

THE / DRAFT

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# About Us

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Philip Collins is the former chief speechwriter to Prime Minister Tony Blair. He is the author of more than six books including three on the arts of rhetoric and persuasion. He has also been Director of the Social Market Foundation and Chair of Demos as well as a political columnist at *The Times*, *The Evening Standard* and *The New Statesman*.

In 2018, Phil founded The Draft, a bureau of writers who are experts in rhetoric: the art of argument and persuasion. We've worked with FTSE stalwarts and fast-growing start-ups, leading charities and on political campaigns – always and only with those whose arguments we wish to advance.



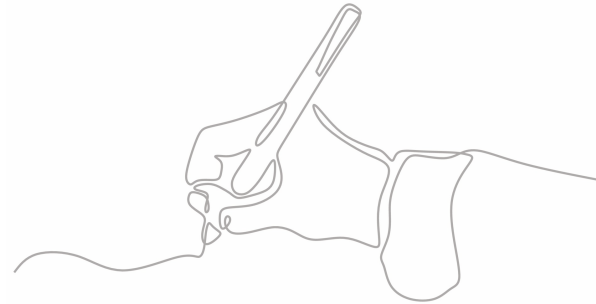
# What We Do

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We are writers - whenever you need to write, or speak, we ensure you do so as persuasively as possible.

But writing is thinking: we don't just help you articulate your ideas, we help you define and develop them too.

And everything we do can be taught - in our training programmes, we teach the art of argument and persuasion.



# How We Help

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## ***Strategy / preparing to persuade***

We assess how persuasive you are today, and how you could be more so tomorrow.



## ***Writing / persuasive writing***

We write every articulation of an argument, whether for a leader or their organisation.



## ***Training / learning to persuade***

We teach the art of persuasive communication, in workshops and online.

# STRATEGY

## PREPARING TO PERSUADE

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# Audits

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You cannot persuade until you understand how effectively you are doing so today.

By reviewing both what you are saying to the world, and what the world is saying about you, we give you a complete view of how you are perceived today, why, and what you can do about it.

## **What you are saying to the world**

We review everything your organisation, and its leadership, has said - from speeches and articles to your online presence and advertising. We analyse the strength and coherence of your arguments and how consistently you are making them.

## **What the world is saying about you**

We then analyse your reputation: we poll the public, review your media coverage, and conduct interviews with experts in your field.

## **The Audit Report**

Combining the two approaches, we write an audit report on your organisation today: setting out how persuasively you are communicating today, and how you could be more persuasive in future.

# Narratives

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Your narrative is the story of who you are, what you do, and what you are trying to achieve. Persuasive communicators control their narrative.

We help organisations write narratives that define their business, or a specific debate that they are engaged in, and then we turn that narrative into a series of easily applied messages.

## **Writing the narrative**

We work with your team to develop a narrative that is informative, but also persuasive for external audiences and inspiring for internal audiences, drawing in the views of your leadership and those working throughout your organisation.

## **Testing the narrative**

We test the narrative with each of the audiences that you must persuade, refining the argument and strengthening your narrative in the process.

## **From narrative to messages**

A narrative is useless if never used. Once the core narrative is agreed, we turn it into a small number of clear and memorable phrases that capture its essence and can be used across all of your communications.

# Voice and Style

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Voice is character and character is persuasion. Before an audience weighs what you say, it judges who you are based on how you sound. Good corporate voices connect, instantly. Bad ones alienate.

We help your business find its voice: one that conveys your character, connects with your audiences and stands out from the crowd.

## **Audit of your voice and competitors**

Beginning with your current voice, we assess the character your words convey. We also look at your peers and competitors.

## **Character development**

To know your voice, we need to know you. Through interviews and research, we immerse ourselves in your business to discover your true character. Character established, we then explore how to express it, testing several voices. When we know which is best, we develop guidelines to help your people use it.

## **Training your team**

Our training teaches staff to use your voice and grounds them in the broader principles of good writing.





**WRITING**

**WRITING PERSUASIVELY**

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# Speeches

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There are few ways in which the world is unchanged in the last two thousand years, but in one way it is: the power of a great speech remains as real today as it was in Ancient Greece or Rome.

Our speeches have been spoken in the House of Commons, the stage at Davos, at conferences and AGMs across the country.

## **Speechwriting**

Speechwriting involves creating a strong and engaging argument and ensuring that it matches the voice and character of the speaker. We work with the speaker, or “principal”, to write the perfect speech, not just for the occasion, but for them.

## **Delivery coaching**

A great speech demands great delivery, and rehearsal should always be the final stage of the editing process - fitting the language to the voice of the speaker. We coach and rehearse with the principal until the speech is truly theirs.

## **Speech planning**

A single speech is the start of an argument, not the end. A good speech plants the seeds of the next. We don't just help you write a speech, we help you plan where that speech is leading you.

# Articles

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When you need to make a public intervention in a debate, there are fewer better ways than a well-timed op-ed. The discipline of boiling your thinking down to 1,000 words is beneficial in itself, tightening your thinking and argument in the process.

Our op-eds have been published in every major broadsheet, and many of the tabloids too. Founded by two columnists, we are experts in opinion writing.

## **Interviewing**

Condensing your argument to the length of a newspaper column is a process that demands precision and focus. We begin by interviewing you, chiseling away at your argument until we reach its nub - the topic of your column.

## **Writing**

A great op-ed isn't just a strong argument - it's a memorable one. We work with you to hone your argument, find the story or image that will ensure it stays with your reader, and the news hook that will attract the attention of an editor.

# Newsletters

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Newsletters create a different kind of relationship with your reader. Their regularity, and their more anecdotal and personal style, builds a deeper relationship between the reader and the writer than almost any other form.

As well as writing our own company newsletter, we write newsletters for a number of leaders, often to deepen the relationship between a leader and their staff.

## **Writing your newsletter**

We work with you to plot out a loose series of newsletters, though always leaving the option to adapt to changing events in the world around you. Then, each week, fortnight or month, we conduct a short interview with the principal and then write the newsletter.

## **Publishing your newsletter**

Where you don't have the design capability, we can design your newsletter and then publish it, through one of a number of platforms, reporting audience engagement data after each publication.

# Conference Scripts

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There are few things worse than a poorly designed conference: death by powerpoint, speakers repeating each other, or a series of unconnected topics.

We design conferences to tell a story that unfolds across the course of a day, matching the right speakers to the right topics, and varying the media to keep the audience engaged and entertained.

## **Finding the message**

The process begins by defining the overall message for the conference: the one thought we want the audience to leave the day with. We then break that message into a series of sub-topics, which each speaker will address in turn.

## **Writing scripts (and creating other content)**

We write the script for each speaker, working closely with them to ensure that we capture their voice and ideas. A series of speakers need breaking up and we have partners who create video and stage manage events to keep the audience engaged.

## **Rehearsing**

Rehearsal is critical to a successful conference - we rehearse with individual speakers, and insist on a full dress rehearsal before the day itself to iron out any final kinks.

# Thought Leadership

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A single, long report - often better published as a series of articles - is the perfect way to leave your mark on a particular subject or debate.

We research and write thought leadership papers and series. Our writers are here supported by our research department, led by Claudia Wood, formerly of the Number Ten Policy Unit and the Chief Executive of the think tank Demos, where Phil was Chair of Trustees.

## **Researching the series**

We conduct independent research and literature reviews, which we support with extensive expert interviews, both with experts in your organisation and outside of it.

## **Writing the series**

Dense and data-heavy, great research is often scuppered by turgid presentation. We break research into bite-size pieces, combine evidence with engaging illustration and stories, and make sure your thought leadership entertains as well as educates.

## **Publishing the series**

We design and print beautiful physical reports, and we create microsites to host your website online and help you promote it to the widest possible audience.

# Copywriting

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Great writers used to abound in advertising: Dorothy L Sayers, Joseph Heller, Salman Rushdie and James Patterson were all copywriters before they were novelists. But today, even industry insiders lament the state of copywriting.

We believe the art of copywriting still matters, and we always follow the lead of David Ogilvy, perhaps the greatest copywriter of them all: *“Tell the truth, but make the truth fascinating... You can’t bore people into buying your product, you can only interest them in buying it.”*

## **Great marketing copy**

Print advertisements, email campaigns, website copy - great advertising copy used to engage and tell a story, but so little of it does today. If you want copywriting that will be remembered, we’ll find the story about you, or your product, that sells.

## **Names and slogans**

Turning a complex idea into an engaging name, or handful of words, is an essential skill wherever we have worked - in politics, where a great campaign slogan can make all the difference; in journalism, where a snappy headline wins or loses a reader’s attention; and, of course, in business too. Our process combines the science of research and testing with the art of inspiration to find the handful of words that work.

# Bids

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Bids are the quintessential act of persuasion, where your choice of words separates success from failure.

We've done them at the very highest level, with billions riding on the outcome. In 2021, we wrote every word of the presentation materials for the winning candidates for the fourth UK National Lottery licence.

## **Strategy**

Every good bid has a single, strong argument underpinning it and tells two stories about the future. One is a dystopia, in which the buyer chooses your competitor. One, a utopia, in which they (rightly) choose you. We help bidders find their argument and tell their story.

## **Writing**

We write everything that a bidder needs: the narrative, the official documentation, and presentation scripts - the last being the moment that bids are really won or lost.

## **Training**

We teach every element of bidding, from strategy and writing to rehearsals and delivery.





**TRAINING**

**LEARNING TO PERSUADE**

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# Mini MBA in Communication

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Hidden away on MBA courses, sometimes just an elective, lies the most important professional skill: the ability to communicate persuasively.

In our new online course, Philip Collins teaches the theory and practice of effective communication over eight weeks, covering every step from understanding your audience to rallying them behind you.

You can watch a short trailer [here](#).

## How the course works

Each week, for eight weeks, students:

- Are sent a video lesson and course reading
- Take part in a livestream seminar with Philip
- Complete a task and discuss it with their peers and Philip online

At the end of the course, students complete a graded assessment.

## Run your own course

Students can either join a live term, running twice a year, or an organisation can run its own course with tailored case studies, course reading and tasks.

# Workshops

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Our workshops are based on our principles of persuasive communication, covering: how to understand your audience, how to set your goal, how to develop an argument, how persuasion really works, how to tell stories, how to write clearly, and how to speak engagingly.

We teach the general principles and we also teach a series of specialist courses, specific to the persuasive challenges faced by different professionals at different moments in their career.

## **Principles of Persuasion**

Our core course - the fundamentals of persuasive communication covered in a day.

## **Specialist Courses**

We run workshops for leaders who want to inspire their teams, seminars for professional writers and corporate communicators, and presentation skills to entire organisations - and we design courses specifically for a team and their needs.

## **Media Training**

We prepare executives for their media appearances, coaching them in the only atmosphere that truly prepares them for the real thing: on set and on camera, under the lights, sitting across from an experienced broadcast journalist.

# RETAINING OUR TEAM

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# The Orator CEO

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The greatest challenges faced by modern Chief Executives are persuasive in nature. Employees, investors, regulators and policymakers must all be persuaded, and so must an increasingly activist public.

It is little surprise that the greatest CEOs of recent years - from Buffet to Bezos - have also been the best communicators.

With a retained team from The Draft, we help a CEO - expert in their own domain already - become an expert persuader too.

**In the first two months of a year-long retainer, we:**

- Agree the principal's persuasive **goals** for the year,
- **Audit** how effectively they are being met today (see slide 6),
- And write a new **narrative** (see slide 7) that defines their story and messages for the year.

Based on this initial phase, we **plan** the principal's speaking and writing schedule across the year (while leaving flexibility to respond to changing situation over the course of the year).

## **Writing and reviewing**

For the remainder of the year, we write everything the principal says or publishes, including, though not limited to, their speeches, articles and internal communications. Once a quarter, we conduct a review of our progress, and adapt our approach where necessary.

# Our Team

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**Philip Collins, Founder.** Phil was chief speechwriter to Tony Blair in 10 Downing Street, and writes a weekly column in the *Times*. He is the author of six books and has previously been Chair of Trustees at Demos, Director of the Social Market Foundation, a visiting fellow at the University of Oxford and an investment banker.

**Nick Rowley, Associate Partner.** Nick leads The Draft's work in Australia and Southeast Asia. He previously advised Tony Blair on climate issues, and helped to launch the seminal Stern Review on the economics of climate change. Nick has since taught Public Policy at the London School of Economics and the University of Sydney.

**Ed Owen, Associate Partner.** Based in Washington DC, Ed is a former journalist and was an adviser and speechwriter to the UK's Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary. He was later CEO of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust and Director of Communications for the UK's courts service.

**Claudia Wood, Head of Research.** Claudia is a research and policy expert with 20 years' experience in think tanks and third sector organisations, and was previously Director of the UK think tank Demos. She has written widely for UK newspapers, been an expert witness at UK Parliament Select Committees, and is the author of over 50 policy reports.

# Our Team

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**Alex Dymoke, Senior Writer.** A former *Evening Standard* and *Independent* journalist, Alex has written extensively for financial services firms, with regular articles in the financial press.

**James Carroll, Senior Writer.** James has 10 years' experience coaching and writing for some of the UK's leading broadcasters, politicians, and authors, and was previously director of a talent agency.

**Alice Elliott, Senior Writer.** A former speechwriter at the CBI, Alice has written for some of the UK's most senior CEOs and industry leaders, as well as leading charities, universities and political campaigners.

**Zachary Hardman, Writer.** An experienced writer for technology firms, Zach also writes for *The Critic* and *Unherd*. He previously worked as a political adviser in Westminster.

**Lizzie Hibbert, Writer.** A former academic and literary editor with a PhD in modernist fiction, Lizzie has written for publications such as *The London Magazine* and *Still Point*.

***Any questions?***

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Get in touch: [info@thedraftwriters.com](mailto:info@thedraftwriters.com)