

From: [Clancys](#)
To: [Tax Board](#)
Subject: Feedback
Date: Thursday, 12 July 2018 9:27:14 AM
Attachments: [image003.emz](#)
[image004.png](#)

Hi

Technology is pointless unless it helps the people using it. For the ATO and its few thousand staff, it needs to provide necessary numbers ... which I'm sure it is doing well. But for the millions of taxpayers, I'm not suggesting it be easy but ... it needs to be crystal CLEAR.

I've had a 40-year IT career including systems development and I've specialised in computer training for the last 12. Working with end users to refine any system is important. What the ATO is sorely missing is a feedback method for taxpayers to comment on the (now online) PROCESS and INTERFACE.

Without any need to change the *back-end* processing methods/results, significant change is required to the *front-end* LANGUAGE and structure ... **to ensure it is clear to the average person.**

You can move in the right direction by allowing feedback on [square brackets are my general comments]:

- a. The overall process
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 - i) I'm continually unsure if I've missed/duplicated anything and how far down the rabbit hole I still have to go
 - ii) due to my initial answers, I was forced into a 'PSI' subsection after which I was informed onscreen that PSI didn't really apply to me but to register anyway. I had no idea if I had done right or wrong and how this would affect questions/answers later on
 - iii) While Tax Agents/Accountants are familiar with ATO forms, fields, logic and terminology, **the average person does ONE annual tax return ONCE a year.** This level of basic unfamiliarity is repeated each year, often exacerbated when things can appear so different from the previous year
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- b. Specific questions [the language is often opaque, ambiguous or tortured 'tax-speak']
- c. Input fields [may suddenly become 'mandatory' only AFTER filling in subsequent fields and attempting to go to the next page]
- d. The online text explanations [seem tailored for tax experts ... instead clickable *layers* of explanation should be made available]
- e. Chat help
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 - i) while 'waiting', I entered a detailed question ... but the Chat person when 'logged in' couldn't see it ... a problem easily fixed by developers and a feature to make the Chat service more efficient
 - ii) one response was poor ... I was sent a link which referred to a 4000 word article in which the key term was never used. I spent substantial time/effort and ended up doubting my own intelligence for not understanding how the article applied to my circumstances and my initial question
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iii) ... on a second Chat with another operative ... I was advised to simply 'edit and change the item' (easy!)
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English is my first and only language. I have a good general education, an honours science degree, and a long professional career including 20+ years in my own business. **So if I find the ATO system difficult to understand and use, that concern must be widespread.**

A functional tax system is important in keeping Australia a great country to live in. Now semi-retired, I have the time and the interest to provide the ATO with focused feedback **if requested.**

Regards,
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