



# Document Use

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS TIP SHEET

Use these practical tips to help you improve your **document use** skills:

- ✔ Use your finger or a ruler to follow rows or columns in a table.
- ✔ Use headings to find information quickly.
- ✔ Look for visual cues such as font size, bolded or highlighted text that may emphasize important information.
- ✔ Look for characters or symbols that may provide special instructions (e.g. asterisks).
- ✔ Write legibly and stay within the allocated spaces.
- ✔ Use words that are easy to read and understand when entering information.
- ✔ Scan documents several times to ensure the information you have entered is complete and accurate.
- ✔ Read instructions carefully before completing forms or questionnaires.
- ✔ Complete documents in the recommended order.
- ✔ Read labels and headings carefully before entering information.
- ✔ Identify common shapes and colours to help understand signs and symbols (e.g. diamond represents warnings; red represents danger or stop).
- ✔ Ask questions if you do not understand what you see on a sign, display or document.
- ✔ Identify what information is needed before searching through documents.
- ✔ Scan documents for keywords, graphs and/or diagrams to gain a better understanding of the material.
- ✔ Use lists, such as a table of contents or an index page, to find specific information contained in manuals or reports more quickly.
- ✔ Use legends to help interpret information in diagrams or graphs.
- ✔ Use the scales provided on maps to practice estimating distances between two locations. Use a string to measure the length of irregular routes then place the string against the scale to determine an approximate distance.
- ✔ Make a glossary of terms commonly found in forms or on signs in your workplace.
- ✔ Look at similar forms to see how they have been completed before starting new forms.
- ✔ Place graphs side by side to make comparisons, calculate information, or arrive at conclusions.