YOU HAVE A VOICE. FIND IT. HONE IT. USE IT.

So that you can say what you need to say in ways that get you noticed.
Your brand is your most valuable asset

In a world where ferocious competition, relentless change and non-stop innovation have become the norm, your brand is:

- your anchor (keeps you upright and consistent)
- your beacon (attracts attention and helps you stand out)
- your north star (leading you forwards)
- your reputation (what people say about you)
- your most valuable asset

So your brand cannot ever just be your logo, products, services or expertise. These are just cogs in the machine.
Brand as DNA

Your brand is your promise to provide a particular experience to a specific set of standards. Think of your brand as the DNA that shapes every single thing your company thinks, says and does:

• It’s how you conduct yourself in the public sphere
• It’s how you do things within the company, and behind closed doors
• It’s what attracts and unites staff, stakeholders, suppliers, clients, consumers, investors
• It’s what turns you from a business into something much bigger.

All these elements are carried in your voice. So what you say you say – and how – are very important.
What is ‘tone of voice’?

Your TOV is how your brand gets heard.

TOV =

WHY (your purpose and USPs)  
+  
WHAT (your values and products / services / expertise)  
×  
PERSONALITY (your TOV)

Your WHY is key because people buy into your WHY before anything else.
A good TOV expresses your brand’s personality in ways that support the brand purpose and brand values.

But only Innocent can sound like Innocent.
Pure Nike – bold, succinct, direct, meaningful.

Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything.

Just do it.
One of Strawbees’ new brand values is ‘Learning by trying’.
Poll 1

If you’ve written for your business or brand, e.g. website, LinkedIn, pitches, etc. did you find it:

A. Easy and love the results!
B. Easy and don’t love the results
C. Hard and love the results!
D. Hard and don’t love the results
Common issues

Writing for your own brand is hard! Here are some common sticking points.

- Getting the facts down but failing to sound interesting or engaging

- Communicating benefits / value clearly (especially if these are abstract or hard to quantify verbally).

- Making points easy to grasp (you can’t rely too much on jargon as it can alienate)

- Compressing messages into something bitesize (being concise takes time and skill!)

- Getting the tone right (perhaps sounding too serious, longwinded, or too similar to your competition).
Strengthen your purpose

Let’s look at what a strong purpose sounds like, and see if we can take any tips.

Greta Thunberg
Strengthen your purpose

Let’s look at what a strong purpose sounds like, and see if we can take any tips.

Sport England
Strengthen your purpose

Let’s look at what a strong purpose sounds like, and see if we can take any tips.

Nike
Find your why

Improve your WHY statement and shorten to SEVEN WORDS from your original 15…

- make it tight and single-minded (no fluff or fancy words)
- emotive (people buy into emotion)
- funny or lively (everyone likes to smile)
- useful or meaningful (don’t be abstract)
- snappy (get to the meat)
- everyday English (lose the corporate-speak)
- be ‘you’ (it can’t sound like anyone else)
- keep it honest (the best brands represent their businesses honestly)
- THIS IS FOR YOUR EYES ONLY SO DON’T WORRY ABOUT SHARING

Helpful trick 1:
What are you in a nutshell?
- Doctors save lives
- Teachers shape minds
- Apple thinks different
- Nike brings inspiration and innovation to all athletes.
- Air BnB helps people to belong anywhere

Helpful trick 2:
Imagine your mum has asked you what you offer the world?
She wants a simple answer. What do you say to her?
Identify your values

Nike
Purpose
To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world
Values
- Inspiration
- Innovation

Ben & Jerry’s
Purpose
Make the best possible ice cream in the nicest possible way
Values
- Make fantastic ice cream for its own sake
- Manage our Company for sustainable financial growth
- Make the world a better place

General Electric
Purpose
Imagination at work
Values
- Imagine
- Solve
- Build
- Lead

What three things do you believe in? A good starting point is to first define what you definitely don’t believe in (in your industry context), then offer the opposite.
What’s your brand personality?

Nike

Purpose
To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world.

Values
Inspiration and Innovation.

Personality
Authentic, connected, distinctive

Choose a brand ambassador
Choose the brand ambassador of your dreams. Pick someone famous – from any walk of life – that you feel embodies your brand, and whose personality and character fits your purpose and values. Name them and choose three traits inspired by them. (Hint: avoid obvious traits such as Approachable, Honest, Professional.)
Well done!

You now have (the beginnings of!):

- a clear, succinct brand purpose
- three strong brand values
- three distinctive personality traits

Spend some time tinkering with these, research your competition, your audiences, and see if you can refine it further.
In summary

A strong voice will help you…

… shine
… turn heads
… be honest and consistent
Books worth reading

- Why Brands with a Purpose Do Better and Matter More by David Hieatt

- Change the Status Quo. Or Become It. by Mark Shayler

- Brilliant Copywriting by Roger Horberry

- The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding by Al Ries and Laura Ries

- Anything written by Paul Arden
THANKS!