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One-Page Brand Voice Guide

A one-page template that sets how your business speaks: three traits written as "this, not that", formal Arabic or dialect per channel, words to use and avoid, rules for emoji and numbers, before-and-after examples, and how to give it to AI tools.

For: Businesses and associations where more than one person writes, or that use AI to write content and want it to keep sounding like them.

Level: Beginner Version 1.0 · 2026-10-01

Why one voice?

When the owner writes a post, an employee replies on WhatsApp, a designer writes an ad and an AI tool writes a product description, the customer hears four different voices. One voice makes a business familiar and trustworthy, and saves the time spent debating "does this sound like us?". This guide puts the decision on one page everyone can refer to.

Voice is not positioning. Positioning says what you offer, to whom, and why you; voice says how you say it. If you have not set your positioning yet, start with the Brand positioning builder on this site, then come back.

Steps to build the guide

1. **Collect a real sample:** ten recent messages and posts your business wrote, across different channels.
2. **Mark what sounds like you and what does not:** flag the sentences you would call "that's us", and the ones that bother you.
3. **Pull out three traits:** from the sentences you liked. Three is enough; nobody remembers more.
4. **Turn each trait into "this, not that":** a trait like "friendly" is not enough on its own; the boundary is what makes it usable.
5. **Decide the language per channel:** simplified formal Arabic, dialect, or a defined mix.
6. **Write before-and-after examples:** take three sentences from the sample and rewrite them with the guide.
7. **Try it for two weeks:** ask everyone who writes to use it, then adjust what did not work.

The template

[Business name] voice guide

Last updated: [date]

1) Who we are, in one sentence

[We ... offer ... to ... because ...]

2) Who we write for

[Main audience, what matters to them, what annoys them about how other businesses talk]

3) Three traits of our voice

- [Trait 1]: [this], not [that]

Example: "[a sentence in our voice]"

- [Trait 2]: [this], not [that]

Example: "[a sentence in our voice]"

- [Trait 3]: [this], not [that]

Example: "[a sentence in our voice]"

4) Language per channel

- WhatsApp and messages: [dialect / simplified formal Arabic / mix]

- Social media: []

- Website and formal proposals: []

- English: [when we use it, and whether foreign words are written in Arabic or Latin script]

5) Words we use / words we avoid

We use: []

We avoid: []

6) Small rules

- Emoji: [never / one at most / WhatsApp only]

- Numbers: [Arabic-Indic or Western digits] — currency: [LBP / \$ / ...] — dates: []

- Exclamation marks: []

- Addressing the customer: [informal you / formal you / plural]

7) Before and after

Before: "[an old sentence]"

After: "[the same sentence in our voice]"

Examples of traits

Trait	This	Not that
Friendly	We talk like a neighbour who knows you and respects your time.	Constant jokes or familiarity that does not suit every customer.

Trait	This	Not that
Clear	Short sentence, one fact, one next step.	Long introductions and big words with no meaning.
Confident	We say what we are good at, without exaggeration.	"Best in Lebanon" and "number one" with no evidence.
Warm	We admit mistakes and thank people sincerely.	Cold, copied formal phrases.
Expert	We explain the reason simply.	Technical jargon the customer does not understand.

Using the guide with AI tools

AI tools write in a generic voice unless you give them yours. Paste the whole guide at the start of the request, then give the task, then review the result against the guide:

Writing request in the brand voice

This is our brand voice guide. Follow it in everything you write:
[paste the guide]

Task: write [type of text] about [topic] for [channel].
Length: [number of lines or words].
After writing, check the text against the three traits and the list of words to avoid, and fix anything that breaks them.

Example: a bakery

Illustrative example

"Al Sindiyana Bakery" is an invented bakery in Tripoli. Its three traits: **friendly** (like a neighbour, not a clown), **clear** (price, time and next step), **proud of the craft** (talks about the dough and the oven, never says "the best"). Language: light Tripoli dialect on WhatsApp and social media, simplified formal Arabic on the website. It avoids "crazy prices", "don't miss out" and repeated exclamation marks.

Before: "Crazy offer!!! The best manakish in Lebanon, don't miss it 🔥🔥🔥"

After: "The za'atar manakish just came out of the oven. Order before ten and it reaches you hot."

Common mistakes

- **Mistake:** generic traits like "professional and innovative" that fit any business. **Fix:** "this, not that" plus an example for each trait.
- **Mistake:** a long guide nobody opens. **Fix:** one page, with the detail in the examples.
- **Mistake:** dialect in a post and stiff formal Arabic in the reply to its comments. **Fix:** a written decision for each channel.

- **Mistake:** writing it once and forgetting it. **Fix:** review it every six months, and add every sentence that worked to the examples.

Completion checklist

- ☐ One sentence saying who we are and for whom.
- ☐ Three traits, each with "this, not that" and an example.
- ☐ A language decision for each channel, and when we use English.
- ☐ Words we use and words we avoid.
- ☐ Rules for emoji, numbers, currency and addressing the customer.
- ☐ Three before-and-after examples from our real texts.
- ☐ The guide is somewhere everyone who writes can find it, and saved for use with AI tools.

About the author — Mohamad Charafeddine is an entrepreneur from Tripoli, Lebanon: founder of the Passion digital marketing agency, president of Takaful Youth Association, and founder of digital platforms. He trains individuals and teams in applied AI and marketing.

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