

Creative intelligence for  
startups and scaleups

A teal-tinted photograph showing a man and a woman in a professional setting. The man is leaning over a desk, and the woman is sitting and looking up at him. The background is slightly blurred, suggesting an office or meeting room.

# Tone of voice explained

Creative intelligence

**SIM7**  
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# Set the tone

If your scaleup is expanding into new markets or you're trying different forms of marketing for the first time, you'll find that a defined tone of voice will help you assert your brand and achieve better results. Here's how it works.

## Your brand tone of voice

How about a quick bit of interactive fun to kick things off? (Don't worry, it's painless, we promise.)

a) Your business will benefit from a memorable, distinctive tone of voice. Here's how.

b) Anyone care to know more about this tone of voice thing everyone's banging on about?

c) Ears open. It's the lowdown on tone of voice, baby.

Three ways of saying broadly the same thing. Three different tones. Three different personalities. Now which one's getting your valuable time and attention?\*

Because that's the power of tone of voice. It can be the difference between a potential customer getting in touch immediately - or being turned off forever.

\*We're 'Camp a': Direct, helpful, empathetic. Clear tone.

## Finding your voice

As a scaleup business, you'll already have a brand; brand positioning and personality, brand values and visual identity. And you know how to apply your brand to different audiences across different channels and platforms. But tone of voice? Do you have one? Do you use it consistently? Does it reflect where you are now - or who your customers are? Tone of voice – what you say and how you say it – is your brand personality in writing.

The verbal identity to your visual one. It's the pitch you make and the words you use. It's rhythm and pace and energy. Because as well as communicating important information and meaning, the words we choose convey all-important emotion too. Like excitement, value, reassurance, support and trust. Yes, trust.

## We feel. We think. We do.

We humans are emotional beings. In the words of Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, the inspirational neuroanatomist, author, and public speaker, we are feeling creatures who think, not thinking creatures who feel. So our words have to engage people emotionally - not just rationally or functionally. Our tone of voice has to make people feel something.

How you use adjectives, conjunctions and contractions. How you use... punctuation. How you mix things. Up. A clearly defined and articulated tone of voice shapes how people see you and, in turn, helps you to build an emotional connection with them. Your tone of voice shows the world who you are and what you stand for - and whether you're someone that's worthy of their time and attention. Big ask. Not-an-inconsiderable job.

That's why it's so important to develop a relevant and memorable tone of voice that your customers (and other audiences) will listen to, relate to - and, in turn, act upon. But where to start? Three quick tips coming right up on the next page.



# 1. Hello, brand values

Your brand tone of voice is your brand values talking. So start by diving into your values. Look at them forensically. Think about the personal qualities and characteristics that you see in people who have those values - or similar values. How would you describe them? How do they come across? How do they make other people feel?

# 2. Write away

Create your tone of voice by writing. Just writing. Play with your brand pitch, positioning and values. Write in the way that your brand values make people feel. Have fun with it. Explore different personality types. Sometimes, and if you don't have one already, it can help to explore different brand archetypes (which we'll be exploring in a guide soon).

# 3. Flex that tone

This is a biggie. Your brand voice must remain consistent but your tone can change. That's because we want our writing to feel like a conversation between equals. Two humans talking to each other, not a chatbot monologuing. So anything we write must start with our audience and we should adjust our tone to suit them.

So if we're talking to a technical audience, we can use technical language. Because it's how they speak, it's what they're used to. If we're talking to school leavers for example, leave the tech speak and jargon at the door.

Show empathy with your audience to build rapport. Share common ground. Keep your writing simple, real and human. (Which is a pretty good rule of thumb rule for every audience, we'd say.)



## Guidelines last

That's right. Finish by creating a set of tone of voice guidelines. Don't start with them. Once you've found your voice, get it down into a (short) set of principles or characteristics. Then share. With everyone who writes for your scale up.

Brand  
/Insight  
/Advice  
/Inspiration  
/Identity  
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## More talk

We can help you develop a tone of voice that'll win hearts and minds, loyalty and business. Discover more at [sim7creative.co.uk](https://sim7creative.co.uk)

Or get in touch with our scaleups branding specialist Henry John at [Henry@sim7creative.co.uk](mailto:Henry@sim7creative.co.uk)