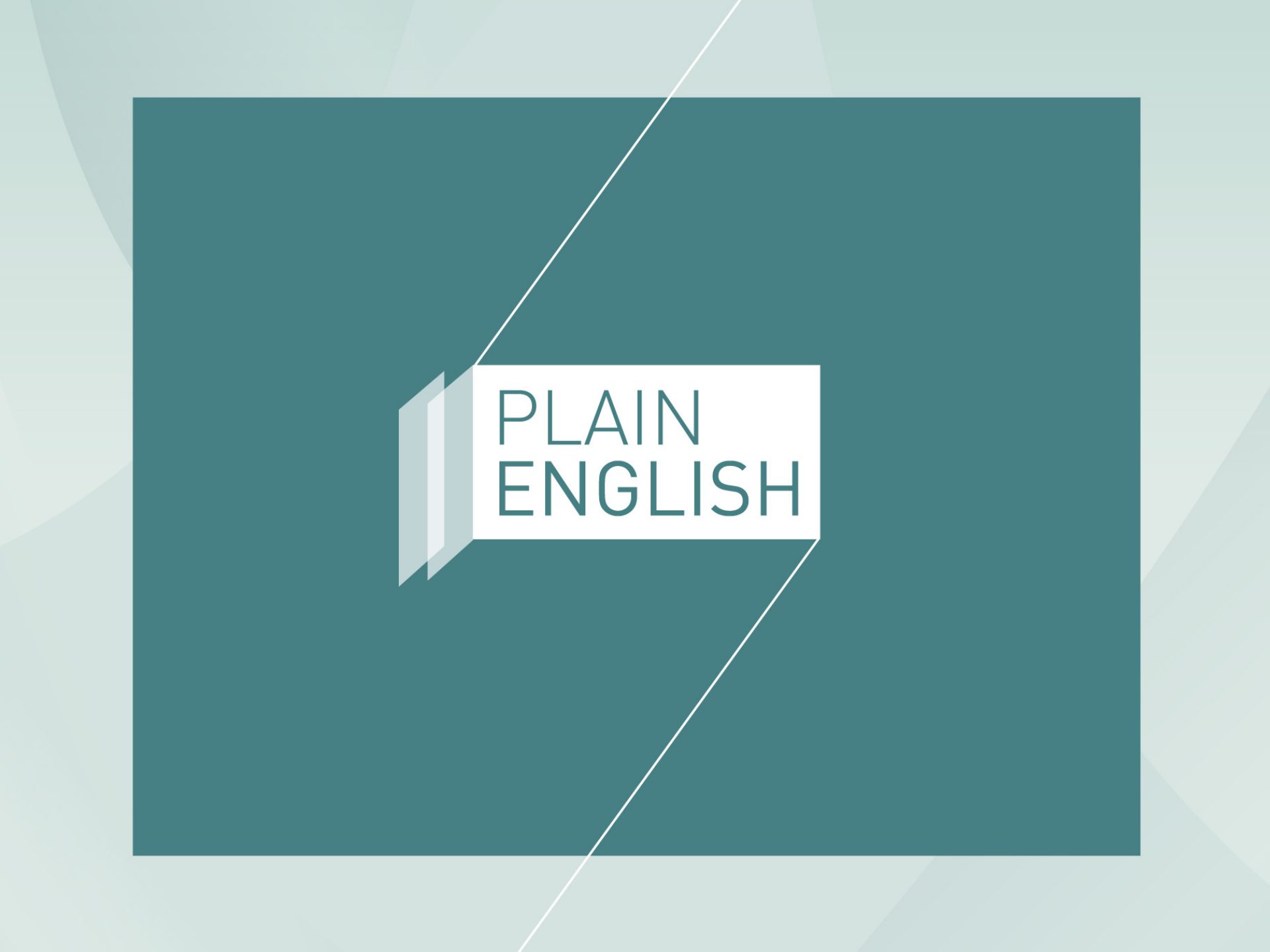




PLAIN
ENGLISH

PLAIN LANGUAGE IN PRESENTATIONS: CONCISE, EFFECTIVE AND CLEAR

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Oslo, Norway
25-27 September, 2019



— MARVAL
— O'FARRELL
— MAIRAL

PLAIN
ENGLISH

IN-COMPANY PRESENTATION SKILLS FOR PROFESSIONALS WITH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

The logo for Amadeus, featuring the word "amadeus" in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font.The logo for Sanofi, featuring the word "SANOFI" in a blue, uppercase, sans-serif font, followed by a stylized graphic of two overlapping shapes, one orange and one blue, forming a circular motion.

PLAIN LANGUAGE PRACTITIONER

WHAT'S THE REACTION?





MARIE ANTAYA

Teaching plain language - are
you a trainer or a performance
consultant?



PLAIN2017 Graz, Austria





- What problems do you have with presentations in English?
- Who is your audience and what message do you want to give them?
- Why does your audience need to know that message?

“I want to be clear and show my confidence with them in order to be precise.”

“I want to communicate clear and precise information about project status or investigations results...It is vital that the audience take the core idea clearly.”

October 2018



“I want them to truly understand what do we do and how do we do it in a clear and easy going manner.”

“...clear, precise, showing the strong work done by the team.”

October 2018



“I want to be clear and show my confidence with them in order to be precise.

My message must be clear and simple, because I work a lot with numbers (I work in finance). “

May 2019



Who is your audience?

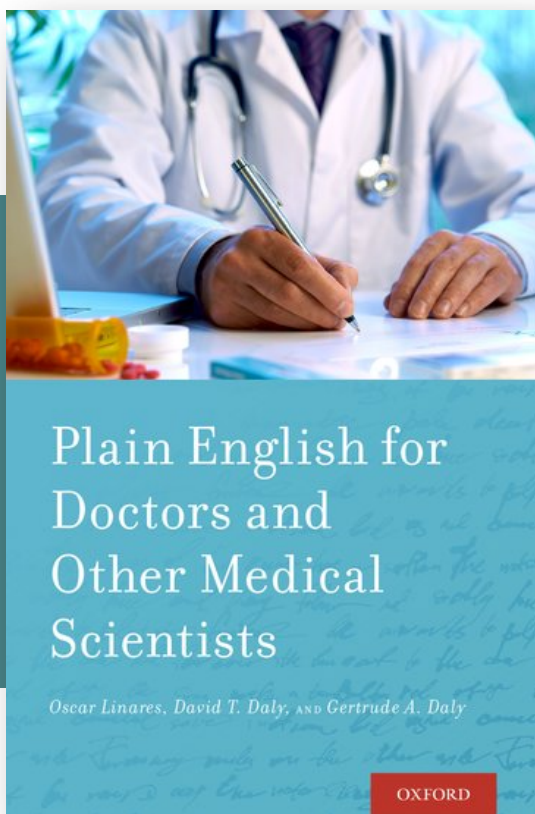
Getting to Why – Logical Structure

Storytelling - **Plain language** - PPT

Body language – Questions



WHY PLAIN LANGUAGE? ...TO IMPROVE HEALTH LITERACY.



1. USE SHORT SENTENCES

Before: A limited number of time slots are available and will be assigned on a first come-first served basis. 19 words

After: The people who arrive first will get the few available time slots. 12 words

2. USE ACTIVE VOICE

Before: Adverse events following smallpox vaccination **should be reported** to state public health authorities and to the national Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS).

After: **You should report** any reactions that happen after getting the smallpox shot to state public health authorities and the national Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS).

3. USE PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Before: The last step in the assessment process is to present and report what was learned during the workplace health assessment to key organizational stakeholders and decision makers.

After: After **you** have collected and analyzed the workplace information, write a report about what **you** learned and share the report with the people interested in the results.

4. AVOID NEGATIVE

Before: Do not take more than the recommended daily dose.

After: Only take the recommended daily dose.

5. USE STRONG VERBS

Before: Patients and health care workers are both responsible for ensuring patients' **adherence**.

After: Patients and health care workers **share** responsibility for making sure patients **follow** instructions.

6. USE EVERYDAY WORDS – WHERE NECESSARY EXPLAIN JARGON

Before: The U.S. public health system and primary health care providers must be prepared to address various biological **agents**, including **pathogens** that are rarely seen in the United States.

After: The U.S. public health system and primary care providers must be ready to identify and protect against diseases caused by many different **germs**. Even if they aren't common, we must be ready just in case.

7. USE INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE – NOT SEXIST LANGUAGE

Before: The CDC believes every person should have the opportunity to attain **his** full health potential.

After: a. The CDC believes every person should have the opportunity to attain **his or her** full health potential.

b. CDC believes **everyone** should have the chance to be as healthy as possible.

8.USE WHITE SPACE – USER FRIENDLY LAYOUT

- Bullets points
- Pictures & photos
- Natural emphasis

BEFORE

Health disparities and secondary conditions can be the result of inaccessible health care facilities and equipment, lack of knowledge among health professionals about specific differences among people with disabilities, transportation difficulties, and higher poverty rates among people with disabilities.

AFTER

People with disabilities may suffer more health problems for several reasons:

- Not being able to get to the doctor's office or clinics with the right medical equipment
- Doctors' lack of knowledge about people with disabilities and their unique problems
- Problems finding transportation
- Low income or money problems



REWRITE THESE SENTENCES IN PLAIN LANGUAGE:

1. The certificate of yellow fever vaccination is valid for 10 years, beginning 10 days after the date of primary vaccination.
2. Occupational surveillance data is used to guide efforts to improve worker safety and health, and to monitor trends and progress over time.
3. There may be several ways to reduce your risk of developing lung cancer.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. The yellow fever certificate lasts for 10 years, beginning 10 days after you got the shot.
2. We gather information from places where people work so we can improve worker safety and health.
3. You can do several things to lower the chances you will get lung cancer.

“I’m the first point of contact for the development and implementation of certain tools and systems, then is my duty to explain those to my colleagues and different teams. If the message that I’m giving is not **clear** enough, I will be underperforming.”

August 2018

amadeus

WHY PLAIN LANGUAGE? ...TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING.





Plain Language
Association
International

“A communication is in plain language if its wording, structure, and design are so clear that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information.”

Source: International Plain Language Federation

www.plainlanguagenetwork.org

8 GUIDELINES FOR PLAIN LANGUAGE

1. Use short sentences
2. Use active voice
3. Use personal pronouns
4. Avoid negative
5. Use strong verbs
6. Use everyday words – where necessary explain jargon
7. Use gender neutral language
8. Use white space – user friendly layout

1. USE SHORT SENTENCES

Before: A limited number of time slots are available and will be assigned on a first come-first served basis. 19 words

After: The people who arrive first will get the few available time slots. 12 words

2. USE ACTIVE VOICE

Before: Laptops and other electronic devices should be turned off or switched on to flight mode before the plane takes off.

After: **You should** turn off your laptop or electronic device or switch it to flight mode before the plane takes off.

3. USE PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Before: The last step in the assessment process is to present and report what was learned during the workplace health assessment to key organizational stakeholders and decision makers.

After: After **you** have collected and analyzed the workplace information, write a report about what **you** learned and share the report with the people interested in the results.

4. AVOID NEGATIVE

Before: Do not take more than one personal item on board.

After: Only take one personal item on board.

5. USE STRONG VERBS

Before: Air and land crew are both responsible for ensuring passengers' **adherence**.

After: Air and land crew **share** responsibility for making sure passengers **follow** instructions.

6. USE EVERYDAY WORDS – WHERE NECESSARY EXPLAIN JARGON

Open-jaw

Huh? No, an open-jaw ticket isn't a jaw-dropping airfare. An open-jaw ticket, ***at destination***, simply means flying into one city and returning from another, where you make your own way between the two, either on a separate airline ticket or by car, rail, tour, cruise or foot. ***For example; flying from Toronto to London and returning to Toronto from Paris, making your own way between London and Paris.***

7. USE GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

Before: The CDC believes every person should have the opportunity to attain **his** potential.

After: a. The CDC believes every person should have the opportunity to attain **his or her** potential.

b. CDC believes **everyone** should have the chance to fulfill their potential.

8. USE WHITE SPACE – USER FRIENDLY LAYOUT

- Bullets points
- Pictures & photos
- Natural emphasis

BEFORE

Travel with a disability

An agent who specializes in working with disabled travelers can arrange every aspect of your trip including booking your airline tickets, tours and restaurants. They can make sure to get the measurements you need, verify the hotels, resorts, or restaurants you're interested in are accessible, and provide other services to make sure you have a smooth trip and a comfortable stay.

New York Times

AFTER

Travel with a disability

Ask your travel agent to:

- Book your tickets, tours & restaurants
- Check the measurements you need
- Verify hotels & restaurants are accessible
- Provide any other services you need to make sure you have a smooth trip and comfortable stay.

New York Times



REWRITE THESE SENTENCES IN PLAIN LANGUAGE:

1. Traveling with your ESA without any additional fee or costs is allowed by airline carriers if you have an ESA letter.
2. Occupational surveillance data is used to guide efforts to improve worker safety and health, and to monitor trends and progress over time.
3. For travel brands that want to attract Chinese travellers, mobile payment is quickly becoming an expectation, not a luxury.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

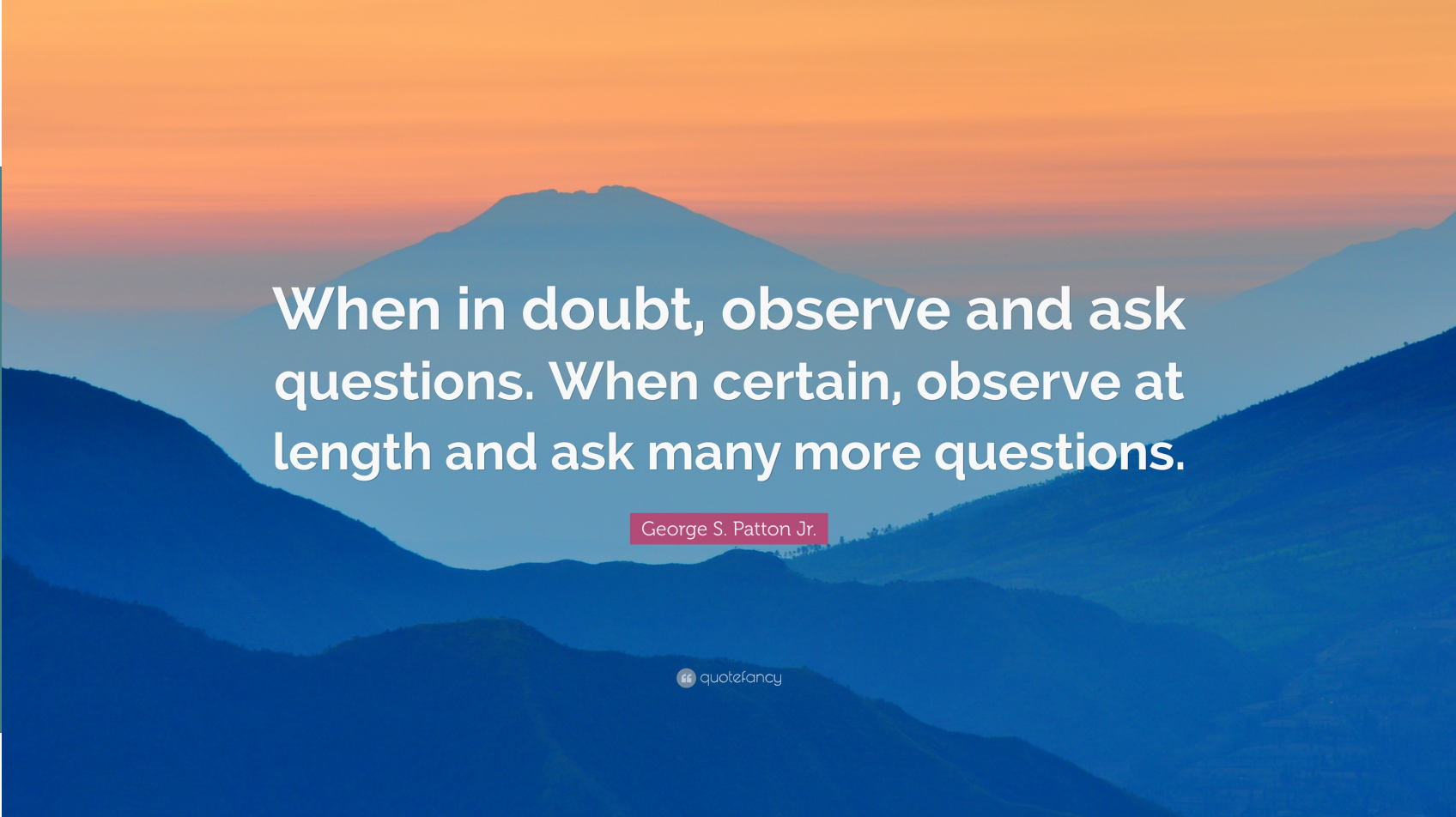
1. Traveling with your emotional support animal without any additional fee or costs is allowed by airline carriers if you have an ESA letter.
2. We gather information from places where people work so we can improve worker safety and health.
3. As a travel brand, if you want to attract Chinese travellers, you must provide mobile payment.

CONCLUSIONS

WHAT IS THE PARTICIPANTS RESPONSE?

1. Overwhelmingly positive
2. Relief
3. We are allowed to repeat the same word? Really?





When in doubt, observe and ask questions. When certain, observe at length and ask many more questions.

George S. Patton Jr.

 quote fancy

RESOURCES:

[Everyday Words for Public Health Communication, U.S. Department for Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

Plain English for Doctors and Other Medical Scientists by Oscar Linares, David Daly, and Gertrude Daly, OUP

New York Times

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THANK YOU

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