These 10 Top Tips will help you make your website more accessible to people with low literacy skills

Is your call centre team busy explaining online forms, or are your front-desk staff constantly answering the same questions? If so, your organisation's information may be a barrier for people with low literacy skills.

An inaccessible website excludes people.

For people with low literacy skills, complex information can lead to stress, mistakes, and missed opportunities. Many people feel ashamed of their limited language skills and try to hide them. As a result, they are reluctant to ask for help and give up if the information is too difficult. Accessible communication makes the difference between participation and exclusion.

One in six people in the Netherlands has low literacy skills. They struggle with reading, writing, and numeracy. They often have lower digital skills too.

These Top 10 Tips will help you make your website more accessible to people with low literacy skills:

1. **Design your website to be simple and clear.** Limit the number of banners, buttons, and links. This way, the reader will not get lost on your website.
2. **Test with people with low literacy skills.** Show your website to people with first-hand experience. Their tips will help you make your website accessible and prevent mistakes and stress for the reader.
3. **Keep sentences short and convey one message per sentence.** Otherwise, the reader will have to process several messages at once and is more likely to lose interest.
4. **Support text with images.** With appropriate images, the reader needs to read less text to understand the message.
5. **Use clear headings and a logical structure.** This allows the reader to find and scan information quickly and easily.
6. **Keep forms simple.** Ask only for key info, explain hard terms, and give step-by-step help. This prevents the reader from needing help when filling in the form.
7. **Make it clear at once what the reader must do.** That way, the reader does not have to read the whole text to know the needed action.
8. **Present information in different ways.** Using video, audio, a step-by-step guide, or a summary makes a text more accessible. This prevents the reader from missing important steps.
9. **Use recognisable examples and situations.** This helps the reader to understand the text, ensuring things do not go wrong in everyday practice.
10. **Use a reading aid.** Many organisations write at B1 reading level. This level is too hard for people with low literacy skills. With a reading aid that can convert texts to 1F/A2 level, every reader can manage their affairs independently via the website.