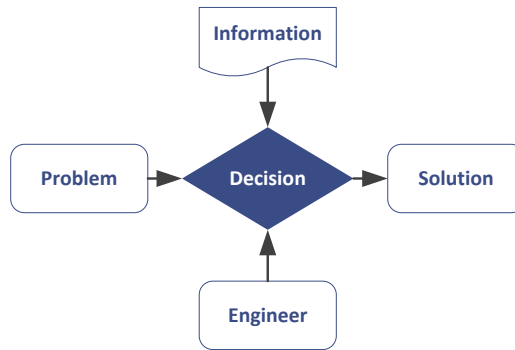


The Importance of Information

Engineering is the practice of delivering solutions to problems, based on information. The quality and completeness of information is critical in this practice. However, the information at-hand is seldom complete. Engineers must regularly seek additional information needed to make appropriate and informed decisions. Everyone is responsible for requesting the information they need

If information is incomplete or unclear:
DO NOT ASSUME – ASK!



Information Management

Information provided to you may not be allowed to be freely shared with others. You may need to commit to ensuring that the information is secure and used only for the explicitly-stated purpose.

The information requested may contain intellectual property (for example commercially sensitive/trade secrets/patents), personal information (for example private information of persons) or be bound by other legal restrictions (for example copyright/security classifications). Restricted information may be marked to indicate that it is not to be shared with others (for example Commercial in Confidence, For Official Use Only, Secret). Explicitly ask how the information provided must be treated.

Make sure the recipient of the request knows you are authorised to make the request and they are authorised to provide it. Where appropriate, seek positive confirmation your message has been: received, acknowledged and understood.

Requesting Information

Requests for information may be to clients, suppliers, manufacturers, testing facilities, research laboratories, sponsors or end-users. Information required may include but is not limited to:

- > Functional or performance specifications for products or materials
- > Usage history/user feedback/hazards associated with the design
- > Results of calculations, analysis, testing or examination
- > Part numbers, model numbers, year of manufacture
- > Certification/compliance requirements
- > Clarification of assumptions and constraints

When requesting information, be professional, clear and succinct in your communications. You are asking others to do work for you, so make it easy for them to understand and comply with your request.

Specify exactly what is needed, stating the required format and when it is required.

Provide sufficient detail so that the request may be understood by somebody with no previous knowledge of the project.

CONTEXT

- the project
- the purpose for asking
- who you are

DETAILS

- what is needed (detailed and specific)
- by when
- in what format

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- how information will be securely and responsibly managed

Email

Email is a common method of communication in industry. When composing an email consider:

- Method** – is email the correct format to be requesting the information?
- Audience** – send it to the right person: don't 'reply all' unless you mean it; only copy in those needed.
- Tone** – use polite and professional language.
- Structure** – structure your communication such that there is a logical flow of information
 - > Introduce yourself and the reason for your request for information
 - > Explicitly state what information you require
 - > Provide any necessary information to comply with your request
 - > Sign off
- Proofread** – don't rely on autocorrect or spellcheck; have you said what you want and need to?
- Acknowledgement** – if someone has communicated something via email, provide acknowledgement that the information has been received, understood and actioned as appropriate.

Email maintains a written record of communication and can be evidence in audits and investigations.

- > What information was requested:
 - » Of whom, when, why
- > What information was received:
 - » From whom, when
 - » Was any follow-up required?
 - » Were information security protocols followed?

Reference Material

> *Law and regulation.* Safe Work Australia Retrieved from <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/law-and-regulation>
 > *Model work health and safety act.* (2019). Safe Work Australia: Safe Work Australia. Retrieved from <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/model-work-health-and-safety-act>
 > *Model work health and safety regulations.* (2019). Safe Work Australia. Retrieved from <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1902/model-whs-regulations-15-january-2019.pdf>