

- **Consider the ethical implications of your definition.** Be sure your definition of a fuzzy or ambiguous term such as “safe levels of exposure” or “conservative investment” or “acceptable risk” is based on fair and accurate interpretation of the facts. Consider, for example, a recent U.S. cigarette company’s claim that cigarette smoking in the Czech Republic promoted “fiscal benefits,” defined, in this case, by the fact that smokers die young, thus eliminating pension and health care costs for the elderly!
- **Place your definition in an appropriate location.** Allow users to access the definition and then return to the main text with as little disruption as possible.

✓ Checklist: Usability of Definitions

(Numbers in parentheses refer to the first page of discussion.)

Content

- Is the type of definition (parenthetical, sentence, expanded) suited to its audience and purpose? (441)
- Does the definition adequately classify the item? (456)
- Will the level of technicality connect with the audience? (441)
- Have you avoided circular definitions? (456)
- Does the sentence definition describe features that distinguish the item from all other items in the same class? (442)
- Is the expanded definition developed adequately for its audience? (443)
- Is the expanded definition free of needless details for its audience? (449)
- Are visuals used adequately and appropriately? (447)
- Are all information sources properly documented? (634)
- Is the definition ethically and legally acceptable? (456)

Arrangement

- Is the expanded definition unified and coherent (like an essay)? (449)
- Are transitions between ideas adequate? (693)
- Is the definition placed at an appropriate location in the document? (454)

Style and Page Design

- Is the definition in plain English? (232)
- Are sentences clear, concise, and fluent? (216)
- Is word choice precise? (236)
- Is the definition grammatical? (670)
- Is the page design inviting and accessible? (297)