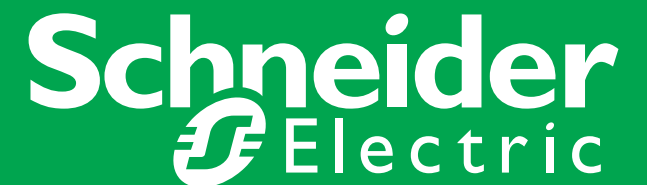


# 2

## Tone of voice

Schneider Electric brand platform  
June 2008



Tone of voice

## How to write like an Energy Optimist?

Rules and guidelines for communicating our story.

## Our story

At Schneider Electric we see the great challenges facing the world as inspiring opportunities, not insurmountable problems. We believe positive change can and will be achieved by great people and great organisations working together. We choose to use our expertise and imagination to achieve positive change. We choose to inspire, develop and deliver ever more efficient and effective ways to use energy, for the benefit of all.

### **We are optimistic about the challenges related to energy.**

The thousands of communications we produce must convey this spirit of being energy optimists, inspiring others to take positive action. These rules and guidelines are here to help you tell our story in the right way.

## Our audience

Each day we speak to millions of people around the world. From emails to advertising, reports and presentations, every single one of our communications helps to build a sense of who we are and what we stand for. And the many verbal business conversations we have all reinforce people's understanding of Schneider Electric too. The audience for a specific communication can be very broad – customers, investors, governments, colleagues, the public – or it might simply be one person who's important to our work. The key is to be clear who our audience is, what they need to know from us and what important points we must convey to them.

- Who is my communication aimed at?
- What do the different readers want or need to know?
- What are the key messages I must convey to them?

## Our tone of voice

**We have established a strong tone of voice that matches our values. These combined qualities should come through in everything we write.**

### Passionate

We are optimistic and pro-active in what we think and do, so we write with a strong positive energy that wins people's attention, keeps them engaged and inspires them to think, discuss and act. We never use cliché. We make use of the untried, the unusual and the unexpected, always finding fresh ways to get our ideas across.

### Open

We use words that involve and inspire people. We are transparent in the way that we talk about what we do and how we do it. And we always invite people to respond, to be part of our story.

### Straightforward

We believe people value directness and simplicity. So we write in a way that's easy to read, we help readers make sense of the complex and we say exactly what we mean – no jargon, no waffle, just clear and inspiring words.

### Effective

We are practical. When describing technical characteristics for example, we use simple, descriptive and precise words. We concentrate on the "how to do it", make things happen and reap the benefits.

@ Do my words convey the qualities of our tone of voice: passionate, open, straightforward and effective?

@ Do my words have energy and optimism?

@ Will my words engage my readers?

## Our writing principles

# How to inject energy and optimism into your writing.

### Create a writing brief

Before you start writing define the key elements involved:

- Who are the different members of my readership/audience?
- What do they want to gain from my communication?
- What are the most important things I need to express to them?
- What do I want them to do as a result of having read or seen my communication?
- How will I make this communication speak with the voice of an energy optimist?

### Use the active voice

Passive: Successful tests have been carried out by the company.

Active: We have carried out successful tests.

Passive: The research will be presented at the meeting by Jan.

Active: Jan will present the research at the meeting.

## Our writing principles

### Say more with less

Just as our business is all about helping people achieve more using less energy, so our writing should get across everything we need to say the least number of words. So...

#### Cut

Analyse your draft and cut any redundant words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs. Look for repeated points, over used phrases or any words that do not add value.

#### Focus

Make one point per sentence, keep to one subject or theme per paragraph and emphasize one big message in your communication. You can convey other key messages but ensure your most valuable point is the star of the show.

#### Support

Attract the reader's attention and reinforce your most important points and messages using secondary elements such as subheadings, captions, pull-out quotes, examples, fact boxes, lists and footnotes.

### Inspire a response

This company is all about action so our writing must inspire a response in the reader by inviting them to do something – 'To find out more please...', 'Please contact us for advice by...', 'Go here to see how we helped...', 'To explore further please...' Etc. Where relevant give links to web pages, email addresses or phone numbers. Be clear what you are asking the reader to do and make the invitation as compelling as possible, with an emphasis on what the benefit is for them. Never leave your reader asking 'so what do I do now?'

## How to refer to... Our vision

# We see a world where we can all achieve more while using less.

We believe that it is possible to find solutions that allow us to fulfil our true potential while reducing our impact on the environment.

**Do** use the vision when describing the company or people within the company.

**Do not** use the vision word-for-word when talking about specific products, services, solutions or technologies.

## How to refer to... Our brand promise

**We want all our products,  
solutions and services to be safe,  
simple, efficient and innovative**

This is what we want people to feel about what we do and how we do it.

**These are the 4 attributes to push in priority in the Schneider Electric added values we emphasis in equations.**

**Do** use these qualities to inspire how you talk about our products, services, solutions or technologies.

**Do not** describe our people as innovative, simple, efficient.

## How to use our tag line

# Promise + proof

The most important is not to claim, but to bring the proof of the promise each time we are able to highlight:  
the Schneider Electric added value + a corresponding customer benefit showing how we help making the most of the energy

## “Make the most of your energy” as a constant

**No** variation with part of the sentence. “Make the most of your time”, “Make the most of your money”... not relevant

**Do** use the formula as a recurrent sentence to conclude or to introduce you argumentations. It will be written in the body-copy as a distinct sentence.

**Or** use as a title or advertising slogan. In this case, it is important to develop argumentation in consequence (i.e. the proof of the promise)

**Not** written together within the logo. ant not translated (except when local regulations make it compulsory)

## Key messages

**Safe, simple, efficient and innovative are the added values that customers can expect when using Schneider Electric's solutions, services and or products.**

In order to help people make the most of their energy, we ensure that the mission is present in all messages through 6 major customers benefits:

- Protecting people and assets
- Ultra secured power for critical applications
- Energy efficiency
- Optimised Capex and Opex (investment costs and running costs)
- Connectivity everywhere
- Lifecycle services

One or several of those six fields of added values must be developed in any message that we convey towards customers.

## Our business language

# Our business language is UK business English for all international communications.

Use the national/regional language or UK business English for local communications, according to the needs and preferences of your audience.

We preferably use date formats like Wednesday 27 February 2008 and time formats ranging from 00:00 to 23:59, avoiding any confusion.

## Our writing checklist

# Key questions to ask of your drafts.

- Who are the readers of this communication and what do they need to hear?
- Is the key message clear to the audience who I am talking to?
- Could the writing say more by saying less?
- Is the writing open?
- Is the writing straightforward?
- Is the writing dynamic?
- Is the writing creative?
- Is there a clear and compelling call to action for the reader?
- Does this sound like the voice of an energy optimist?
- Have you read it aloud?

**Finally, would you want to read it?**

## When writing like an energy optimist?

# Writing like an energy optimist

means to breathe humanity in our communication to address the sensitive part of people. We address individuals, not functions. This is the philosophy we have to keep in mind to succeed in this quest...

**... but** the risk is to always speak in a qualitative way to make sense, even when it is not necessary. Suppose you are creating catalogues pages. It would be an error to change the descriptive style we ordinarily use. But, in this catalogue, a set of introducing and promotional pages should adopt the new energy optimist tone.

We have **two opposite registers** to play, depending on the context. Keeping in mind where we are for each sentence we write is a key factor for success.

## Writing like an energy optimist

# Example 1: promoting training

### **Get in shape with Schneider Electric product coaching**

#### **Empower your staff**

Energy consumption is a real issue for businesses today. Finding the best way to handle this can be a real challenge.

Our business is all about helping companies achieve more with less energy resources. Our entire product range is designed with this simple idea in mind.

We don't just have clever kit though - we have expert consultants who know how to use it. They're here to show you how to get the most out of it too, by equipping your people with the skills needed to use our products and solutions to their full potential.

We offer a wide range of training programs designed to help our customers get the most out of their Schneider Electric offers.

Whatever size your business is, we can offer bespoke courses that suit your needs. These can take place either on site or at one of our local training centres.

If you would like to be involved with either of these offers please call today.

# Example 2: Innovation plant, invitation

### Future thinking

At Schneider Electric we're always thinking about new ways to save energy while making our products perform better. We keep our eyes trained on the big issues of the future, looking for new problems to solve and emerging customer needs to serve.

Our Innovation center is a showcase for the latest innovations from Schneider Electric's Research & Development laboratories. It's a place where our customers and the media can come for in-depth insight into all the thinking that goes into our products, learn more about the latest developments in energy management for their industry and get a taste of some of the new ways we'll all deal with energy in the future.

So if you're in the area, do come by.

# Example 3: automation offer guide

## Putting people in control

### Automation

A guide about our products for Schneider Electric sales engineers and authorised distributor staff

### Getting the most out of this guide

We want to make it easy as possible for you to make presentations about our key products.

This guide aims to help you find the key information about our products and how they fit together into great solutions.

We have split each product range into four sections:

**Key information** covers the typical applications, extent of range, options, typical customer profile and an overview of the competitor products.

**Presentation** has your starters for ten on what to say and pictures to use so that you can present the product in a few easy steps.

**Features** is the section with the technical overview of what the product does.

**Benefits** gives examples of what this product could do for the different types of client likely to buy this product.

## Writing like an energy optimist

# Example 4: introduction to employees

The world is at a crossroads. Rapid globalisation offers new opportunities for millions of people. It also brings with it huge environmental challenges that threaten our way of life

Everyone is going to have to adapt to a new world of opportunity where energy consumption and efficiency become more central to our lives: whether at work or play. This is where we come in. We believe that there is a future where we can all achieve more while using less. We want to be the ones that people and organisations turn to to help them make the most of their energy.

We believe that there are solutions to the challenges facing our planet, and in fact many of them are ours. That's why we are positive about the future.

# Example 5: New product promotion

### **Meet the circuit breaker with a brain**

Most circuit breakers live up to their name at the first sign of overloading.

This used to be enough but in today's digital age, current has become the new currency. Maintaining energy quality is vital for preventing damage to expensive, sensitive equipment.

Any downtime after a power cut has an expensive knock-on effect on productivity. This gets far worse if you have to waste time investigating what caused it.

That's why our new Compact NSX circuit breaker introduces measurement, analysis and communication functions into a circuit breaker for the very first time.

No other circuit breaker lets energy managers monitor the quality of electricity passing through the unit or gives advance warning of problems before they happen.

At the first sign of trouble, the LED warning light lets them know what has happened in an instant.

So faster problem diagnosis leads to more productive working

Make the most of your energy