ID Guidelines

The following 150 guidelines are based on the 16 design principles.

1 Defining the Problems

The Sender
- Define what the sender wants to achieve.
- Decide when this is to happen.
- Find out about the project budget, as well as all other requirements.

The Representation

The Message
- Define the purpose and the objective of the message, always keeping the intended receivers in mind.
- Collect and review necessary facts for later use in the design process.
- Consider the use of words, images, and graphic form.

The Medium
- Select the most suitable medium for the message.
- Produce synopsis for text, pictures, and sound.
- Adopt the graphic design to the medium.

The Receivers
- Carefully define the group of intended receivers.
- Collect data about age, culture, gender, and socio-economic factors.
- When possible, consider any feedback that may be expressed by any previous receivers.

The Context
- Define the internal context of the message.
- Define the external contexts of the message.
- Define how the context may influence the interpretation of the message.

2 Providing Structure
- Develop a clear structure for the content.
- Limit the number of levels in the structure.
- Show the hierarchy and structure of the content in the graphic design.

3 Providing Clarity

Legibility of Text

Legibility of Print Media
- Use clear, direct, simple and transparent typography.
- Use a common typeface, between nine and twelve Pica points, for continuous text in a book, a pamphlet, or a report.
- Restrict the number typefaces and only use a few per information material.

Legibility of Text on Wall Charts
- Set text bold and large enough, adjusted to the reading distance.
- Use lower case letters and avoid all-capital printing for running text.
- Restrict the number typefaces.

Legibility of Text on Screens
- Use typefaces designed for screen display.
- Use black text on a white or yellow background.
- Avoid the use of all capital letters.

Legibility of Projected Texts
- Use no more than six rows of six words in each image, set in a linear typeface, with characters large and bold enough.
- Maintain a good contrast between foreground and background.
- Avoid graduated and tonal background fills.

Legibility of Pictures
- Use picture elements that are bold and large enough.
- Use a style guide for picture elements in schematic pictures.
- Set words in images and pictures bold and large enough to read.

Legibility of Layout
- Use standard page sizes with standard grids for pre-planning of pages.
- Use a clear and simple layout.
- Use arrows, bullets, lines, and symbols in various colours; also margin notes, repetition, and space to highlight relevant information.

Legibility of Symbols
- Use distinct colours and simple graphical elements to design symbols that will function in any size.
- Design solid figures with a distinct contrast to the background.
- Use characters and graphical elements that are bold, distinct and large enough.

Legibility of Numerical Values

Tables
- Use type between 8 and 12-point size for table cells.
- Use vertically oriented tables.
- Use rounded off numbers.

Graphs
- Compare lengths of variables to show their relationships.
- Compare areas of variables to show their parts of a whole.
- Use actual figures in graphs when accuracy is needed.

Legibility of Maps
- Use bold and distinct symbols in a consistent size.
- Restrict the number of typefaces and complexity of patterns.
- Provide distinct contrast in form and dimensions.

Legibility of Colour
- Use a light or a dark background colour appropriate to the content, and then use a colour with good contrast for the figure or text.
- Make sure that differences between colours are clear and obvious.
- Combine colours with shape in warning signs.

4 Providing Simplicity

Readability of Text

Readability of Print Media
- Use an active voice and avoid too many details.
- Use a style guide and make the message comprehensible for the intended receivers.
- Make an overall check of language, writing style and terminology before the script can be confirmed as an original.

Readability of Text on Wall Charts
- Edit the text into sections that are easily read.
- Check the spelling!
- Use headings and other text elements in a consistent way.

Readability of Text on Screens
- Display data so that it is easy to read.
- Recognize cultural differences.
- Use a "normal" combination of upper and lower case letters.

Readability of Projected Texts
- Consider the use of lists.
- Be careful in the use of acronyms.
- Restrict stylized and fancy typefaces to opening frames.

Readability of Pictures
- Write legends to explain pictures.
- Choose illustrations carefully and use visual sequencing techniques to present complex ideas.
- Leave out needless pictures and picture elements and avoid excessive image detail.

Readability of Layout
- Create standard pages for different information materials.
- Avoid dull, exciting, provocative, or too uncommon graphical designs.
- Review typography and layout for consistency of readability.

Readability of Symbols
- Use colour, position, size and shape.
- Use a combination of pictographs and words.
- Use realistic figures rather than abstract forms.

Readability of Numerical Values
- Provide all the information the learner will need in the table.
- Group items in a clear way.
- Put target entries to the left of the answers.

Readability of Maps
- Restrict the number of visual symbols on maps.
- Keep it as simple as possible.
- Be consistent! Inconsistencies will confuse the readers.

Readability of Colour
- Use colour to emphasize or to play something down.
- Use colour to show differences or similarities.
- Use colour to help readers recall information and to find things.

5 Providing Emphasis
- Use specific elements for emphasis.
- Use clear contrasts for emphasis.
- Use variables like complexity, directionality, exaggerated features, humour, isolation or motion for emphasis.

6 Providing Unity
- Use style and terminology in a consistent way in each specific information material.
- Use layout and typography in a consistent way.
- Use highlighting techniques in a consistent way.

7 Information Access

External Access
- Design information materials to fit main systems for storage.
- Use international standards, such as standard page sizes.
- Consider aspects of information security.

Internal Access
- Create appropriate indexes and other search systems.
- Provide clear contrast between figure and ground.
- Provide a supporting context for important information contents.

8 Information Costs
- Consider the costs for design and production of the material.
- Consider future costs for distribution and storage.
- Plan and execute continuous reviews of all costs for the material.

9 Information Ethics
- Respect copyright.
- Respect ethical rules, and media-specific ethical guidelines.
- Never engage in image manipulation.

10 Securing Quality
- Establish a system for control of the different versions of documents.
- Review the information material with respect to credibility, graphic design, structure, style, and terminology before technical production.
- Invite users to evaluate the information material.

11 Harmony
- Develop standard templates for graphic design.
- Use standard templates for graphic design.
- Find balance between the design elements.

12 Aesthetic Proportion
- Find out receiver preferences of aesthetic proportions.
- Be careful using proportions according to the "golden section."
- Never mix a decorative use of colour with cognitive importance.

13 Facilitating Attention

Attention to Text
- Use headings with words that will catch the attention of the receiver.
- Set headings in different type versions to get attention.
- Use italics, boldface or colour to get attention.

Attention to Pictures
- Provide pictures of people, in particular pictures of their faces.
- Use pictures that are interesting enough.
- Use different types of visuals.

Attention to Symbols
- Use clear and distinct symbols for warnings
- Put warning signs close to the hazard.
- Use clear symbols for wayshowing.

Attention to Layout
- Use legends to direct attention and interest within pictures.
- Use "bleed" creatively to expand the impact of pictures.
- Use highlighting techniques to enhance relevant information.

Attention to Colour
- Use bold and bright colours to get attention.
- Use colour coding to improve attention.
- Use colour to enhance attention to a visual message.

14 Facilitating Perception

Perception of Text
- Use a list of contents to create pre-understanding.
- Provide text with a rich language for pleasant reading.
- Avoid irrelevant information and distracting jargon.

Perception of Pictures
- Use photographs showing people.
- Provide pictures with interesting contents.
- Provide a good contrast between figure and ground in pictures.

Perception of Layout
- Avoid too short and too long lines.
- Use colour, orientation, pattern, shape, size, texture, and value to show that objects belong together.
- Make sure that distribution of space reflects relationships.

Perception of Colour
- Consider that many people are colour blind.
- Use colour to enhance perception of a visual message.
- Use colour and grey scale to influence the perception of size.

15 Facilitating Mental Processing

Processing of Text
- Design text to facilitate mental processing.
- Use a variety of examples and non-examples.
- Provide the time that is necessary for the receivers to read, interpret and understand the message in the text.

Processing of Pictures
- Use line drawings when study time is limited.
- Provide more realistic versions of artwork when unlimited study time is allowed.
- Use graphics in a consistent way.

Processing of Layout
- Use illustrations that are relevant to the content in the text.
- Make close connections between verbal and visual representations.
- Avoid inconsistent use of typography.

Processing of Colour
- Use colour coding in a consistent way.
- Limit the number of colour codes.
- Find out likes or dislikes of colour.

16 Facilitating Memory
- Present only a limited number of information elements at the same time.
- Provide meaningful contents.
- Present text and illustrations in close connection.