This document is a guide to the type of content and examples you should include in your brand book. Your brand book will be an easy to follow guide to all the ways you express your brand including visuals, tone, content, experiences, etc.

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A strong brand is the foundation for our organization's success. To build a great brand, we need to be clear about our "why", or reason to exist, our vision for the future we're trying to build, our values and how we want to act and what is the true value and impact our organization delivers.

Make sure you reference this section whenever deciding or planning any messages, events, posts, or campaigns.

## Welcome message

This is typically two or three paragraphs explaining what this guide is for (to ensure consistency in the expression of the brand in all its formats (visual, content, tone, voice and experiential). Why it's important to use it and who within the organization to contact if anyone has a question.

## Vision

What does the future we're trying to build, and shape look like?

## Our "Why" – reason to exist

Why do we exist? Not what we do and how, but why? What is our purpose?

## The true value we deliver

What is the true value our clients get from interacting with us? This is not the benefit they get by using our products or services but rather the emotional benefit they receive by interacting with our organization.

## What are our values? What do we hold true?

What are the 3 – 4 values we hold true and are prepared to uphold and live by, especially when it would be so much easier not to?

## How we do we need to behave and act so we know we're living by our values? What should our personality be like?

What are the 3 – 4 corresponding personality traits to our values? What are the behaviors we want to make sure we encourage and nourish within our organization? What do we want our culture to be?

This section includes all the logo usage guidelines including the logotype, icons, typography, wordmarks, colour palette, etc. It should include examples of the correct and incorrect ways to use the logo, space and size guidelines as well as recommended file types for different uses.

## Background of meaning of logo

Provide a short description and background about the logo and its meaning. Describe any references or symbolisms included in the design.

## Elements and versions

Show and explain the use of all elements that may form part of your logo (i.e. wordmark and icon). Show all different versions you can use your logo (i.e. colour and black and white, vertical and horizontal format).

## Common mistakes

Show visually some of the common mistakes people make when using a logo.

## Size and shape

Show clear measurements and guidance on the minimum permitted size and required space around the logo.

Your brand colours are extremely important when expressing your brand. In this section include the actual primary and secondary colours that form part of your brand colour palette.

## Primary colours

Include the detailed information as well as swaps of your primary colours in CMYK, RGB, HEX and Pantone.

## Secondary colours

Include the detailed information as well as swaps of your secondary colours in CMYK, RGB, HEX and Pantone.

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Your fonts style is another great way to express your brand. Consistency throughout the organization on what fonts are used are imperative.

## Brand fonts

Include name and examples of what your brand fonts are and look like as well as when to use each.

Photos and videos are more than ever, important and useful when expressing your brand. It is essential to have a good library of proprietary or stock images (photos and videos) you can use to help express an idea or concept while reflecting your brand.

## Approach

Provide a short guide on the type of images you should use that reflect your brand values and personality. Describe as best as you can the style of the images (i.e. hopeful, light, or more serious and somber; close ups of people or landscapes of places). Try to think of what you want these images to express (i.e. hope, need).

## Examples

Include examples, of stock or original photos and/or videos that should be used. Start putting together a library of images that you can tap into to use.

Much like photos and videos, illustrations are becoming more common and can be a great way to simplify a message, to help guide the viewer or reader through a document, etc. It's important you outline the style and use of illustrations.

## Approach

Provide a short guide on the type of illustrations you should use that reflect your brand values and personality. Describe as best as you can the style and when and where to use illustrations.

## Examples

Include examples of illustrations that should be used. Start putting together a library of illustrations that you can tap into to use.

The type of language you use is direct reflection of who you are as an organization. Many of your potential clients, donors, funders and other audiences will likely first read something about you such as in your website, grant application, story, social media post, etc. It's extremely important that the language and tone of voice you use are consistent and appropriately reflect your brand.

## Copy tone

Describe the brand voice (friendly, serious, intellectual, simple). If the organization was a person how would it be like? How would we speak?

## Writing tips and tricks

Provide a few examples of main things to keep in mind to make sure you hit the right tone and use the right language.

## Copy style examples

Providing examples is the best way to guide people. In this section include dos and don'ts with some very short and concise writing samples.

Writing may be one of the main ways you use or rely upon to express your brand. You may also have many people within your organization that are writing on behalf of the organization as well as many different platforms and audiences you're writing for. Although messages should change depending on the audience and platform, consistency is expressing your brand is key. This section is to provide more detailed information as well as some boilerplate information and language that anyone from your organization can use as is.

## About who we are

Provide a short (2 – 4) paragraphs explaining who you are as an organization. Here you explain why you exist. The value and impact or your organization.  You may talk about the need or problem you're solving, and you may use a story to help share that information. Do include the emotional benefit your audiences get from your organization.

You may expand the information when talking about the problem you're trying to solve. Remember, your audience won't likely know anything or may have preconceived ideas or misconceptions about the issue so approach the issue as if who you're talking to know nothing about it. **Never assume your audience understand the issue and the importance of focusing on it.**

**Don't use this section to talk about what you do or how you do it.**

## About our work

In this section you list the ways you're "solving" or addressing the issue or cause you focus on. You can provide some details on what you do and the types of programs or ways by which you're addressing the issues/cause but keep it concise and to the point. Although you may be providing more straight forward information here, remember to show your passion. Passion is contagious and emotional and it's the way to express the importance of your work and to connect in a deeper way with your audiences (no matter what audience; yes, even funders or accountants (we're all people with feelings).

You can include in this section such information as partners and collaborators as this may be of interest and compelling to many audiences as well as other pertinent information such as who (the people) you serve and/or where (location/s) and a list of projects or programs you offer.

## Brand terminology

Provide a short description and/or list of any terminology you may use to express or provide details about the organization and the work you do (i.e. Names of events/projects/programs, measures of success, meaning of words (i.e. if you use an indigenous word), scientific method/s you apply to your work (i.e. Feedback Informed Practice)**.**

## Words not to use

It's just as important to state what language *not* to use. In this section include any language or specific words that you as an organization don't use as it may offend audiences or those you serve, reinforce a misconception or sustain stigma.

## Boilerplate language

Include specific boilerplates for the organization that staff can use as is from this document. These may be boilerplates about the organization in general, what makes you different, the impact you provide, how you measure success, define the problem you're addressing as an organization, how donations are used, and impact tracked, what your goals are and how people can help you achieve them, etc.

## Style guide

Good grammar and consistency are very important. The impact of your information may be hindered if the reader spots a grammatical mistake or inconsistencies in the copy.

In this section provide guidance on the use of thing such as addresses, capitalization, use of Canadian versus American English, dates, the preferred use of words (i.e. not for profit vs nonprofit), etc.

You're not trying to give an in-depth grammar guide but merely focusing on the most possible common mistake or questions staff may have. It's a good idea to keep adding to this list as you notice mistakes.

For more information on grammar you can direct staff to  or this short article for some great basic writing guidance.

For more information on brand building please visit us at www.marcastrategy.com and listen to our podcast A Branded World.

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