

Please answer as many of the following questions as you can (where applicable).

The Project

What communication is needed? (12-page brochure, 8-page website, A4 press advert, direct mail postcard etc)
Is there a previous example of this communication? Is there anything in particular that you do or don't like about it?
Do you have any other material which might provide me with some background information?
When do you need this communication to be completed by? Is there a set deadline?
Who will be my primary point of contact for feedback and approval?
Will I be working with anyone else? (PR agency, marketing consultant, designer etc)

The Company

Describe, in plain English, what it is that your company does.
In general, how does your company benefit its customers?
How long have you been in business? Are you a well-known brand in your sector?
What is your company's USP? Why should potential customers choose your company over your competitors?
Give me a feel for current conditions in your marketplace?
In a minimum of five words, describe the personality of your business?
Who are your main competitors?
Is there anything you admire about the way in which your competitors promote themselves?

The Audience

Describe your main target audience? (sex, age, job title, responsibilities, character, socio-demographic information etc)
What is their level and understanding of the market and your service or product?
What do you want the audience to feel about the service or product? (reassured, excited, relieved etc)
What are the important issues facing them at the moment? What keeps them awake at night?
What are the most common objections for them to overcome when purchasing such a service or product?

The Content

What is the primary objective of the document? (i.e. generate enquiries, a new service or product, brand building etc)
What is the single most important point that the copy must communicate?
What are the key messages that should be included?
Are there any specific keywords or phrases you would like included in the copy?
Are there any existing straplines, words or phrases that you would like to include in the copy?
What is the call to action? (make a purchase, contact you, request more information, increase awareness etc)

The Brand/Service/Product

Describe, in plain English, what the brand, service or product is? And how it will benefit customers?
In general, how does your service or product benefit customers?
What is the USP or Point of Difference of your service or product?
What evidence is there to support your claim? (testimonials, case studies, market research etc)
Do any of your competitors provide a similar service or product/ Or can any of them make a similar claim?
In a minimum of 5 words, describe your brand, service or product?

The Style & Tone

Do you have any existing style guidelines?
What do you like or don't you like about the style and tone of your current copy?
What tone do you think the copy should have? (friendly, serious, humorous, hard-hitting, informative etc)
Do you know of a piece of writing or a website which illustrates the style and tone you would like to use?
Would you like the copy to be written in British-English or American-English? Will the document be translated?