



Explain
everything
clearly
and
people
will
understand
immediately.

Better Writing: Explain Everything

We write for people to understand but sometimes we make the mistake of not giving readers all the information they need. When we write we should explain unfamiliar items to those who do not know them, as well as the context around what we say.

Technical expressions to non-specialists. If you write “tyrosine” to people who don’t understand chemistry add a few more words and explain *it’s an amino acid*.

Names to people outside your organization. Outsiders don’t know who is who so when you mention someone explain their role. Here’s an example: “John Kemp—*our financial manager*—will not approve the budget”.

Projects, plans and agreements to those who don’t

participate in them, such as “The Potsdam contract (*signed with supplier HDS*) will be interrupted”.

Acronyms to people outside your field. “We will change LIFO for FIFO. *For those who don't know, LIFO and FIFO are methods to value inventory.*”

Cultural or geographical aspects to foreigners. “We can't hold the meeting on the first Monday in September *because it's Labour Day in Canada*” or “We won't contract a supplier in Da Nang for our factory in Hanoi. *Why? It's more than 15 hours away by truck*”.

Andrew's advice: when in doubt, explain it!



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