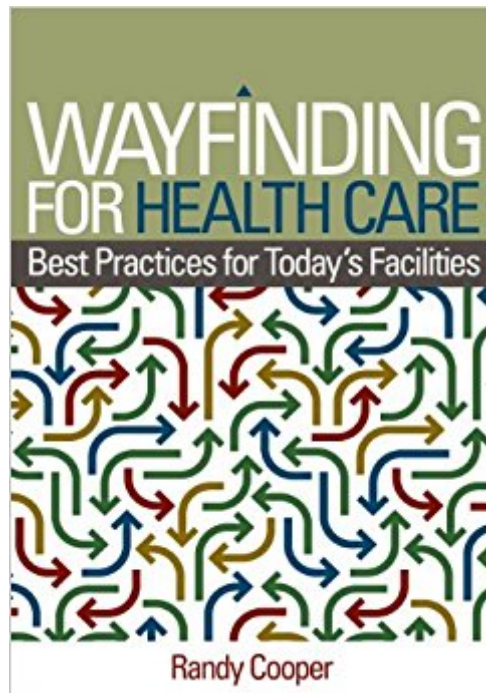




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# Wayfinding For Health Care: Best Practices For Today's Facilities



## Synopsis

A pragmatic book that exclusively covers wayfinding at health care facilities. It serves as a guide to stimulate thinking and highlights projects that illustrate how wayfinding projects at existing or planned facilities can be put on track quickly and successfully. It clearly builds the case that proper wayfinding protocols have an immensely positive impact on staff, patient and visitor behaviors and perceptions and ultimately affect patient satisfaction, staff morale and an organization's bottom line.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The visual impact and correctness of a well thought-out graphics and wayfinding presentation can be critical in an effort to humanize an environment that is, by nature, a cold institutional space. . . .

Mr. Cooper has created a framework and approach that a facility or design team can utilize in the design process. Designers will be able to look to these guidelines and examples as not only a baseline approach but as a springboard to propel them to more imaginative and creative solutions.

--Christopher Upton, AIA, FAAMA, Director of Healthcare Planning, Kirksey, Houston...shows graphically the importance and functionality of signage and wayfinding in hospitals and on health care campuses. It offers a systematic approach to implementing a consistent wayfinding program that can improve both efficiencies and facility image. Here is a wealth of hard-to-find information in a single, coherent source from one of the most experienced design professionals in health care. --J. David Mullins, AIA, ACHA, Director of Healthcare Consulting and Program Management, Boyken International, AtlantaMr. Cooper has created a framework and approach that a facility or design

team can utilize in the design process. Designers will be able to look to these guidelines and examples as not only a baseline approach but as a springboard to propel them to more imaginative and creative solutions. --Christopher Upton, AIA, FAAMA, Director of Healthcare Planning, Kirksey, Houston

Randy Cooper, SEGD, is an award-winning designer, a nationally recognized author and speaker to health care audiences, and the owner and president of Cooper Sign & Graphics in Atlanta.

As an admirer of wayfinding projects in communities, entertainment venues and airports, I have studied what works for them for future use at the large inner-city medical center where I work. I love this book more than any other wayfinding resource because there is no conversion of venues needed. It provides specific healthcare examples and case studies that rely on conventional wisdom and years of environmental graphic design research by those who have devoted their lives to the field. The book's description that hooked me was "...helps project leaders to justify a financial investment in wayfinding --- identify, prioritize and document facility needs --- and build a wayfinding and signage standards manual for ongoing reference..." Making a point and winning the support of C level executives is so much easier when referring to the hard-core examples and chapters in this book. Get this book when you are ready to move beyond the band-aid approach to signage and take on an institution-wide wayfinding solution. It will help you every step of the way.

I am sorry to say I was deeply disappointed with this book. For what is promised to be a wayfinding primer, I found it to be overly simplistic, lacking in more than basic knowledge, and not well directed to the first-time visitor, who should be the primary focus of a well-designed wayfinding system. I also thought the book contained many poor quality photos and illustrations, which was especially surprising given that the author runs a sign fabrication firm. The author does not appear to have the experience necessary to understand wayfinding as both an art and a science. To a large extent, successful wayfinding requires, first and foremost, finding out what the user community thinks it wants (which can often be different from what it actually needs) and, depending on the extent of a wayfinding firm's use of interviews, focus groups and other audits, identifying the differences of opinion within the user group that typically surface. The author is largely silent on how to air and resolve such differences and glosses over this likelihood as he does in his treatment of many other important principles of the wayfinding process. Here as elsewhere in the book, the author reiterates the basic information that the average Request for Proposal contains. The author makes a number

of broad sweeping generalizations that are simply superficial solutions reflecting the lack of a working knowledge of healthcare facilities. To quote the book: "gaining complete, facility-wide commitment is the only way for a successful wayfinding initiative to be implemented and maintained." Having successfully implemented and monitored several major wayfinding projects in different healthcare facilities, I thought the author's knowledge was significantly lacking. I've always been rather skilled in shared governance, working effectively with physicians, nurses, administrators, neighbors, visitors, patients and families in problem resolution, and it is clear to me that you rarely gain "complete, facility-wide commitment," although a working consensus is certainly achievable given the right leadership, both internally and from the wayfinding design consultant. Throughout my healthcare career, I've always utilized an extensive, inclusive, rigorous Request for Proposal and interviewing process for retaining wayfinding firms. The Society for Environmental Graphic Design is a good source for screening such firms, as is the Internet, since, as design firms, wayfinding consultants maintain robust and informative web sites. In my experience, such firms as Corbin Design of Traverse City, Michigan, who repeatedly won contracts because they did their homework and exhaustingly analyzed the unique needs of my organization and its visitors each and every time, would seem to me to provide a much stronger resource to the American Hospital Association for any future in-depth discussions on the subject and to its members for their ongoing needs. Ritch K. Eich President Eich Associated

I am highly disappointed in this purchase. Charging over \$70 for this is just a crime: a) The content leaves much to be desired. A quote on p. 30: "Room numbers. Numbers are needed by staff as well as patients and visitors to correctly identify a location." That is just such a ridiculously obvious statement that there's not much left to say. Approximately half (maybe more?) of this 150-page book are pictures, and this is what you give me in terms of content? Damn. b) It looks like I printed it from low-quality thumbnail images blown up on my InkJet printer. And, yep, about half the book is filled with these splendidly pixelated photos of hospital signage. c) There is literally no data on impact good wayfinding can have on patient/visitor experience. There is no data on the cost of good vs. bad wayfinding. But you know, "at South Georgia Medical Center, [...] the translation services department had documented a user rate of just 4 percent [...] [while] Spanish-only speakers made up about a quarter of all customers." (p. 55)...the best data you've given me is that translation services are underutilized at South Georgia Medical Center? d) This book was written in 2010, and wayfinding technology gets 3 pages (38-40). Meanwhile, some kid getting his B.S. writes this in 2009: Google "Indoor Navigation System for Handheld Devices"...first link. Needless to say, I'll be

returning this book. I'll try to compile some real info from scholarly articles.

This book finally addresses objectively the many issues hospitals face with guiding visitors, patients, and staff quickly to their destinations. Working as an architect and consultant with hospitals around the country, I have been asked for directions many times by fellow visitors - precisely because of the common wayfinding errors pointed out in Mr. Cooper's book. I wished I could give a copy of it to all of my clients' facility managers - but I HAVE recommended to them. The information and guidance in the book is helpful - especially when wayfinding is having an impact upon a hospital's internal efficiencies. The book is written with practical, objective guidance on determining key functional issues and their resolution in the context of precise information and an overall "branding" look of a facility. It is obvious that there are many years of experience brought to bear in addressing the unique issues of wayfinding in hospitals here - something architects, interior designers, and facility managers can use to address a complex issue at the earliest phase of design, or a systematic re-working of an overall hospital's wayfinding system and "look". The American Hospital Association got it right in commending this book - it's been needed for years.

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