



AWARD ENTRY WRITING SKILLS

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AWKWARD INTROS.



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Stanley St



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Chief Strategy Officer
OMD (NZ)

WHAT WE'LL COVER.

Why awards?

The
importance
of
preparation

Golden rules

Useful hacks

Q and A

WHY AWARDS?

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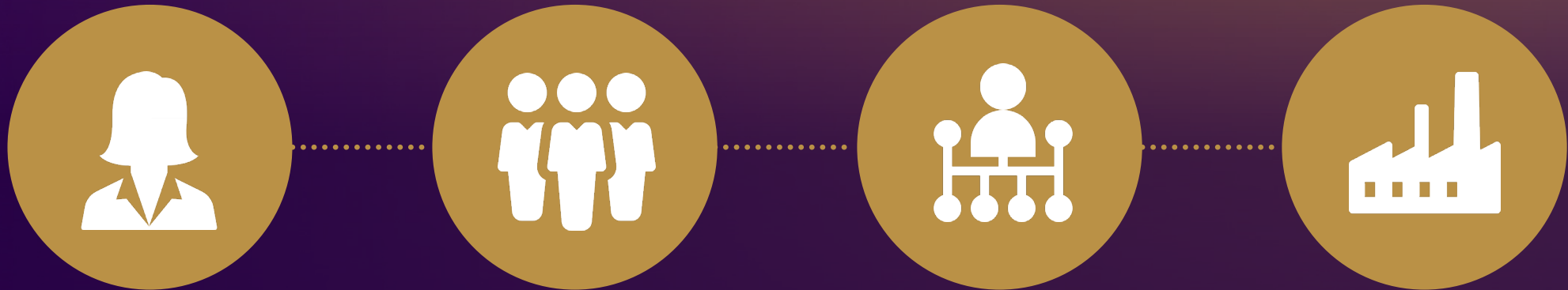
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MORE THAN A GOOD NIGHT OUT.



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SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS.

Build an awards culture...

Study the shows

- What and who are winning?
- Why?
- What trends or patterns can we see?
- Calendarise the events

Read the entries

- WARC
- Comms Council

KPI yourselves

- Measurement drives behaviour

Get involved

- Review your work as it goes
- Internal awards programmes

SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS.

Build an awards culture...

Start while you're planning the campaign

- Identify the potential early on
- Lean into your measurement frameworks, create benchmarks and gather data early

Challenge the longlist

- Scrutinise and peer review
- Kill your darlings!

Create a story treatment

- To help assess the strength of your entry
- To help plan the data and supporting evidence you'll need
- To share with clients early who can advise on approach as well as data available

Start Early!

- Benchmark and gather your data
- Capture videos, images, news about the campaign, social media noise, etc.

GOLDEN RULES & HACKS

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NOBODY GIVES A SH*T ABOUT YOUR CAMPAIGN.

- Yes, you lived and breathed it, but the judges didn't.
- Don't assume the judges know your category or your client.
- You will need to set out key facts that will help to put your story in context.

**TIP: TELL YOUR STORY TO
SOMEONE WHO KNOWS
NOTHING ABOUT IT.**



**This means
you'll have
to explain it.**

TELL A STORY.

- Don't feel compelled to tell the judges every single element of the campaign – focus in what's good.
- Make the central idea or action obvious and unambiguous.
- Winning is as much about not giving people reasons to doubt it as it is about convincing them

TIP: BUILD YOUR STORY ON POST-ITS. IS THERE A CLEAR NARRATIVE OR IS IT JUST A LIST OF WHAT YOU DID?



Powerful stories stand out.

SOME NOTES ON STORY.

STORY TYPES:

DAVID V GOLIATH

- the underdog's tale

With less money, a small customer base and all the odds stacked against us we overcame the monster and won despite the odds!

RAGS TO RICHES

- the brand rebirth

Years of neglect meant the business was struggling and needed to reignite the passion and love we knew was always there

THE IMPOSSIBLE TASK


- never been done

Marketing is all about creating opportunity and we could clearly see one. But it had never been done before. So with some incredible smarts and moments of genius we built a whole new solution.

WIN IN THE FIRST 20 WORDS.

- Judges read at least a dozen entries each.
- Your entry could be at the bottom of their pile.
- They're bored, frustrated and looking for inspiration.
- A punchy start can create a halo effect and carry them through your entry.

TIP: TAKE INSPIRATION FROM FAMOUS FIRST LINES IN FICTION.



**Be bold.
Pull the judges
into your entry.**

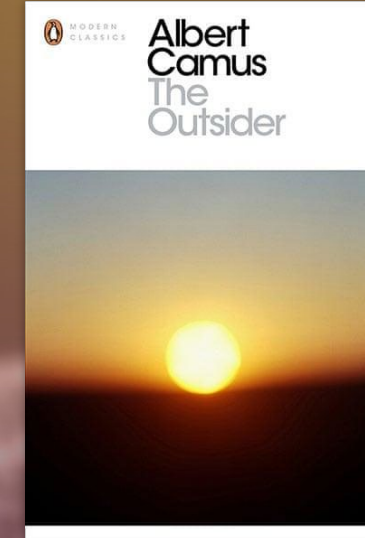
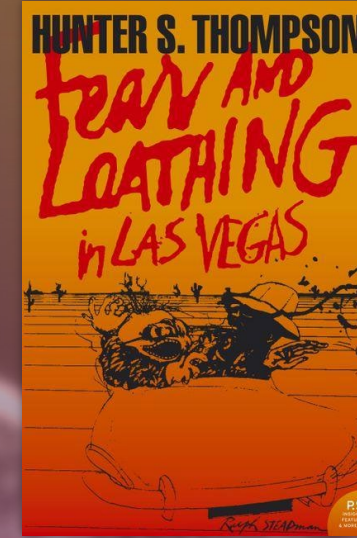
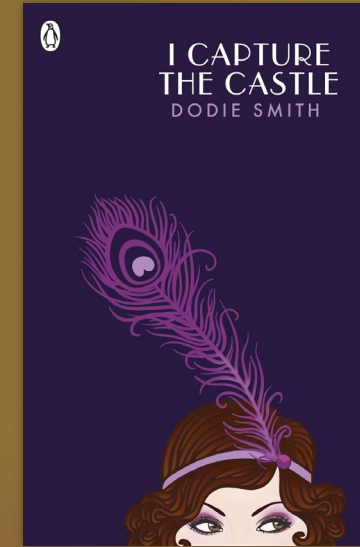
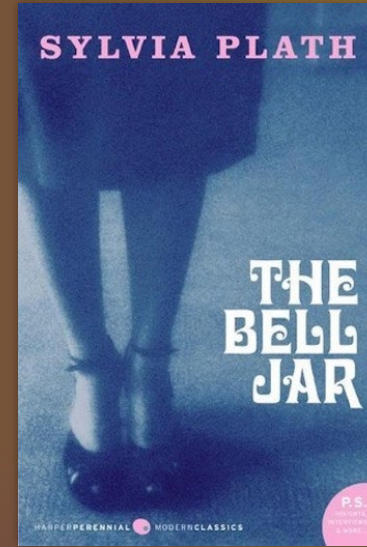
“Mother died today. Or maybe, yesterday; I can’t be sure”.

We were somewhere around Barstow on the edge of the desert when the drugs began to take hold”.

I write this sitting in the kitchen sink”.

As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect”.

It was a queer, sultry summer, the summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs, and I didn’t know what I was doing in New York”.



HAVE A UNIQUE CHALLENGE.

- Find the story behind sales and market share.
- Rephrase the challenge to a real world problem.
- Imagine reading an entry that said “we needed to make Wellingtonians happy again”.

TIP: DON'T ALWAYS STICK TO YOUR ORIGINAL AIM. IF SOMETHING MORE INTERESTING COMES UP DURING THE CAMPAIGN, THEN REVISION ITS HISTORY.



think different

**Interesting
challenges
create drama.**

HAVE A KILLER IDEA.

- Sounds obvious, but it's so important: All major awards shows focus on creativity – what is ground-breaking, and what made it a cultural phenomenon?
- It's much better to enter one strong idea than entering many mediocre ones and overload your entries.

TIP: FOCUS ON THE ELEVATOR PITCH. CAN YOU HEADLINE YOUR IDEA IN ONE OR TWO SENTENCES?



Articulate your
entry's X-
factor.

CONNECT BACK TO THE BIGGER PICTURE.

- Not all the judges will be deep digital specialists.
- They will want to understand the why behind the how and the what.
- Ensure you've connected the dots between strategy and execution.

TIP: SHARE YOUR ENTRY WITH YOUR BD OR HEAD OF STRATEGY.




Find the right balance between execution and strategy.

HAVE MEANINGFUL RESULTS.

- Results don't have to be sales metrics to win, but you have to show impact and quantify your idea worked. Likes, tweets, shares, impressions, are not enough on their own.
- Make sure you demonstrate the “before and after” effect as well as proving the causality of your work to the results.

TIP: TRY TO CREATE INTERESTING RESULTS (EG COKE ISN'T TRYING TO SELL YOU A CAN OF COKE, IT'S TRYING TO MAKE YOU HAPPY.)

Customer satisfaction

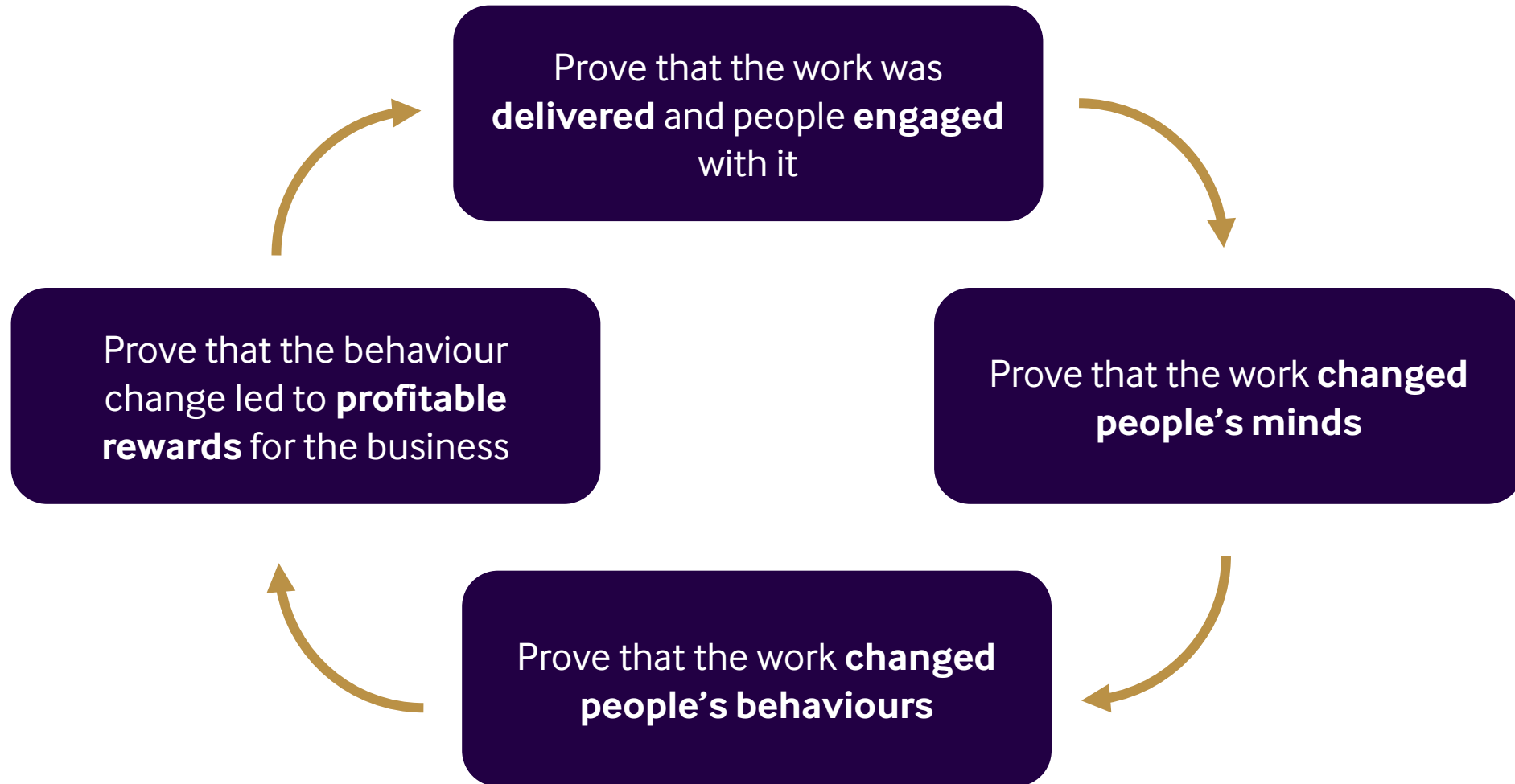


Results must connect back to objectives.

RESULTS CHECKLIST.

- ✓ Was the challenge met?
- ✓ Were the objectives SMART and were they met?
- ✓ Do the numbers link back to the challenge?
- ✓ How far did the needle move?
- ✓ Before vs. after. Do we have baselines to compare against?
- ✓ Do we understand the context around the numbers? Why were they chosen? Were they difficult?
- ✓ Prove that it was your campaign that made the difference by removing any other possible influences from the campaign.
- ✓ Quantify an ROI if it adds weight to your results.

EFFECTIVENESS FLOW.



SIMPLICITY WINS. EVERY TIME.

- 1,200 words seems like a lot, but often it isn't.
- The simpler your story, the harder it is to argue.
- The simpler your language, the easier it is to understand.
- Be ruthless. Cut out hyperbole to write sentences that add value and have impact.

TIP: EDIT. EDIT. EDIT.



The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak.

— *Hans Hofmann* —

AZ QUOTES

Don't make judges lives hard.

UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENT AWARDS INTIMATELY.

- Read and review all the categories before you start writing.
- Think about how your story can be changed to suit different awards.
- Don't copy and paste – it's lazy and judges will mark you down.
- Review your final entry against the award criteria. Have you covered everything?

4.1 SALES AND AD-OPERATIONS AWARDS

4.1.1 AUDIO SALES EXCELLENCE

AWARD DESCRIPTION

Judges will be awarding a sales professional that has truly excelled with their Audio strategy. Entrants should demonstrate how they have embraced or assisted in the development of Audio advertising within the digital ecosystem, by using Audio to fulfill each of the Entry Criteria below. This could be at a campaign level, or across a broader portfolio of clients.

ENTRY ELIGIBILITY

Sales professionals (individual) within Publisher/Media and Vendor/Ad-Tech companies only. No joint entries.

Entries should be specifically developed for the period from 1 April 2020 - 30 June 2021.

ENTRY SUMMARY: WHY SHOULD THIS ENTRY WIN AN AWARD

WORD LIMIT 150

WORD LIMIT (EXCLUDING ENTRY SUMMARY) 1200

ENTRY CRITERIA

WEIGHTING

Insights. Demonstrates a thorough understanding of client business objectives (including KPIs, which could include but is not limited to, clicks, views and likes etc., and actionable metrics, for example, lift in brand awareness, units sold and customer acquisition etc.), and the ability to recommend and align relevant products accordingly. This could include any research, insights, and competitive analysis information etc., from which recommendations were based. 25%

Proposals. Produces clear, concise, and engaging proposal/s in response to client brief/s or RFPs, which incorporate into recommendations a thorough understanding of client business objectives, for example, raw data points and benchmarks for success (KPIs), and how these will be achieved. These proposal/s will clearly articulate the Audio buying approach, for example, audience selection, data, advertising formats, ad position, engagement, impressions, listens and content selection, conversions, CPM etc. 25%

Relationships. Identifies relevant key stakeholder relationships and how these relationships have been harnessed to upsell and create further opportunities, whilst continuously demonstrating values of trust, ethics, and integrity. 25%

Results. Conducts unbiased debrief at end of the campaign/s, which includes post campaign analysis which demonstrates campaign's ROI delivery in line with client business objectives, and accurately calculates Audio metrics. 25%

TOTAL 100%

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4.2 CHANNEL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

4.2.8 BEST USE OF VIDEO

AWARD DESCRIPTION

Judges will be awarding a digital led campaign that has truly excelled through the utilisation of Video within its creative and media strategy, to increase performance, customer engagement, influence purchase behaviour and drive the customer's ROI. Entrants should demonstrate how they have developed their Video advertising strategy, including creative and innovative production (for a digital application, site, video, or campaign), to the execution, distribution, and promotion of the campaign.

ENTRY ELIGIBILITY

Advertising Agencies, Advertisers, Creative Agencies, Media Agencies, Media and Marketing Consultancies, Publishers, Vendors/Ad-Tech companies. Joint entries accepted.

Entries should be specifically developed for advertising activity in New Zealand launched within the period 1 April 2020 - 30 June 2021.

Please Note: Any entries for Social or paid-Search campaigns for Video (for example, Facebook, Instagram, or Google Search) are not permitted for this Award.

ENTRY SUMMARY: WHY SHOULD THIS ENTRY WIN AN AWARD

WORD LIMIT 150

WORD LIMIT (EXCLUDING ENTRY SUMMARY) 1200

ENTRY CRITERIA

WEIGHTING

Insights. Summarise succinctly the challenge/s, key insights, objectives and how this led to the development of the strategy. 25%

Strategy. Demonstrate how the Video advertising strategy has been developed in response to the brief and challenges and how this led to the implementation. Clearly describe the role of Video. 25%

Implementation. Demonstrate how the creative, production, execution, distribution, and promotion of the content was driven by the Video advertising strategy, making specific reference to any Video innovations that drove campaign performance. 25%

Results. Demonstrate how the Video content achieved success, to increase performance, customer engagement, influence purchase behaviour and drive the customer's ROI, with a clear line connecting implementation and results. This may include pre and post campaign metrics. 25%

TOTAL 100%

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4.3 CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVENESS AWARDS

4.3.5 BEST MULTI-CHANNEL INTEGRATION CAMPAIGN

AWARD DESCRIPTION

Judges will be awarding an integrated multi-channel campaign (one or more digital channels, and one or more offline channels) that has truly excelled in its strategic approach (in which digital played a key role); through increased performance, customer engagement and purchase behaviour, to drive ROI and deliver outstanding results.

ENTRY ELIGIBILITY

Advertising Agencies, Advertisers, Creative Agencies, Media Agencies, Media and Marketing Consultancies, Publishers, Vendors/Ad-Tech companies. Joint entries accepted.

Entries should be specifically developed for advertising activity in New Zealand launched within the period 1 April 2020 - 30 June 2021.

ENTRY SUMMARY: WHY SHOULD THIS ENTRY WIN AN AWARD

WORD LIMIT 150

WORD LIMIT (EXCLUDING ENTRY SUMMARY) 1200

ENTRY CRITERIA

WEIGHTING

Insights. Summarise succinctly the challenge/s, key insights, objectives and how this led to the development of the strategy. Outline the KPI's provided in the brief. 25%

Strategy. Demonstrate how the multi-channel integrated campaign strategy was developed in response to the brief and challenges and how this led to the channel selection, rationalisation, and any innovative insights relative to production, execution, distribution, or promotion of the content across the chosen channels. Clearly define how digital was a priority rather than a support channel. 25%

Implementation. Demonstrate how the implementation of the campaign was driven by and enhanced the strategy. Articulate the level of innovation used to achieve the KPI's, which contributed to the campaign excelling and driving overall success, and the difficulty of campaign execution. Clearly define the role of digital. 25%

Results. Demonstrate how the multi-channel integrated campaign achieved success (such as engagement, sentiment, reach, conversions, acquisitions, or other key metrics), to increase performance, customer engagement, influence purchase behaviour and drive the customer's ROI, with a clear line connecting implementation and results. This may include pre and post campaign metrics. Clearly define how digital was an essential driver of success rather than a support channel. 25%

TOTAL 100%

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BE ENTHUSIASTIC BUT AVOID THE BULLSH*T.

- Data is the new oil!
- Digi-tail!
- Fanbassador!
- New Zealand first!
- World first!
- Fanbassador!
- Etc etc etc

PLEASE DON'T.



KEY AN EYE ON WORD COUNT.

- If you leave it too late, managing word count (wc) can mean cutting large elements of your story
- Start too early, and you may limit storytelling potential

TIPS: CHECK ON WC AS YOU'RE WRITING. SEARCH ONLINE FOR WC HACKS TO HELP.



WORD COUNT TECHNIQUES.

ACTIVE

Monkeys love bananas

The cashier counted the money

The dog chased the squirrel

PASSIVE

Bananas are loved by monkeys

The money was counted by the cashier

The squirrel was chased by the dog

AVOID FILLER

It has been reported that incidence in ovarian cancer is significantly increasing in New Zealand, and there are numerous risk factors for the disease that have been identified

ART DIRECTION HELPS. A LOT.

- The easier your entry is to read, the better.
- Don't just focus on your writing – think about layout and design.
- Use lines, colour, size, space and typography.
- Sign-post for clarity and emphasis.



BE THICK SKINNED. ASK FOR FEEDBACK.

- Writing about your own work can make feedback seem like criticism.
- However fresh perspectives will help to give your entry greater clarity.
- Ensure you have built in time for feedback from your peers.



A FINAL THOUGHT.

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KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE.

- Experienced.
- Demanding.
- Cynical.
- Bored.



GOOD LUCK!

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