

A large, stylized logo consisting of a white 'X' with a purple swoosh above it, followed by the letters 'SQA' in a white, serif font.

X SQA

A smaller version of the X SQA logo, with the 'X' and swoosh in purple and 'SQA' in blue.

X SQA

Tone of Voice

How we sound when we write and speak for SQA



About Tone of Voice

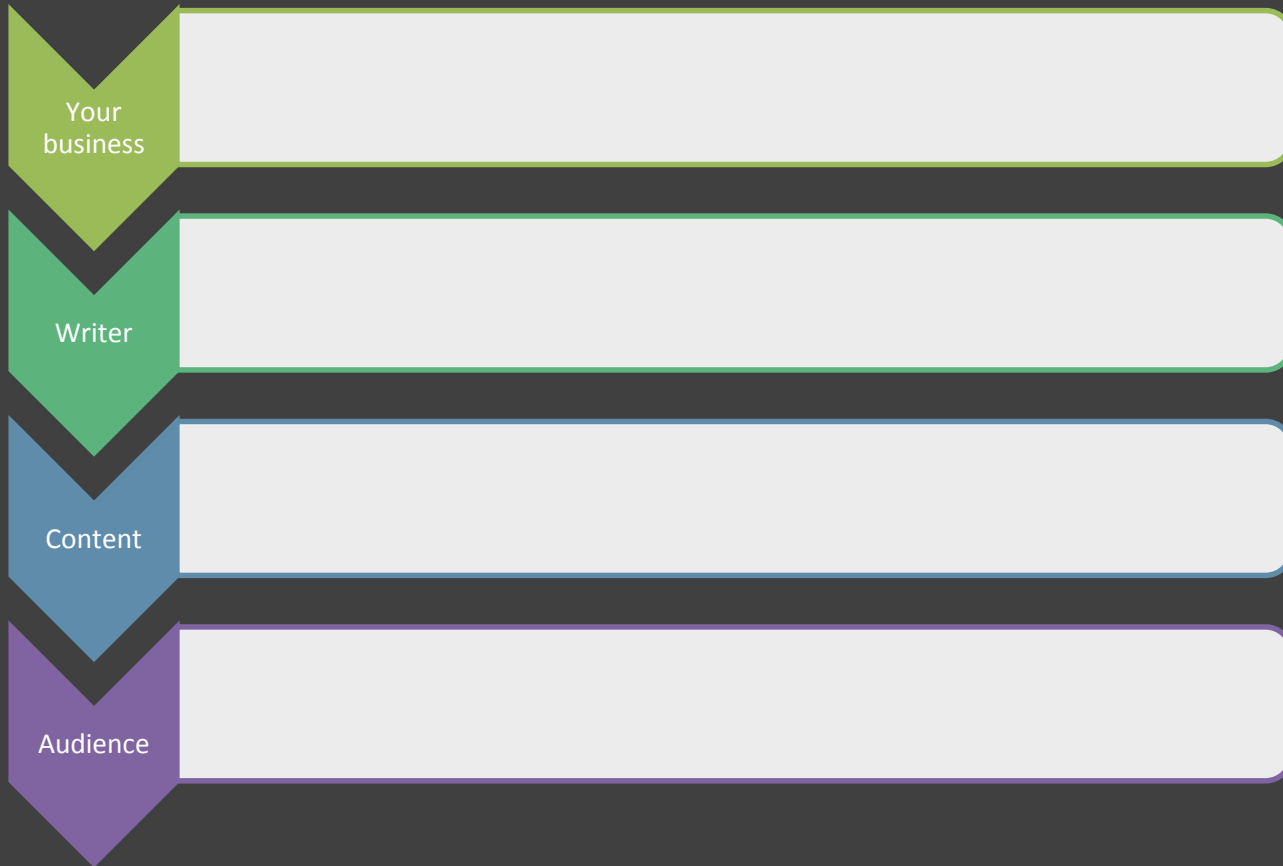
- A device that guides us to write and speak in SQA's style
- Together with our values and visual brand, helps express SQA's culture



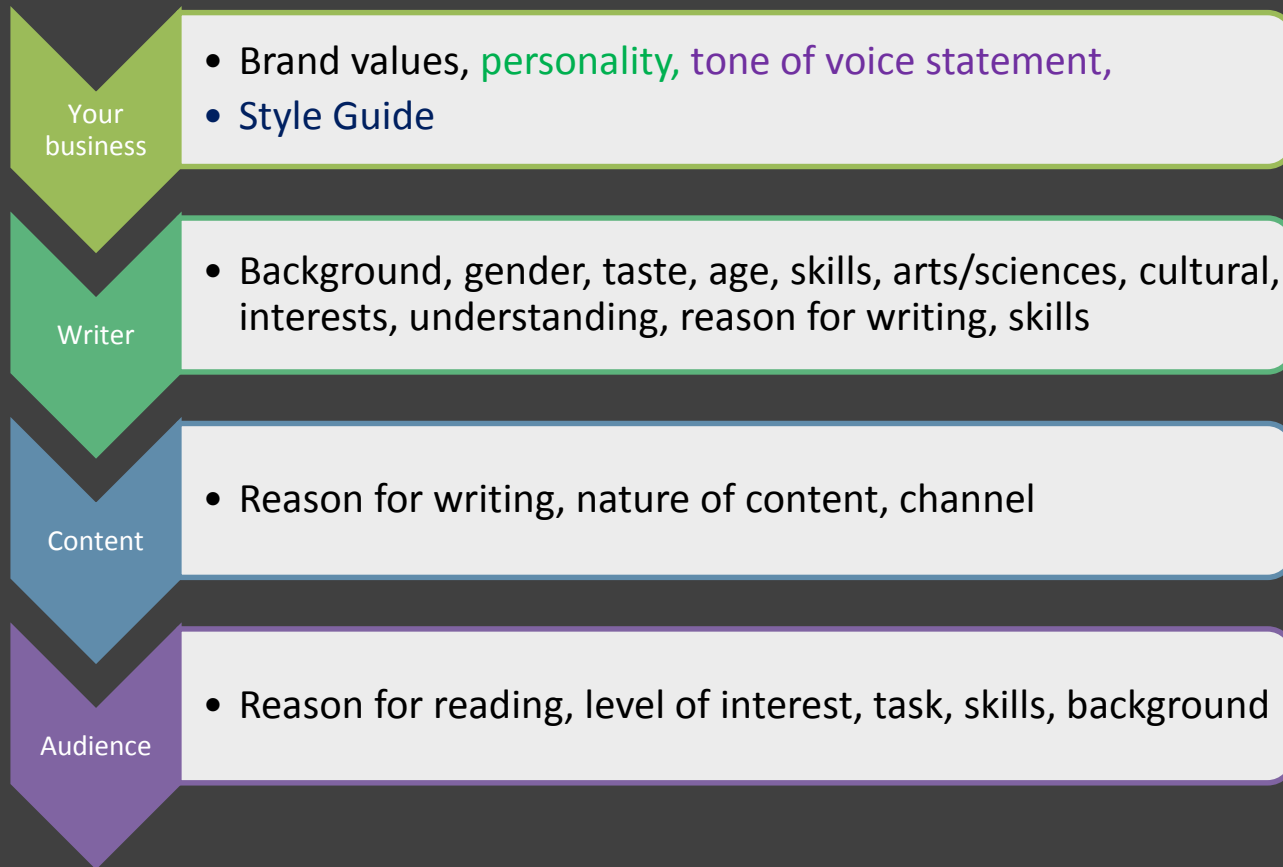
What did the workshops deliver?

- A brief crib sheet relevant for any piece of writing
- How should we sound document
 - Tone of Voice
 - Why
 - How
 - Good examples
 - Poor examples

Sedimentary Model



Sedimentary Model

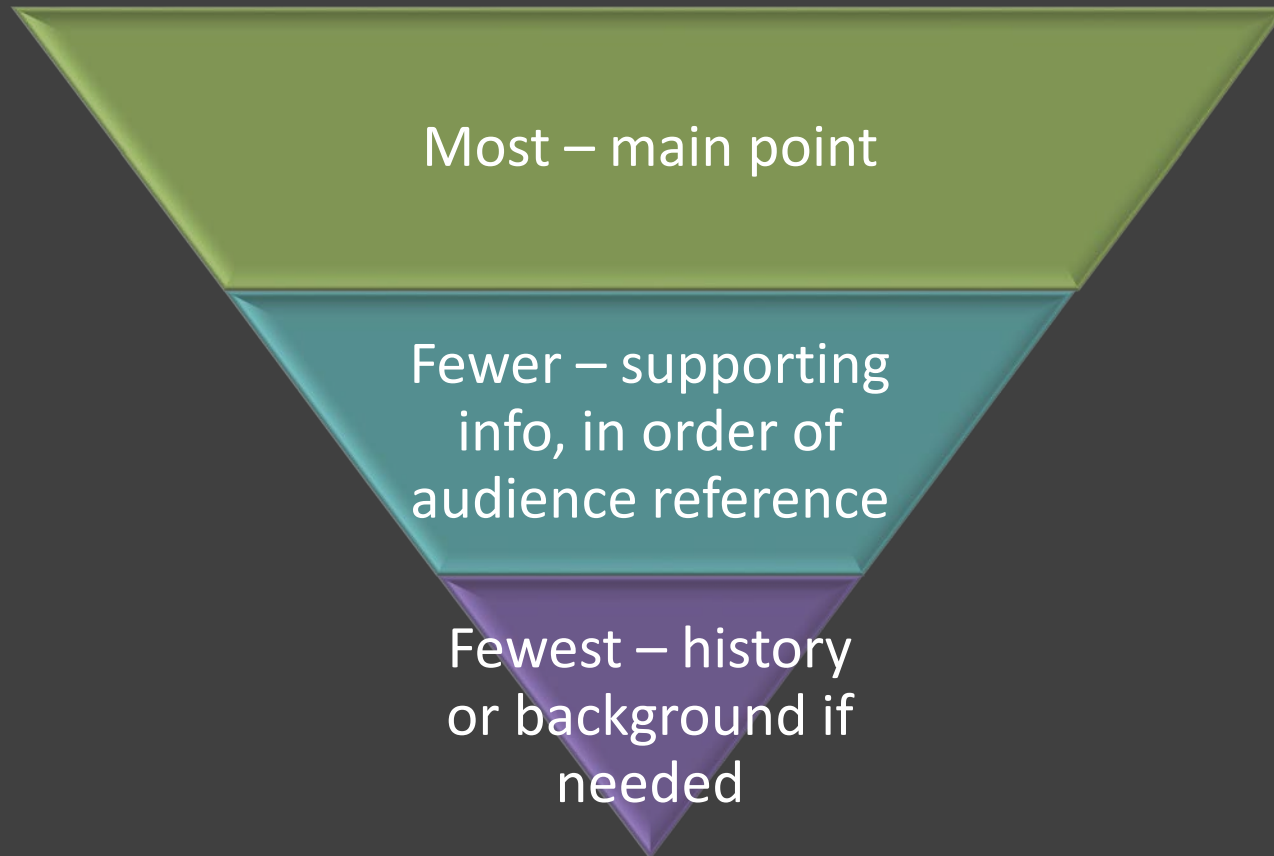


George Orwell & Plain English

- “(i) Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.
- (ii) Never use a long word where a short one will do.
- (iii) If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
- (iv) Never use the passive where you can use the active.
- (v) Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
- (vi) Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.”

— [George Orwell, Politics and the English Language](#)

What comes first



SQA's Tone of Voice

Clear

Confident

Approachable

Inspiring

Clear

- Why?
 - We want our readers to grasp what we are saying quickly and easily.
- How?
 - Short words
 - Short sentences
 - Short paragraphs
 - Prefer active voice

Confident

- Why?
 - If we state our position with certainty and assurance, readers are less likely to be confused.
 - We are professionals who know what we are talking about. We can convey even complex ideas simply, using practical, straightforward language.

Confident

- How?
 - Get straight to the point
 - Be direct
 - Say what you mean without too many conditions
 - Use bullet points
 - Use words your readers would use
 - Use technical language in context but avoid jargon, abbreviations and acronyms
 - Check facts
 - Proof-read for typos

Approachable

- Why?
 - We will always seek to be supportive, empathetic and relevant to our audiences, enabling them to succeed. We will be outward looking rather than inward looking.
 - We will draw the reader into our writing, speaking directly to them in a conversational style.

Approachable

- How?
 - Think about who will read your writing
 - Focus on the reader
 - Why are they reading it?
 - What task are they trying to complete?
 - What information will help them?
 - What order should it go in?
 - Follow accessibility guidance
 - Be inclusive
 - Use “you” and “we” (second person)
 - Be positive rather than negative
 - Ask the reader questions
 - Use contractions – we’re, can’t

Inspiring

- Why?
 - We will use personal stories and strong examples to influence and persuade.
- How?
 - Use strong verbs more than nouns (avoid noun stacks)
 - Use examples and case studies
 - Tell stories
 - Use adjectives to convey enthusiasm

SQA Tone of Voice toolkit:

- Before and after writing crib sheet
- Tone of Voice in action
- Examples of good and poor writing
- Writing style guide
- Bespoke workshops
- Writing training workshop

Tone of Voice – using it

- ◆ Each marketing team embeds in own processes and/or develops new ones
- ◆ Each marketing team actively ‘sells’ to colleagues
- ◆ Engaging Change HoS
- ◆ Teams engaging with it
 - Sales, liaison team, ops



Tone of Voice – using it

- ◆ What is the best way to adopt it in our team
- ◆ How do we review?

