



## Excessive Information? Know the Characteristics of **USEFUL** Information

By: Amariah Hanum Binti Hussin and Dr Raziah Bi Binti Mohamed Sadique

Nowadays, information can be easily disseminated through various mediums. With just a touch of a fingertips, information will instantly spread widely and goes viral. Unfortunately, there is information that is poorly disseminated and creates misunderstanding among many readers. In addition, negative perceptions can also exist due to misunderstandings. Therefore, it is a must for the disseminator of information to determine the authenticity of the information provided so that it will not divide the society and be a cause of defamation suit.

In organization, the dissemination of accurate and authentic useful information is essential to ensure workflows run in harmony. Clear and accurate work instructions are important to ensure the working process runs smoothly. This is to ensure the work and task assigned can be completed efficiently. Thus, the organization goals to maximise profit can be achieved.



**USEFUL  
INFORMATION**

However, the amount of information must be controlled to avoid information overload. During the pandemic of Covid-19, face-to-face meetings are prohibited to minimize the risk of infection. Thus, all information will be disseminated via online platforms namely WhatsApp's, Telegram and Google Meet. Unfortunately, this can cause information overload when the human mind has a limitation to absorb and process all the information at the same time. Romney et al. (2021) identified that overloaded information will result in a decline in the quality of decision-making process and increase the cost of providing information.

Thus, the ability to recognise useful information needed is crucial to organization. Romney et al. (2021) explain 14 characteristics of useful information as stated below:

**Table 1: Characteristics of Useful Information**

Characteristics of Useful Information	
Access restricted	Able to limit access to authorized parties
Accurate	Correct; free of error; accurately represents events and activities
Available	Available to users when needed; in a format that can be easily and quickly used
Reputable	Perceived as true and credible due to highly regarded source or content
Complete	Does not omit aspects of events or activities; of enough breadth and depth
Concise	Clear, succinct; appropriate volume presented briefly but comprehensively
Consistent	Presented in same format over time
Current	Includes event and activity data up to the present date and time
Objective	Unbiased; unprejudiced; impartial
Relevant	Reduces uncertainty; improves decision making; applicable and helpful
Timely	Provided in time for decision makers to make decisions
Useable	Easy to use for different task; human and machine readable
Understandable	Presented in a useful and intelligible format; easily comprehended and interpreted
Verifiable	Same information produced by two independent, knowledgeable people

As a conclusion, organisations must have a skill to identify the characteristics of useful information in order to ensure the benefits of information to others. The benefits include reducing uncertainty, improving decisions, and improving the ability to plan and schedule activities. Therefore, useful information is very crucial to ensure the working process can be done efficiently and effectively.

#### Reference:

Romney. M. B., Steinbart. P.J., Summers. S.L., Wood. D.A (2021), Accounting Information Systems, 15th Ed., pp30, Pearson.

