

HOW TO WRITE JOB AIDS

1. What is a job aid?

A job aid describes step by step what you should do to perform a procedure.
A job aid can also be named “Instructions”.

2. What does this job aid offers?

This job aid describes how you can write good job aids.
We will use as an example the job aid: “how to disinfect your hands”
All examples are written in italics

3. How can I write a good job aid?

- 3.1.give a Meaningful Title
- 3.2.mention Author, Version number and Date
- 3.3.list the Materials needed
- 3.4.describe the Action Steps
- 3.5.have your job aids Read and Performed by a Colleague

3.1. Give a Meaningful Title

The title must mention the content of the job aid.
Do NOT give a title like “Job Aids_ Medical Service_ 015/1”
PREFER Title with meaning “How to disinfect my hands”

3.2. Mention Author, Version number and Date

Put this information in the “Header” or “Footer” of your document.
In this way, it will be visible on the printed page.

3.3. List the Materials

List the Materials you need.
If needed, distinguish between - Material provided (for example, in the test kit)
- Materials not provided

Use a Bulleted or Numbered list, in a logical ranking
For washing your hands with antimicrobial soap, you need:

- *Liquid antimicrobial soap in a dispense*
- *Running water*
- *Towels*

3.4. Describe the Action Steps: decide on the Format

There are different formats to describe the action steps:

Example: we will improve the job aids below

Hands are disinfected with either antimicrobial soap or alcohol. If hands are visibly dirty, they should always be washed with household soap first. Next, antibacterial soap should be used in case you have running water; if not, you should use alcohol.

Format 1: “Cookbook format”: describes all alternatives

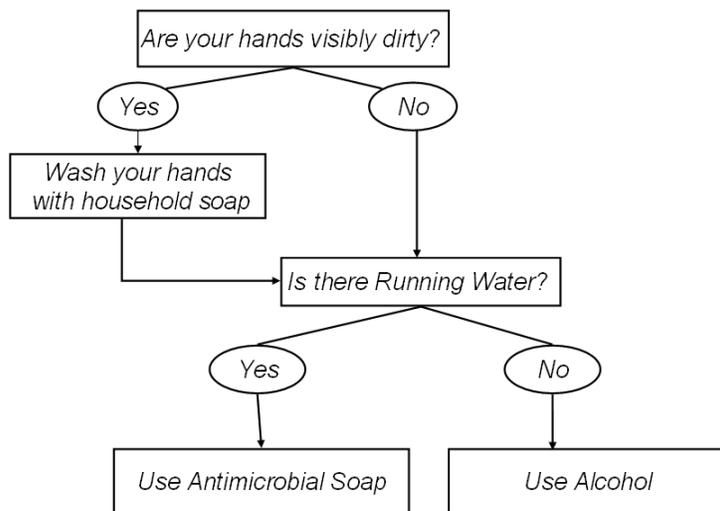
1. If your hands are visibly dirty, wash them with Household Soap.
 If your hands are visibly clean, go to step 2.
2. If there is running water, use Antimicrobial Soap.
 If there is no running water, use Alcohol.

Format 2: “Decision table”: lists the alternatives

<i>IF</i>	<i>AND</i>	<i>THAN</i>
<i>1. Hands are visibly dirty</i>	→	<i>wash hands with Household Soap, next go to 2</i>
<i>2. Hands are visibly clean</i>	<i>there is Running Water</i>	<i>use Antimicrobial Soap</i>
	<i>there is NO Running Water</i>	<i>use Alcohol</i>

Note: if there is no “AND”, use arrow

Format 3: “Flowchart”: goes through the alternatives



Describe the Action Steps: Use Simple Style

1. **Number the steps:** 1,2,3,...in sequence
If more than 10 steps: subdivide in different topics
One step describes one action of maximum 15 seconds
2. use **Short and Simple Sentences:** not more than 15 words.
3. use **Short and Simple Words**
Avoid as much a possible use of Acronyms, spell them out the first time you use them
Add list of Abbreviations
Use always same word or term
Do NOT speak about household soap and next "normal soap" or "bar soap"
USE always "household soap" throughout the text
4. use **Active Verb**, not passive voice
use **Imperative**, not verb or "you"
NOT: you have to use household soap
BUT: use household soap
6. **Turn any list into a bulleted or numbered list**
7. **Stress important information:**
use CAPITALS
use **bold** or *italicized* or underlined text
use Color
8. **Put "When's" or "Ifs" before "What's"**
NOT: Use of towel to cover your hand in case you have to close the tap by hand.
PREFER: If you have to close the tap by hand, use a towel to cover your hand.
9. **Put warnings before the steps**
10. **Use pictures/drawings**



Figure 2. Rub hands palm to palm

Check if picture fits the text
Refer to the picture in the text
Put pictures on the left side of the paper, text on the right side
Use colours if needed

3.4. Have your job aids Read and Performed by a Colleague

1. ask a **Colleague** to **Read** the draft of your job aid and to give comments
2. ask a **Colleague** to **Perform** the job with the draft
do NOT help him/her, do not give further explanations
make notes of what should be added or changed
make these notes on your copy of the job aid

1. I was wondering whether it would be of assistance to a person following your directions while writing a job aid, to know who are the targeted people for the job aid (level of instruction) and so what level of English/and or detail of the procedure should be used (are experienced persons or people trying for the first time the method?).
2. I got a bit confused in the part 3.4, between the format and the style. Should I use the format 1, 2 or 3 or a format with picture and drawings? The format do not contain numbered steps...I couldn't understand.
3. Maybe giving an exemplified frame, would it be of help?