Creating accessible

Microsoft Word
Documents

Accessibility Guiding Principles

- Equity and Inclusion

- Mission and Focus (@Coastline)

- Alignment with Federal Regulations

- Board Policy

- Usability and Effectiveness

Creating Accessible Documents in Word

Everything is a paragraph... Unless it isn't!

- Semantic document structures are document structures with special meaning
- Styles don't affect the meaning of semantic document structures
- Screen readers work with semantic document structures

Semantic Structures

- Paragraphs
- Headings
- Lists
- Tables
- Images

Headings and Heading Levels

Headings

- Functions as a landmark within a document
- Every heading has a level
- Be sure to use the Navigation Pane

Heading Level

- A heading's level indicates its nesting level within the document hierarchy
- Always start your documents with a Heading Level 1; all subsequent headings should be level 2 or greater
- A Heading Level 1 is much like the title of a book and all subsequent headings are like chapters and sub-chapters in the book

Paragraphs

Everything is a paragraph… Unless it isn't!

Microsoft Word treats all text in your document like a paragraph unless you tell it otherwise.

- Always turn on paragraph markers
- Don't use paragraphs to add space between two sections of text
- Be aware of "soft breaks"
- Paragraph text should be between 10pt to 12pt font size

Fonts, Colors and Contrast

Fonts

- Make sure font Sizes are at least 9, but 12 is ideal.

- Use Sans Serif Fonts (Veranda, Arial, Calibri, Montserrat)

Colors and Contrast

- Text becomes difficult to read if the color is too similar to the color behind it. Increasing contrast makes text easier to read.

Lists and List Types

Lists

- Group related items together
- There are 2 types of lists: ordered and unordered

Unordered Lists

- Commonly referred to as "bullet lists"
- No order is implied

Ordered Lists

- Commonly referred to as "numbered lists"
- Items are implicitly ordered

Tables and the Table Header Row

Tables

- Great for summarizing tabular data
- Do not use tables for controlling layout
- Do not merge cells
- Do not leave cells blank

Table Header Row

- Declares the names of the columns in the table
- Table header names should be short and descriptive

Images and Alternative Text

Images

- Images are visual elements
- Images may be decorative or may convey information
- An image requires alt text if it conveys relevant information

Alternative Text

- Alternate text should be short, concise, and complete
- Don't include "image of" or "logo of"; users know when they encounter an image
- Include alternate text only if the image adds relevant information to the conversation of the page

Links

- Make certain that the text used for links is both clear and informative, offering users a meaningful understanding of the link's destination.

- Avoid the use of generic phrases such as "click here" or "read more."

- For instance, instead of using "Click here for more information," opt for "Learn more about our accessibility guidelines."

Formatting Activity

Let's fix a document!