2021 International Plain Language Day Writing Contest

Thank you for participating in the International Plain Language Writing Contest! In the exercises below you will be prompted to apply specific plain language (PL) principles to improve the writing.

**Instructions:**

1. Review the PL principles distributed with this handout.
2. Examine the original examples below. Decide how the passages and sentences can be improved.
3. Open a Word file and rewrite the examples in PL keeping the original numbering.
4. Please email your rewritten passages and sentences as a Word file to Dr. Natalia Matveeva at MatveevaN@uhd.edu by **Monday, November 1**.

Students with the top three entries will be notified via email that they each won a 64 GB flash drive on **Wednesday, November 3**.

|  |
| --- |
| ***PL Principle 1: Use active voice***  |
| **Original:** A decision was made by me. | **Your version in PL:**  |
| **Original:** The foregoing Fee Table is intended to assist investors in understanding the costs and expenses that a shareholder in the Fund will bear directly or indirectly. | **Your version in PL:**  |
| ***PL Principle 2: Use personal pronouns***  |
| **Original:** Copies of tax returns must be provided. | **Your version in PL:**  |
| **Original:** The applicant will be the primary source of information regarding his or her circumstances for the purposes of determining eligibility and need. | **Your version in PL:**  |
| ***Principle 3: Use vertical lists*** |
| ***PL* Original:** Each completed well drilling application must contain a detailed statement including the following information: the depth of the well, the casing and cementing program, the circulation media (mud, air, foam, etc.), the expected depth and thickness of fresh water zones, and well site layout and design. | **Your version in PL:**  |
| **Original:** The funds invest mainly in the stocks of U.S. and foreign companies that are showing improved earnings and that sell at low prices relative to their cash flows or growth rates. The Fund also invests in debt, both investment grade and junk bonds, and U.S Treasury securities. | **Your version in PL:**  |
| ***PL Principle 4: Don’t be wordy*** |
| **Original:** In the eventuality that you encounter unexpected and otherwise unforeseeable problems, please apprise me of the situation. | **Your version in PL:**  |
| **Original:** Your cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated.  | **Your version in PL:**  |
| ***Principle 5: Keep it short!*** |
| ***PL* Original:** It’s a simple process:  After the portfolio managers find companies with the dual attraction of dependable earnings growth and attractive valuations by focusing on their long-term underlying worth, they ascertain the underlying worth of those companies by carefully comparing the value of their corporate assets with their potential returns before determining if a company’s stock is mispriced relative to that underlying worth.  Even people who are a few sandwiches short of a picnic should be able to understand it.  | **Your version in PL:**  |
| **Original:** According to Nancy Smith, Director, Office of Investor Education and Assistance, three people, Ann Wallace, from the Division of Corporation Finance, Carolyn Miller, formerly of Siegel & Gale and now with the SEC, and William Lutz, author and Professor of English at Rutgers University, poured their hearts and minds into the plain English handbook that inspired me to create these exercises, which you are enjoying as well as finding useful, I hope, and so all of the credit and none of the blame goes to them.  | **Your version in PL:**  |