

# Writing to influence

## Top Tips for Campaigns Ambassadors

Writing to influence in campaigning means persuading someone else, such as your MP, to do something for a cause that matters to you. You probably write to influence more often than you think, for example writing a post asking people to sponsor you for a charity run.

Your approach might be different depending on the audience, but some of the essential techniques will be the same.

### **To write to influence, first you need to know your purpose and your audience.**

#### **Purpose: what do you want?**

You need to keep in mind exactly what you are trying to achieve – this will help to keep your writing focused. Before you start writing, have a clear idea of what you want to achieve with your words. Do you want to build rapport or share a call to action? Knowing your purpose will help you choose the right tone, style, and format for your writing.

#### **Audience: what do they want?**

Think about who you are writing to, what do they want? Try to understand their needs and interests, for example does an MP sit on a relevant committee or group. You also need to think about what questions and objections they might have. By knowing your audience, you can engage and connect with them.

### **Using emotions, logic and values to write persuasively**

Your purpose and your audience will help decide how much you focus on each, but a blend of all three will be the most effective way to influence through your words. Using storytelling is a powerful tool to help you get their attention, explain your points, and create empathy. To influence people, they also need to believe what you say. Evidence like facts, data and examples can help support your position, build trust, and convince the audience. Using benefits can demonstrate how your message can solve their problems or improve their situation. Finally, a call to action can prompt your reader to take the next step.

# Structuring your writing to engage

You know what you want, you've researched your audience and decided on the story you're going to tell, so how do you pull it all together?

## Step 1: Demonstrate the crisis and opportunity

What is the problem and why does it need their urgent attention today? For example, *smoking is the biggest cause of cancer and death in the UK and there are still around 6 million people smoking in the UK.*

And how can they play their part in fixing it right now? For example, *if it becomes law, the Tobacco and Vapes Bill will help to create the first ever smokefree generation.*

## Step 2: Make your ask

There's a crisis and opportunity, but what can your reader do about it? Explain exactly what you want them to do after reading this? For example, *as my MP I want you to vote in favour of the Bill as it passes through Parliament.*

## Step 3: Show the impact they can have

Here is where you can show them the theory of change; if you do *this*, then *that* will happen. For example, *almost 9 in 10 people who smoke in the UK start before the age of 21. Smoking rates don't come down on their own, they come down with government action; increasing the age of sale of tobacco products will help to build a healthier future, prevent cancer, and protect people from a lifetime of deadly addiction.*

## Step 4: Tell a story

You've mostly used logic to make your case so far. Now you can bring in personal experiences alongside facts to create the emotion needed to drive action. The research you have done in to your audience will help you choose the best examples here.

## Step 5: Invite the reader into a wider movement

Here is where shared values and goals play their biggest role. Talk about how this campaign, or this action, fits into the bigger picture of beating cancer. For example, *cancer affects people in every family and every constituency. Nearly 1 in 2 of us will get cancer in our lifetimes. With political will and leadership, we can all have more moments with the people we love. Our aim is simple: longer, better lives. By acting on smoking now, we can help to elevate UK cancer survival to amongst the best in the world.*

## Step 6: Repeat your ask

You've used emotions, logic and values to hopefully convince your reader to act, all that's left is reminding them exactly what you want them to do now.