



TEN TIPS is a new series from the APA Transportation Planning Division's Emerging Professionals Group. Each installment of the series includes tips from experienced transportation planning professionals aimed at helping students and new planners navigate the industry.

Improving Use of Industry Jargon

1. **Keep learning - learning is a never ending process.** *Madhu Narayanasamy, AICP, Project Manager, CDM Smith*
2. **We all probably use too much jargon**, but it's important to know the vocabulary and it varies by location. First, learn the terms, then figure out how to use less jargon-loaded versions of them. *David Fields, AICP, Principal, Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates*
3. **Don't use it!** *Hilary Perkins, AICP, Planner, City of Maryland Heights, MO*
4. First, **learn and understand how the industry jargon developed** and then set about looking for ways to improve it. Nobody appreciates an uneducated zealot. *Chris Comeau, AICP CTP, Transportation Planner, Bellingham Public Works Engineering*
5. To expand your industry vocabulary, read technical (government, academic, etc.) documents - ideally from the source/practitioners for each area. But, **do not over-use jargon when you can say it more simply or clearly**, as many audiences may not be familiar with it. *Lindsey Morse, AICP, Research Associate, Railway and Transport Strategy Centre, Imperial College London*
6. Some jargon is important as it conveys an image or concept in a way that is intuitive. **If jargon will be meaningless to the public, don't use it** when communicating with the public. *Cynthia Hoyle, FAICP, Alta Planning + Design*
7. Jump right in. Go to meetings where you'll hear a lot of transportation-speak, and then **follow up after the meeting with your boss or a co-worker on terms or acronyms you don't understand.** *Shelby Powell, AICP, Deputy Director, NC Capital Area MPO*
8. **Never use acronyms unless written out the first time it is used** and jargon in public-facing or training documents. *Dharm Guruswamy, AICP CTP, Corrective Action Plans Program Manager, FTA WMATA Safety Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*
9. **Keep away from acronyms** and keep your definition simple. *Karen Campblin, AICP, Founder|Planner, ktcPLAN*
10. Whenever you are able, **use plain English. Planning jargon can be counter-productive.** *Dan Haake, AICP, Freight/Rail Planner VI, CDM Smith*