



When you communicate with someone, you are designing information to cause an action. Sometimes, this action is as simple as learning something new. Other times, the action might be more complicated, like registering to vote. **Information design** is the process of making the information you want to share clear, engaging, accessible, and usable.

You can apply information design principles to everything from your website and voter education, to ballots and forms. Key principles of information design included here are:

- Knowing your audience
- Content structure
- Plain language
- Hierarchy
- Typography
- Visuals
- Color
- Consistency

Practice: Use a design review to get feedback on your materials

Design Review is an internal feedback method on the information design of materials. In a design review, a group of people gather to constructively evaluate a design by identifying what is working well, any potential issues, and alternative ideas.

You can use a design review to get feedback on concepts, first drafts, and near-final drafts. Hearing feedback can be intimidating, but getting a well rounded view of your materials now will improve them before they go out to voters. It should happen before usability testing and final legal review. Remember that feedback is about the material, not about the designer.

Steps to hold a design review

1. **Print your material.** Printing out the material so you can look at it on a table or wall is helpful. Alternatively, invite your critics to look at the material on a computer. If possible, print at 100% scale so you can evaluate if the typography and visuals are readable.
2. **Set a time.** Plan for about 10 minutes per item, topic, or idea you're reviewing. Longer materials like handbooks or voter guides will need more time.
3. **Gather a group of people.** The group should have different perspectives, ideally not have worked on the material, and know the audience. It can be a group of any size. Alternatively, you might review your own materials guided by the questions on the next page.
4. **Set the tone.** Explain the goal, who it's for, and when it needs to be completed. Knowing the deadline will help your critics know what scale of feedback to share with you.
5. **Use the information design questions to guide the conversation.** The 8 questions on the next page will help the review group objectively assess different aspects of the information design.
6. **Record feedback.** Use the chart on the back to record feedback, or take notes. Write down everything, even if you disagree in the moment.
7. **Decide what feedback to incorporate.** You will get different types of feedback. Now, you have to decide how to proceed. Some feedback will be critical. Other feedback will not be possible by the deadline, so consider if there are different ways to solve the issue.

Practice: Design Review

Use this sheet to document information design feedback during an internal design review.

<p>What is being reviewed? <i>So you can remember what these notes are!</i></p>	
<p>Who participated in the review? <i>So you can ask them follow-up questions, if needed.</i></p>	
<p>Does the information meet audience needs? <i>When and why will a voter interact with this material? What are the consequences (real or imagined) if they make a mistake?</i></p>	
<p>Is the content structured to help voters find all the information they need? Does the information connect voters to other formats for language access, accessibility, and preference?</p>	
<p>Is the information written in plain language, so voters understand the message?</p>	
<p>Does the information hierarchy on a page show what's most important?</p>	
<p>Is typography used to make the text readable in all languages?</p>	
<p>Do visual elements (like illustrations, graphs, and photos) support meaning, and help voters understand the content?</p>	
<p>Is color used in an accessible way to support meaning?</p>	
<p>Is the material consistent (visually and message) with other office materials to show they all come from the same source?</p>	