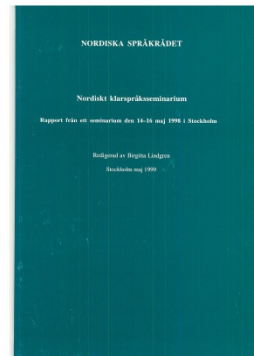


Klart språk i Norden

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Denne artikel er omfattet af ophavsretsloven, og der må citeres fra den. Følgende betingelser skal dog være opfyldt:

- Citatet skal være i overensstemmelse med „god skik“
- Der må kun citeres „i det omfang, som betinges af formålet“
- Ophavsmanden til teksten skal krediteres, og kilden skal angives, jf. ovenstående bibliografiske oplysninger.

Søgbarhed

Artiklerne i denne udgivelse er skannet og OCR-behandlet. OCR står for 'optical character recognition' og kan ved tegngenkendelse konvertere et billede til tekst. Dermed kan man søge i teksten. Imidlertid kan der opstå fejl i tegngenkendelsen, og når man søger på fx navne, skal man være forberedt på at søgningen ikke er 100 % pålidelig.

Plain Language Commission

Birgitta Lindgren

Detta är ett kort sammandrag av Martin Cutts föredrag.

Martin Cutts redogjorde i sitt föredrag för brittiskt klarspråksarbete inom Plain Language Commission. Slagordet för sådant arbete är *plain English*. Liksom i Sverige har man i Storbritannien under historiens gång reagerat mot krångligt lag- och myndighetsspråk. Edvard VI uttryckte följande fromma förhoppning 1550: "I would wish that the superfluous and tedious statutes were made more plain and short, to the intent that men might better understand them."

En viktig milstolpe i modern tid var när finansdepartementet på 1950-talet uppdrog åt Ernest Gowers att skriva en handledning i enkelt och begripligt språk. Denna skrift, "The Complete Plain Words", kommer i ständigt nya upplagor. Under 1970-talet ökade kravet från medborgarna på ett enkelt myndighetsspråk, och 1982 beordrade regeringen alla departement att räkna över sina blanketter och att upphäva sådana som var onödiga, förenkla de övriga och att årligen rapportera arbetet. Även på kommunal nivå har klarspråksarbete vuxit fram.

Olika undersökningar visar att klarspråk fungerar och kan löna sig. Enligt en amerikansk undersökning ökade förståelsen av en blankett om medicinsk vård med 91 % när den skrevs om på enklare språk. I en annan undersökning testades Martin Cutts plain-English-version av en lag på 90 juridikstuderande: 9 av 10 fördrog den versionen mot den ursprungliga versionen. Att förståelsen verkligen påverkades framgick av att 94 % svarade rätt på frågor om lagens innehåll när de utgick från den enklare versionen; för dem som utgick från den ursprungliga versionen blev motsvarande siffra bara 48 % .

Nedanstående utdrag ur Martin Cutts bok "Plain English Guide" visar att de råd om enkelt och begripligt språk som ges för engelskan i mycket överensstämmer med de som gäller för svenskan.

Först kommer en sammanfattning av riktlinjer (A summary of guidelines). Därefter en ordlista (Plain English Lexicon). Slutligen ett exempel på en text "före" och "efter" bearbetning (Bathroom modernization).

Summary of guidelines

Style and grammar

- 1 Over the whole document, make the average sentence length 15 to 20 words.
- 2 Use words your readers are likely to understand.
- 3 Use only as many words as you really need.
- 4 Prefer the active voice unless there's a good reason for using the passive.
- 5 Use the clearest, crispest, liveliest verb to express your thoughts.
- 6 Use vertical lists to break up complicated text.
- 7 Put your points positively when you can.
- 8 Reduce cross-references to the minimum.
- 9 Try to avoid sexist usage.
- 10 In letters, avoid fusty first sentences and formula finishes.
- 11 Put accurate punctuation at the heart of your writing.
- 12 Avoid being enslaved by writing myths.
- 13 You can be a good writer without learning hundreds of grammatical terms.

Preparing and planning

- 14 Plan before you write.

Organizing the information

- 15 Organize your material in a way that helps readers to grasp the important information early and to navigate through the document easily.
- 16 Consider different ways of setting out your information.

Management of writing

- 17 Manage colleagues' writing carefully and considerately to boost their morale and effectiveness.

Plain English for specific purposes:

Instructions and legal documents

- 18 Devote special effort to producing lucid and well-organized instructions.
- 19 Apply plain English techniques to legal documents such as insurance policies, car-hire agreements, laws and wills.

Layout

- 20 Use clear layout to present your plain words in an easily accessible way.

Utdrag ur Cutts, Martin: *Plain English Guide*, s. 26–27. Detta är endast en del av listan.

Plain English lexicon

If you overuse the words in the left-hand column of the table, your writing could be perceived as pompous, officious and long-winded. Not that anyone should forbid you from ever using them, but judicious use of the alternatives will help you to be shorter, simpler and more conversational. The alternatives are not always synonyms, so use them with a proper care for meaning and for the job they have to do in the sentence.

| <i>Official terms</i> | <i>Plainer alternatives</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| accede | agree, grant, allow |
| accordingly | so |
| accustomed to | used to |
| acquaint yourself | find out, read |
| additional | more, extra |
| address (sense 'consider') | tackle, deal with, consider |
| advices | information, instructions |
| advise (sense 'inform') | inform, tell |
| aforementioned, aforesaid | [omit or be specific] |
| aggregate (noun) | total |
| alleviate | ease, reduce, lessen |
| apprise | inform, tell |
| as a consequence of | because |
| ascertain | find out |
| assist, assistance | help |
| attain | reach |
| attribute (verb) | earmark |
| calculate | work out, decide |
| category | group |
| cease | stop, end |
| cognizant of | aware of, know about |
| commence | start, begin |
| component | part |
| concept | idea |
| concerning | about |
| consequently | so |
| constitute | make up, form |
| construe | interpret |

Utdrag ur Cutts, Martin: *Plain English Guide*, s. 128, 130.

BATHROOM MODERNIZATION

Originaltexten:

First of all apologies for the delay in the start of the bathroom refurbishment programme which was due to start at the end of last year but because the costs came in over budget, further negotiations had to be entered into with the contractors and the extent of the work reconsidered.

Although all the work to the bathroom will be undertaken as previously agreed, we will not be undertaking any work to ground-floor WCs which you may or may not have.

Find attached a draft programme for the anticipated commencement date on your property and we anticipate that the work will take three or four days to complete. Your next contact will be by the contractor, GH Construction, who will contact you individually about a week prior to the start at your house.

If you anticipate any problems with access arrangements or require any further information, please do not hesitate to call Jane Teal on Tameside 000 99.

BATHROOM MODERNIZATION

och efter bearbetning:

I apologize for the delay in the bathroom modernization programme which was due to begin at the end of last year. The delay has occurred because the costs were higher than we had budgeted for. We have had to negotiate again with the contractors and reconsider the extent of the work.

All the work to your bathroom will be done as previously agreed. But unfortunately the extra costs mean that if you have a ground-floor toilet, we will not be able to do any work to it.

I attach a programme which shows the likely starting date for work on your property. We expect the work will take three or four days to complete.

You will hear next from the contractor, GH Construction, who will contact you about a week before work at your house begins.

Please call Jane Teal on Tameside 99099 if you think the contractor will have any problems with access to your house, or if you need any more information.

Litteratur:

Cutts, Martin: *Plain English Guide. How to write clearly and communicate better.* Oxford University Press 1996

Cutts, Martin: *Lucid Law.* 1994