



How to Write an Information Sheet or Brochure

A one-page handout for your group that answers the questions: “Who are we?” “What do we do?” and “Why is it important?” will help you to spread your message through the community.

The information can be given to prospective group members and others who are interested in finding out about your group. Information sheets or brochures can also be given to people and services who you want to know about you. They can be put in waiting rooms, given to libraries and pinned up on notice boards.

There are two components to think about, the content and the format. Each of these areas has their own considerations.

Content

Generally a person picking up the information sheet is going to read the first one or two paragraphs. It is therefore important you get your message into the first paragraph and then go into more detail later on. What does the group do, and for whom? What is the community need you satisfy? Keep it short and simple and try not to get technical.

What you do

List your services with a briefly describe of each services you provide. Say who is eligible for your programs. The clearer you can be about this, the fewer people you’ll have to turn away later.

Explain why your group is a good thing. You need to promote your services, not just list them. Even people in your target audience need to be persuaded to take up what you have to offer and you have to show other people – potential funding opportunities, for example – that what you do is worthy and needed. Don’t say you’re wonderful – make what you do sound wonderful.

Operating details

Check that you’ve covered the basics: Who can join the organisation? How do they join? What does it cost? How can they access the services and when do the services run (if any)? What do the services cost? When is the office open?

Contact details

Include a way for the reader to get to know more about your group if they’re interested. Be sure to include your address, phone numbers, and fax numbers, e-mail address/s, and website address if you have one.

What you need

If appropriate tell people how they can help you. If you want volunteers, donations of goods or services etc, this is a good place to say so.

INFORMATION SHEET

More information

Don't feel that you have to put in everything. An information sheet or brochure is meant to capture the attention of the public, and you just want to convey a simple message. You can always attach other information for example price lists, publication lists, if this is needed in a particular instance. Don't put in anything except necessary information. Look at every paragraph and ask "Will it interest anybody who knows nothing about us?"

Format

Even if you are an amateur, you want to look professional! Take a bit of time to get the look and feel right.

Ensure that the look of the information sheet or brochure is consistent with any other publications, and with any letterhead etc that your group may already be using. Consistent use of a logo or particular size and style of typeface/font on everything you produce will help your group to become recognised.

Layout

There are a number of simple, easy to use formats you can choose for your information sheet or brochure:

- a straightforward A4 page
- an A4 page divided into two or three columns
- an A4 page designed as a 3 fold double sided brochure

Once the content is drafted, you can cut and paste the information between these different formats and print off as needed.

Colour or black and white

A simple black text on a white background will enable you to run off copies on the photocopier. Photocopying onto coloured paper can also help to make your work eye catching but if you choose a dark or solid shade it can make it difficult to photocopy or fax these copies so always keep black and white originals for this purpose.

Graphics

It can be a good idea to break up the page with pictures or drawings, or even with well-placed blank space. If you are considering using a photograph you may want to try photocopying it first to see if the quality and clarity is still retained.

Give consideration to the font size and typestyle you will be using. Every typeface has its own personality. A particular typeface cannot change the meaning of the words, but it can enhance the message. The choice of typeface is particularly important when designing logos or titles because the image can be changed by simply substituting a different typeface. Experiment a little with the many personalities and moods that can be conveyed by typefaces to help you convey your message.

How to use the information sheet

Run it off in small quantities. Send or hand deliver a bundle to every information display in your area – community health services, local government, GP or specialist office or waiting room, hospital, libraries, etc.

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