



CITY OF VINCENT

# THE WAY WE WRITE

## OUR VOICE

Our voice is more than just our writing style.

Our voice is our personality emerging through written words. If the City were a person, how would we speak to our community? Who are we? What do we stand for?

People form an instant impression based on the written word. This can be the deciding factor as to whether someone stops reading or continues to engage with us.

Our voice is:

- friendly
- bright
- approachable
- helpful
- relaxed

Consistency is key. This includes the types of words and language we use (or don't use), how we format text, how our writing flows and the point of view we write from.

## HOW CAN I SUPPORT THE CITY'S VOICE?

- Keep your writing short and concise. Less can often be more.
- Establish your message quickly. Summarise your main points up front so your reader can easily understand and interpret what you are saying.
- Write in a way that is friendly, easy to understand, user focused and avoids jargon and acronyms.
- Make your writing accessible. For example, consider readers who have English as a second language.
- Write in an active voice, rather than passive. For example, "A sentence was written by Jane" (passive). "Jane wrote a sentence" (active).
- Be consistent with our preferred format (see next page).

If you want to learn more, the [Gov Au content guide](#) is a great resource and has more detail on:

- content structure
- writing style
- punctuation and grammar
- accessibility and inclusivity

If you need help developing content for marketing materials, check out our content examples available on the **Vintranet** or email **!Marketing** for advice.

## OUR PREFERRED FORMATTING

| Category                      | Example                                                                                                      | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dates                         | Monday, 1 January 2018                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Day, Date Month Year. (No st or th)</li> <li>Only use day and year in context.</li> </ul>                                                                                            |
| Times                         | 10.30am – 12pm                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a stop to separate hour and minutes.</li> <li>When time is on the hour, no minutes required.</li> <li>Avoid 12noon – use pm.</li> <li>Separate times with a dash (-).</li> </ul> |
| Numbers                       | She works 20 hours a week over three days.                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zero to nine in words.</li> <li>10 and above in digits.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                   |
| Currency                      | \$100,000                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Separate three digits with comma.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                         |
| Capitalisation                | Use capitals sparingly                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capitalise names, days of the week, places, proper nouns and formal job titles.</li> </ul>                                                                                           |
| Titles                        | Use sentence case, not title case for titles                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only the first word is capitalised, unless a proper noun appears.</li> </ul>                                                                                                         |
| Bold or italics in a sentence | Limit the use of <b>bold</b> , <i>italics</i> or <b>colours</b> to highlight key words                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If your content is easy to read then you shouldn't need to use these format tools.</li> </ul>                                                                                        |
| Address                       | 244 Vincent Street<br>Leederville WA 6007                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address format as per example.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                            |
| Phone number                  | 9273 6000<br>0400 000 000                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only use area code (08) for interstate readers.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                           |
| Commas                        | Commas create a natural pause, great for adding inflection to a sentence, but, having too many is confusing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use in moderation. Consider using a bulleted list or full stops instead of commas.</li> </ul>                                                                                        |
| Emoticons and emojis          | ☺ :-)                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use in context.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                           |

| Category                                             | Example                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Explanation                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Exclamation marks                                    | !!!                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid overusing.</li> </ul>                                                                                                 |
| Bullet points and numbered lists - simple fragmented | Things to remember: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use a colon to introduce</li> <li>• no punctuation on each line</li> </ul>                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid semi-colons or commas on each line.</li> <li>• Start each line with a lower case letter.</li> </ul>                   |
| Bullet points and numbered lists – complex sentence  | Things to remember: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In this type of list each line is a full sentence.</li> <li>• Users should capitalise the start of each line and end in a full stop.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a list is made up of complete sentences, add a full stop and capitalise each line.</li> </ul>                            |
| Justification                                        | Left justify all documents                                                                                                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Left justified text is easier to read.</li> </ul>                                                                           |
| Font and size (internal documents)                   | Arial size 11                                                                                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unless otherwise required.</li> </ul>                                                                                       |
| Sub-headings                                         | <u>Sub-headings</u><br>Help break up the content                                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readers often skim read sub-headings, lists and images.</li> </ul>                                                          |
| Hyperlinks                                           | Visit the <a href="#">Gov Au content guide</a> for more information.                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hyperlink the <a href="#">keywords</a> to make it meaningful.</li> <li>• Avoid using <a href="#">click here</a>.</li> </ul> |

