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## **Our tone of voice.**

We are straight talking and honest. We highlight the positive and show the young people we work with as what they are – strong, talented individuals. We are a distinctive mix of being inspiring yet genuine, passionate yet professional, understandable yet impactful.

See the following pages for the four principles that guide our tone of voice. Keep these in mind whenever you write anything for us.



# We are Disruptive. Not demanding.

Being bold and assertive will get us noticed. We aren't afraid to take risks. Our disruptive energy is what makes us powerful as a movement. But however bold we are in our message, we are not agitators. We are disruptive, not demanding.

## **Not like this:**

We're tired of waiting to tackle the biggest issues we face as a world. We're taking matters into our own hands. We're standing up to the ignorance of those who have gone before us, and we will show them how it is done.

## **Like this:**

We know there are some big challenges we face as a world. If we want to move things forward, we need to find a new solution. And we believe we have the answer.

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# **We are Serious.**

## **Not soulless.**

We must engage our audiences using clear, accessible language that demonstrates our role as experts but without alienating people. Being credible doesn't mean being dull.

### **Not like this:**

Young people are perceived as targets for services instead of being considered an essential component of national development strategies. This means that young people are not given meaningful opportunities to better themselves and contribute to society.

### **Like this:**

Young people are often labelled a victim or a threat. They are not given the opportunity to tackle issues they care about. We prove that young people can lead in changing their lives and the lives of entire communities.



# We are Practical. Not pessimistic.

We are passionate and practical. We never use pity or shame to guilt others into action. However we know we make our case stronger by telling stories that resonate and compel. We are practical in our work and persuasive in the way we communicate.

## **Not like this:**

These issues we're dealing with have been around for many, many years. We have the experience required to make real and lasting change. We need all the help we can get if we're going to make any kind of progress.

## **Like this:**

We know we're dealing with deeply ingrained issues that will not be resolved overnight. But we have the skills to make real and lasting change. Our work to date is proof.

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# **We are Inspiring. Not insincere.**

Our courage and determination have the power to fill others with a positive desire to get involved. Young people are the solution and we should celebrate that through youth voices. We're not about feel-good words, but we do evoke empathy. We have a serious mission we're trying to accomplish.

## **Not like this:**

We young people are full of energy, and can't wait to make the world a better place!

Together, we can do it!!!

## **Like this:**

We are young people committed to resolving the toughest challenges we face on our planet.

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## **Words to use and words not to use.**

Jargon (the words and phrases of any sector or workplace) can provide a sense of unity and belonging to individuals and organizations working within a particular area, but language of this kind can also be unclear or alienating to the people we work with and for.



### **Words/phrases to use:**

Making sure young people's voices are heard  
Power  
Resilience  
People changing the world  
Communities leading  
Business skills  
Volunteers  
Community members  
Young people/ young person\*

(\*use this as a default when describing a group or individual).



### **Words/phrases not to use:**

Giving young people a voice  
Empowerment  
Impoverished  
Beneficiary  
On the ground  
Income generating  
Third world  
Stakeholder  
The youth\*

(\*Youth is only used for marketing purposes for catchy campaigns or phrases – for example Youth Power. Don't use this to describe young people as it sounds othering)