

Key to Using Dashes Correctly

1. Candidates who received scores of 10–15 will be called back for an interview. [Use the en-dash to replace *through*.]
2. These networks—already an established cost management strategy—also help members comply. [Use an em-dash to create a strong break within a sentence.]
3. Providers such as Vanguard and Fidelity offer online assistance—Wells Fargo was forced to at least meet them. [Use an em-dash instead of a semicolon or a period to emphasize the independent clause that follows it.]
4. Those interested in obtaining a quote should call 800-555-3477. [Use a hyphen to separate numbers.]
5. The key to accomplishing diversity is to seek diverse candidates—which may entail recruiting where more diverse candidates are likely to be found. [Use an em-dash to emphasize the words that follow it.]
6. Some companies are using in-network providers to keep a cap on cost increases. [Use a hyphen between compound modifiers of a noun.]
7. Only two companies met or exceeded expectations—Charles Schwab and Fidelity—and those firms were also the most highly rated by consumers. [Use an em-dash to create a strong sentence break.]
8. The double-digit increases in drug costs have insurers seeking new ways to keep policies affordable—unfortunately, those increases result in higher deductibles. [Use a hyphen between compound modifiers of a noun. Use an em-dash instead of a semicolon or a period to place emphasis on the independent clause that follows it.]
9. Special low-cost coverage is being offered for those aged 18–30. [Use a hyphen between compound modifiers of a noun. Use the en-dash to replace *through*.]
10. The survey was released to HR professionals in late September—just weeks before enrollment season began in earnest. [Use an em-dash to emphasize words that follow it.]
11. One-on-one advice can be expensive—especially for participants with low existing balances. [Use a hyphen between compound modifiers of a noun. Use an em-dash to emphasize the words that follow it.]
12. For a variety of reasons—most of them legal—the retirement policies are full of jargon. [Use an em-dash to create a strong sentence break.]