



How to brief your copywriter for success

A hands-on guide
from Press4Copy

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A person's hands are holding a black compass with a white face and blue markings. The compass is held up against a background of a vast, hazy mountain landscape under a cloudy sky. The person is wearing a dark jacket.

Know what you want

What's it to be? Lead generation? Promoting your brand? Driving a response? There's no limit to what words can achieve for you.

But if you don't have clarity on the purpose of your message, your copywriter won't bring it to life.

Know what you want your copy to do, and share this with your copywriter.



Pack the brief

Copywriters tend to be good at entering unfamiliar worlds for as long as a project takes.

They can take information on board. They can filter in what they need, and filter out what they don't.

So share your world. Be sure your copywriter understands your competition, your challenges and opportunities.



Have a single focus

There's an old saying in copywriting. "Give me the freedom of a tight brief." It means you giving absolute clarity of your communication's purpose. So make this focus the single most important part of your brief.

Write it down in a very short sentence. If you use the word 'and' or insert a comma, you're including more than one key message.

See your background information as the ammunition, and the single focus as the gun.

Who are you writing to?

A good copywriter will want to provide copy that strikes a chord with your audience even more than they'll want to strike a chord with you.

That's exactly why you're paying them.

So tell your writer who you are talking to - young professionals with lots of disposable income who love to socialise with their friends, or single mum strapped for cash and time?





Your tone of voice

Every organisation should have a tone of voice. It's important that your copywriter gets a sense of yours so that they produce copy which sounds like it's come from your brand.

If they are editing copy that has already been drafted, they can then give it your brand's unique voice.

Tell your writer who you are, and who you're not.

Think visually

It may be that you simply want 20 word captions to accompany an image, or you may want the copy to reference the imagery directly.

Perhaps you simply want the copy and imagery to incorporate the same theme. Whatever the case, tell your copywriter. Provide links to the images and state how you want the images and copy to marry up.



Word counts

It's really important to give your copywriter a steer on how many words you'd like each section to include.

If it's an 800 word article, tell them so. If it's a web page and each part of the page has a different amount of words that the design can accommodate, tell them how many words they've got to play with for each part.

Be honest

Of course you'll want to provide feedback on your copywriter's first draft.

This might be simple amends. It might be a complete rewrite.

Whatever, be honest in your response. Copywriters tend to have thick skins and value clarity over politeness. It's your copy, get it to exactly how you want it to be.

This simple guide will help you get the best out of your copywriter. To find out more, or to brief a copywriter with decades of experience in a huge variety of sectors, talk to Press4Copy.

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