



Brand Tone of Voice Transcript

Focused Branding Course

Intro slide:

Hi there! You've made it to the next segment! I'm so excited to teach you **how to define your brand's tone of voice**. In this segment, we're going to cover how to speak to your audience effectively. Ready to go? Let's go!

Slide 2

First I want you to think about the brands you love. **Behind every successful business there is a thought out strategy in place to make you connect and love it.** Your brand tone is an element of this strategy.

Now, as you're probably starting to put together, all of these different elements that we're going over in this course go together in a tiny little package to create a really efficient, amazing brand message.

Slide 3

Let's talk about your brand's tone of voice. You might be thinking:

- "Where do I even begin with creating a tone of voice?"
- "Wait, a brand's 'tone of voice' is a thing?"

And of course:

- "I have too much to do already, I'll figure it out later."

Slide 4

I want to go over with you what a brand tone of voice is. It is the true way to connect with your audience.

Also, I want to clarify that a brand message and tone are different things, but they go hand in hand together.

The brand's tone of voice is the way you *convey* your brand message to your audience.

It also shows how words can shape how your brand is perceived- it's such an important part of your brand identity!

Slide 5

It's really important for your brand to appeal to your audience intellectually and emotionally to really connect with them.

It has to do with your:

- Language style
- Your attitude and stance on certain topics
- Your tone essentially makes your brand's persona more human, which is what makes the real connection with your audience. That is so important!

Slide 6

Did you know that 65% of customers said that they are emotionally connected to brands that make them feel like the company cares about them? That's a *huge percentage*. And the way to make this connection is by maintaining your brand's tone and to make sure it's written specifically for your audience.

Slide 7

How does one even come up with a tone of voice game plan? I'm all about the game plans here, guys, if you haven't picked up on that!

Slide 8

In order to do that, you'll need to review...

- Your mission statement and core principles and values.
 - What does your brand stand for?
- Your tagline
 - What kind of voice are you already projecting or have in place?
- Your target audience,
 - What kind of voice is going to appeal to them?
- And overall, think about your brand:
 - Where does your brand fall for this audience? What do they think of initially?

Slide 9

We're going to go back: think about the brands you love. How do they speak to you?

Slide 10

Chances are they probably mimic how you and your friends speak. By mirroring your language style, they've built a connection with you. As you're creating your brand message and the tone that it's going to be conveyed in, think about these things:

- How do brands talk to you?
- What makes that connection special?

Slide 11

If you overheard someone talking about your brand, what words would you want them to say? I have a bunch of them listed here [see slide]. Do you want to be 'fun,' 'cheeky,' 'serious,' 'straightforward,' 'collegiate,' 'respectful,' 'informal,' 'casual', and so on?

There's so many different angles you can go whenever you're coming up with words that describe your brand and how you want to handle the tone.

Slide 12

I want to go over a few brand examples to show you how other brands have set their tone.

Slide 13

Let's go over how Starbucks sets up their tone:

- "Today is yours."
- "You've got this."
- "Power up."

See these words, how they're kind of coming together?

- "That first sip feeling."
- "Order and pickup."
- "Easy as that."

"By using both functional and expressive voices, we'll create more space for **brand relevance, connection and joy.**"

They chose those three words at the end, *relevance*, *connection* and *joy*, to really build their brand tone of voice.

When they're creating their message and putting it out into the world, for example, on their website, banners up in store, marketing materials, etc.-- really everywhere that they speak-- including their app over here, you'll notice that they are trying to connect it back to these three words: *relevance*, *connection*, and *joy*.

It's really important to think about whenever you're creating your tone, that you are really focusing on a couple of different words that you want your brand to represent, like Starbucks does.

This also is directed very much in a, "Easy as that," "You've got this," **motivational tone**. They're going to be using their voice differently across subjects like privacy policies. Those are

of course going to be way more serious-- it just depends on where you're putting it. They cross between using a functional and expressive tone interchangeably.

Slide 14

Here are some Instagram posts I wanted to point out that they have.

“Get that to-do list done with the non-dairy Honey Almond Milk, Flat White. 🍵” It's a ‘to-do’ list kind of vibe, and really shows *who* they're talking to: somebody who's on the go. And that's probably what we're all doing whenever we're getting coffee in the morning. *We're on the go!*

The next one says, “Because there's always time for some *you* time, the new pistachio latte is perfect any time of day. ❤️” So again, they're putting *you* time in there making coffee be a really special thing to treat yourself. They're infusing “joy” into their tone.

Slide 15

Next up, we have jetBlue, and their goal that they've written out is that they want:

To create the most welcoming environment for those flying with us, all while remaining faithful to our core values and sensibilities.

Their five core values can be summarized in five words:

- Nice
- Smart
- Fresh
- Stylish
- Witty

Let's look at some examples.

We have this one, “Welcome to the suite life,” which is just a play on words, instead of “sweet”, they have “suite life” because Mint is one of their fancier upgrades.

“2 for 1 flights? Get BOGO-ing together.” A fun, witty way to say it.

And we have “Welcome aboard ShopBlue,” and I've underlined the couple of things that I wanted to point out. “Up your off-duty game or become a runway (or tarmac) sensation.” I love a good pun!

The next one we have up here to the right is “wag-worthy swag for pets that jet.” How fun is that?! They obviously are not on the more serious side of things. If you look to the top left again, I have underlined “a seriously fly bed in the sky” because it's again, showing that they're nice, smart, fresh, stylish, and witty. All of these things really show what jetBlue wants to project.

Slide 16

Additionally, here's a couple of their Instagram posts:

“Views so good, you'll never want to (Or)land{o}.” Again, it's a funny little pun, it's cute and it shows off their personality more.

And then on the right, it shows that they are all about the Paris Agreement. It's more on the political side of things and what they stand for. Two variances of their tone.

Slide 17

Now, it's your turn!

Slide 18

I want you to choose three to five words that describe your brand. Make sure it aligns with your key target audience and who you want to be as a brand. Now, hopefully you've already gone through this segment to figure out who your target audience is. And if not, you can always go back and check it out.

Slide 19

Here's a few of the stylized branding elements you need to consider when you're creating your tone of voice:

- Humor
- Formality
- Respect
- Enthusiasm

Slide 20

I've created a tone of voice scale worksheet for you to go through for your brand. By deciding where your brand lands on a scale of 1 to 10 for each category, this should help you navigate where your tone should land while you and your team are creating branded content. It's a good tool to reference and gauge where you're actually landing whenever you're creating content. You've got to keep this in mind all the time.

Slide 21

Let's compare the categories. First, we've got **humor**:

- When you're going for “funny,” it's going to be easier for the target audience to remember you and will typically get shared more often across social media platforms. The downer is if you do it the wrong way, it could come off as unprofessional. You have to be careful whenever you're adding a little bit of humor.
- If you're going for **serious**, it's going to be more to the point, all business and no comedy. You're going to come off as more credible and trustworthy most of the time with this tone, but you need to be careful here as sometimes as it can be seen as stiff and unapproachable.

Slide 22

Here are examples of 2 very different email marketing styles. Zillow, a real estate company, is straightforward and serious. They cut to the chase by offering a guide. Moo, an office supply company, offers humor in their messaging by adding “hi-yah!” in their language and a button for their subscribers to press in order to get their reward code.

Slide 23

For **formality**, I like to compare jetBlue and Delta, with Delta being the more formal company.

- Formality gives your audience a sense of professionalism and authority, but there's not as much personality infused into the voice.
- If you think about Delta here, they're more to the point, straightforward in all areas of voice.
- If you're going more casual or the jetBlue route, it's a friendlier approach with personality and charm.
- You have got to be careful because sometimes a casual approach can be seen as having a lack of professionalism and experience.
- jetBlue uses a lot of puns in their writing and they use language like “jetBlue swag” as we went over in the example. As you can see, this language is definitely way more casual than what Delta uses.

Slide 24

As you can see in these print ads, Delta is more formal than jetBlue. JetBlue tried to keep it more casual by poking fun at the term “suits” and adding a pigeon in an ad that mentions being “cooped.”

Slide 25

The next category would be **respect**. I like to compare Grey Goose versus Wendy's. Grey Goose being the 'respectful' brand

- Being on the more respectful end: it's friendly and cordial.
- At Grey Goose, they focus on their own brand and statistics. They don't tease or taunt other brands.
- Wendy's, however, is sassy.
- Being sassy gives a feeling of brand confidence and superiority because of this bold approach. With this tone, you're owning your attitude unapologetically and unafraid of ruffling some feathers.
- Using sass for your tone can be tricky. It may offend the audience if done incorrectly. It's risky, but it has a high payoff if people end up finding the humor and are reposting it to share with their friends
- Wendy's is known for their Twitter account, where they call out other brands sarcastically, like McDonald's and Burger King.

Slide 26

Let's compare the 2 Twitter accounts. Grey Goose primarily posts about cocktail recipes and announcements when new products come out. They focus solely on their own business.

Slide 27

Wendy's on the other hand, actively retorts back to any taunting and also pokes fun at other brands. It creates a lot of buzz in the Twitter world on a regular basis!

Slide 28

- For **enthusiasm** we have "**matter of fact**" as one route.
- I like to compare Northwestern Mutual, which is an investment firm, just very straightforward and to the point on everything.
- Simple and to the point, can come off as honest without being sugar coated. It just might make the brand feel a little less personable.
- Ecstatic: I like to think of Progressive Insurance with Flo [their spokesperson.]
- It's friendly, enthusiastic, and has a really fun, personable approach to language and brand promotion. It portrays a willingness to help.

- Think of Flo in the Progressive Insurance Commercials: she's enthusiastic, a super fan of her brand, she's awkward, and she's fun. People typically love her.
- You can win by using a high level of enthusiasm-- but it can also annoy some of your audience. Maybe they don't like her personality. You're really taking a gamble no matter what route you go, just own whatever angle you take on for your brand's tone of voice.

Slide 29

The Northwestern Mutual Facebook page and digital ad examples here show a classic look, and explains simply that they'll help with your goals and provide information for any insurance needs.

Slide 30

The Progressive Insurance Facebook page and digital ads have the brand's quirky, over-the-top enthusiastic spokesperson, Flo. Here, she's posing as Sasquatch next to the messaging that corresponds with it, mentioning "...we know it's out there," in relation to insurance. She is also wearing a "I love Progressive" button on her Sasquatch costume. The brand brings her quirkiness into the digital banner ad on the left as well. By using Flo consistently in their ads, Progressive has built an incredible amount of brand awareness. This made-up character is enthusiastic and a die-hard fan of Progressive!

Slide 31

The previous tone of voice examples were shown in a variety of marketing methods because I wanted you to see how often you'll be using it. When you use your tone of voice, you're going to be using it on your:

- Website
- Social media
- Brand packaging
- Business to business (B2B) & business to consumer (B2C)
- Your printed marketing materials
- Advertising

Basically everywhere! Including customer service responses. Truly, you'll use your brand's tone of voice everywhere.

Slide 32

It's so important to stay consistent with your tone of voice!

Slide 33

Did you know that by being consistent with your branding, it's been shown to increase revenue by an astounding 33%--*an increase of revenue by 33%*! Think about that. That's a lot of money!

Slide 34

Let's talk about brands that have consistency.

Your first impression is so important. You need to make the connection from the start. So that's why it's really important to get your tone of voice nailed down at the beginning of building up your brand and business.

- It increases your brand awareness
- Gives you competitive edge
- Establishes trust over time, which brings people back to you
- Builds confidence within the brand team

If you're putting forth a brand that is consistent with everything they're doing in their branding, your team is going to be really confident in everything they're putting out there because it's so well-versed. They'll know exactly what direction to go since you put it into place initially.

Slide 35

Do your branding elements align? Think about everything we've done so far:

- Your mission, core values and principles
- Your target audience
- Brand words
- Your tone of voice scale

Do these all go perfectly hand in hand? Do you think that these all are talking to the same person or same audience? It's really important to make sure it's consistent.

Slide 36

If you're in doubt, just ask. It's as simple as that.

Find out if your brand tone of voice is resonating with your target audience. If you have any doubt about it or you just want to double-check, here you go:

Create a survey and just ask.

See if you can post them in the forums that you already did your research in earlier to find your target audience, because those are the people you want to ask anyway.

You can use Google forms, Type form, and SurveyMonkey. These are all free resources to create your surveys. I personally use Google forms.

Slide 37

Quick recap:

- We went over what a brand's tone of voice is compared to a brand message, and how they're different
- Importance of tone of voice consistency
- How to get started on creating your brand's tone of voice
- The stylized elements to consider and compare when choosing types of descriptive words for your brand.
- To make sure that your brand messaging components align with everything else we've already gone over in this course so far.

Slide 38

Pep Talk:

I want you to just start with a few descriptive words and start brainstorming.

See what resonates with your audience, and don't stress about it because you can always adjust it later. Just get started and get out there!

I'll see you in the next segment!