

involvement insights:

WRITING TO ENGAGE

STYLE – Plain English. Succinct. Readable.

- ✓ Do simplify. If possible, opt for simpler words and those more relevant to and readily used in today's language.
- ✓ Do cut the waffle. Where you can say it with fewer words - do.

TOP TIP: Replace 'methodology' with 'method'; switch 'by way of' for 'by'. See the [Plain English Campaign](#).

STRUCTURE – Clear. Flowing. Easy-to-read.

- ✓ Do vary sentence structure and remember paragraphs. A mix of short and longer forms retains interest and makes for easier reading.
- ✗ Don't write overly long sentences. An ideal introduction is 15-30 words. Vary lengths depending on audience and type of copy.

TOP TIP: If you find a sentence hard to read out-loud, it's probably going to be difficult for others to read too.

GRAMMAR/SPELLING – Proof read. Proof read. Proof read.

- ✓ Do re-read your work several times – even the best writers make mistakes. Ask your media / public relations team to check your work.
- ✗ Don't underestimate the power of good English. It helps people understand you and has an impact on organisational reputation.

TOP TIP: Read 'Eats, Shoots and Leaves' for a light-hearted run-down of all things English language.

AUDIENCE – Who. Where. How.

- ✓ Do write for your audience. Create different versions tailored to who is reading, where they are reading, and how they like to read.
- ✓ Do consider different formats, such as larger text or alternative languages, depending on who will be reading your work.

TOP TIP: Revisit your stakeholder map to help determine main groups you are writing for.

MEDIUM – Right impact. Right time. Right result.

- ✓ Do write differently for different purposes. An advert is short and catchy; a press release is a drip feed; a tweet is succinct and direct.
- ✓ Do seek support from specialists you work with, or peers who may be able to help you tailor your copy.

TOP TIP: There is a wealth of internet information to help you structure your copy.

TONE – Interest. Personality. Identity.

- ✗ Don't take tone of voice lightly – it's part of your organisation and what you write needs to fit the brand.
- ✓ Do write in a friendly, interesting, knowledgeable manner. You wouldn't bore people face-to-face, so don't do it in text.

TOP TIP: To communicate well, you need to know your subject. Understand your brief and do your research.

ACRONYMS/COMPLEX TERMS – Spell out. Explain. Avoid.

- ✗ Don't assume people know an acronym or term. They can be barriers to engagement – and your organisation.
- ✓ Do spell out acronyms when you first mention them and try to avoid complicated terms. If you must use one, explain it simply.

TOP TIP: On first mention of an acronym, spell it out in brackets after i.e. PPP (Patient and Public Participation).

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Midlands and Lancashire CSU commissioned by NHS England to help build expertise and capability in support of the participation agenda