

Words

- The words "client" and "consumer" should not be used in public discourse to describe people.
- Describe people in terms they would describe themselves.
- Focus on people, not abstract concepts.
- Public messages should use short words and short sentences.
- Do your word choices activate helpful or unhelpful frames?
- Preference collective terms that people would use for themselves (Australians, families).
- Don't copy problematic language of your audiences.

Imagery

- Design matters.
- No more dreary pictures of sad people. Show people the end result - their happiness and freedom.
- Use images that show how positive, compassionate and caring we are.
- Use images that people relate to - people don't relate to lawyer's offices.
- Can your audience see themselves or people like them
- Be careful presenting yourselves as authority figures. Are the people you serve looking for an authority figure or someone who cares?

Stories

- Stories need a beginning, a middle and an end. Is your structure helping or hindering your story's message?
- No evidence without stories.
- Focus on people, not policies.
- Plan out the key messages each story needs to tell.
- Try telling stories in different formats (written, audio, video). Different people engage with different kinds of storytelling. Mix it up!
- Stories are most powerful from the people who experienced them. Help people to tell their own stories.

Us

- We are people who help people.
- Be confident about who we are. Our work changes lives and makes Australia a fairer place. Own it!
- We don't "seek" or "aim" to do things. We do things.
- Your mission statement should paint the picture of what Australia/the world looks like as a result of our work.
- Describing **what** we do isn't enough. Describe **how** our work fits into the bigger picture.
- Use active language about our work.

Words to embrace



People - Families, Australians, Victorians, Mothers, Fathers, etc (Terms people would call themselves)

People hurt by predatory business (Someone made a choice to hurt these people)

The people we serve/people we work with (Gives them agency)

People in debt (They are people first and foremost)

People who can't make ends meet/feed their family (Defines them by what they use money for)

They are poorly paid (Onus on employers/business to pay people properly)

Economy out of balance (Suggests the balance can be tipped back)

Basic living standards (Sets a minimum standard)

The community (Terms that focus on the collective)

Words to replace



Consumers, shoppers (people do not identify this way)

Vulnerable consumers (because people do not identify as consumer, they do not care about consumers being vulnerable)

Clients (Makes people clinical and removes their agency)

Debtors (Defines people by their indebtedness)

The poor, low-income earners (Defines them by their income)

They don't earn enough money (Onus on them to earn more money)

Economic inequality (Sounds insurmountable)

Safety net (unhelpful metaphor)

Taxpayers (Frames debate around money)