



A study in brand elevation driven by defining refreshed voice, tone, and persona through qualitative research

Verb is a SaaS company in the LMS space that focuses on leadership skills and whole person development. Companies purchase subscriptions and create learning paths for their teams with content ranging from how to better express ideas in the workplace to unconscious bias.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Lack of clearly defined persona + voice

COLLABORATION

Freelance writer, internal and external stakeholders

CONSTRAINTS

Manpower, timeline

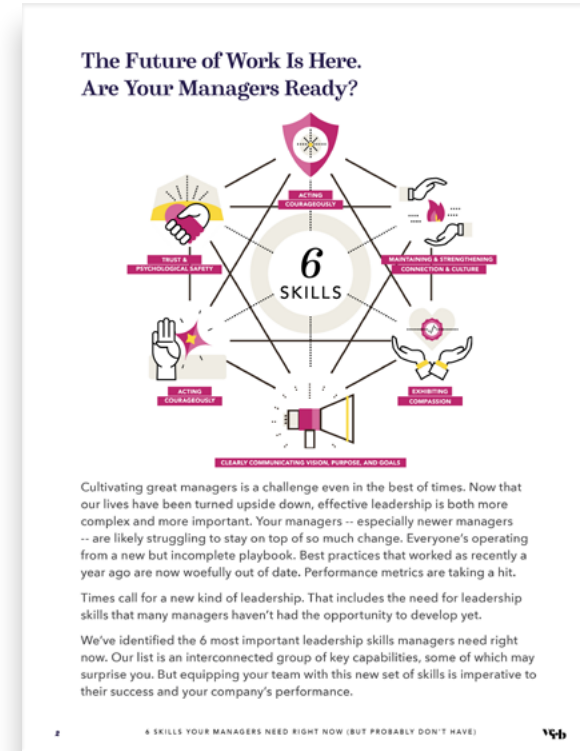
OUTCOME

Unambiguous tools for empowering cohorts to confidently express Verb's value propositions across all types of work.

TAKEAWAYS

The value of customer involvement in brand building





Brand color palette

Use these color proportions in any layout or collateral design. Text should always be set in black, white or gray.

White and Reflect Beige are recommended for full-flooded backgrounds when breathing room is desired, with the exception of Inspire pink, which is used in gradient form to denote section dividers in presentations (like this one!)

Learn Violet and Succeed Yellow are to be used sparingly; document hyperlinks and small chart accents, when another color is necessary.

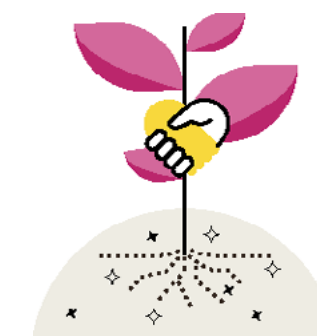
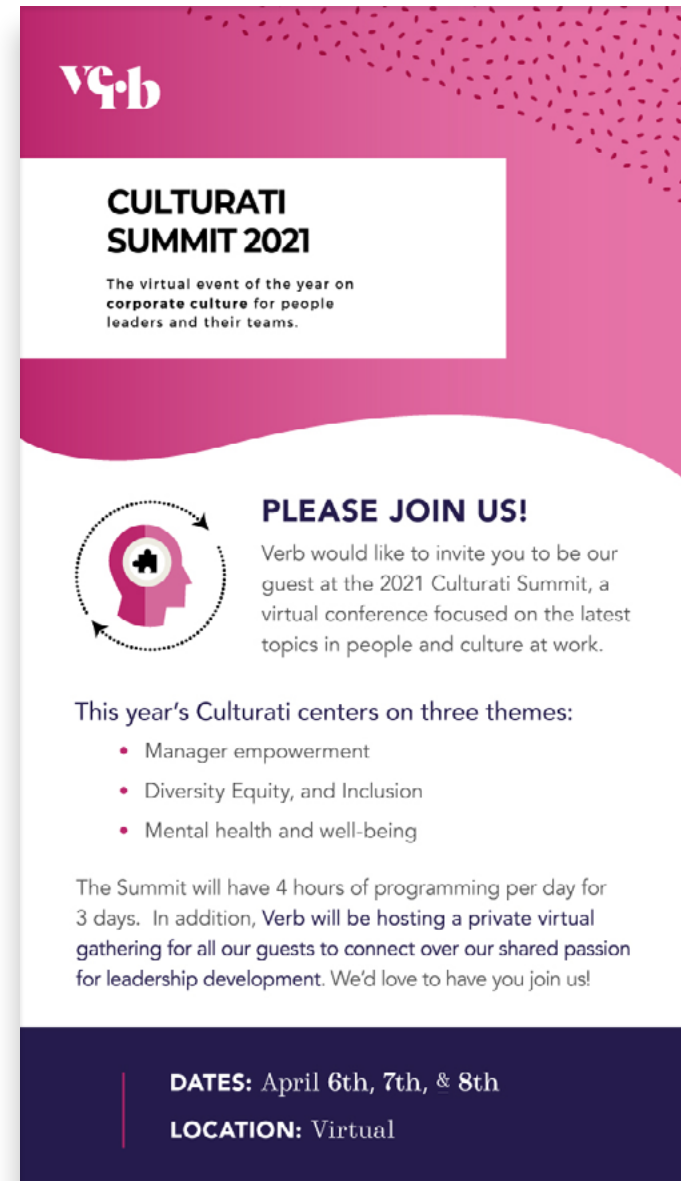
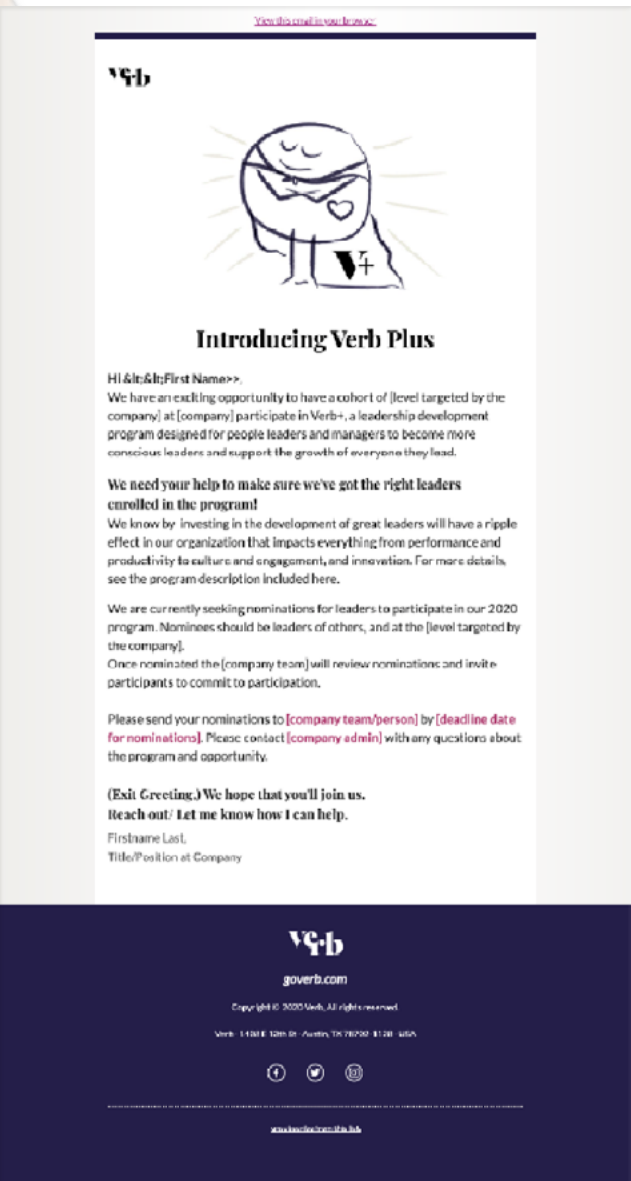
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WHITE HEX: #FFFFFF PANTONE: 382 C CMYK: 0% 0% 0% 0%	REFLECT HEX: #F5F5DC PANTONE: 445 C CMYK: 0% 0% 100% 0%	LEARN HEX: #9932CC PANTONE: 266 C CMYK: 100% 0% 0% 0%
		SUCCESS HEX: #FFD700 PANTONE: 485 C CMYK: 0% 0% 100% 0%

Photography

It's important that our image choices connect with people on an emotional level, and that the subject and style stay true to the tenants of our brand.

STYLE
always in high contrast black and white. Photos should feel authentic and editorial.

USAGE
Photography should be used as a background or a supporting element to help communicate an idea.



EMPLOYEES

Mike + Will

Doris and Daniel

DESI AND SMITH

KJ + LINDSEY

JOE

KELSEY

#1

Everyman

The Everyman believes in the inherent worth and dignity of all, and encourages others to be their true selves, without judgement.

#2

Outlaw

Curious and rebellious, the Outlaw challenges the status quo and breaks accepted conventions to become a catalyst for change.

#3

Sage

The Sage values observation, learning and logic, and helps us see the world objectively in the belief that the truth will set us free.

#4

Caregiver

The Caregiver is moved by compassion, generosity and selflessness to help and serve others.

CUSTOMERS

SHANE HUTSEN

NITYA SHEKAR

RACHANA JAIN

Donna Yurchevich

Jonathan Kabuye

THE EVERYMAN

The Everyman believes in the inherent worth and dignity of all, and encourages others to be their true selves, without judgment. They seek out connection and belonging. They're most recognized as supportive, faithful and extremely down-to-earth.

Everyman personality

Friendly, humble, authentic - The Everyman above all wants simply to belong. They tend to blend into society as "everybody" and don't like to stand out in the crowd. They're friendly and very easy to talk without being overly funny or overly rude or overly loud.

Everyman drive

Connection, equality, fellowship, and inclusion.

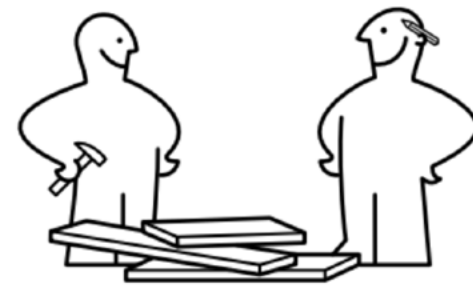
Everyman strategy

Align with basic values and create a welcoming community for all.



Lead from the back and let others believe they are in front.

NELSON MANDELA
© PHOTOFEST



THE OUTLAW

Curious and rebellious, the Outlaw challenges the status quo and breaks accepted conventions to become a catalyst for change.

Outlaw personality

They are resilient, resourceful, and have the ability to inspire.

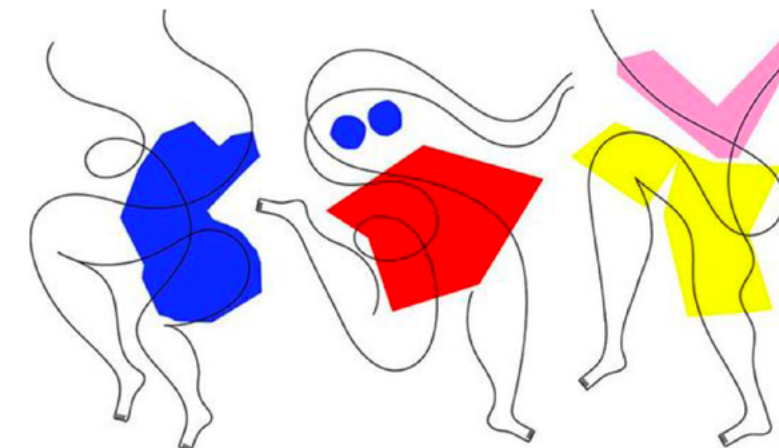
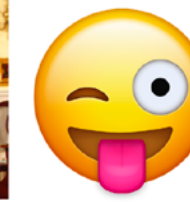
They're not always natural leaders - some appear as a kind of everyman anti-hero - but they certainly know how to shake things up. The Outlaw has a desire to crusade for a revolution to change the world for the better. They have a disdain for rules, regulation and conformity that would remove forms of their freedom of choice (or anyone else's).

Outlaw drive

Liberation and change

Outlaw strategy

Denounce the status quo, engage in positive disruption



THE SAGE

The Sage values observation, learning and logic, and helps us see the world objectively in the belief that the truth will set us free. Committed to encouraging the world gain deeper insight and wisdom, the Sage serves as the thoughtful mentor or advisor.

Sage personality

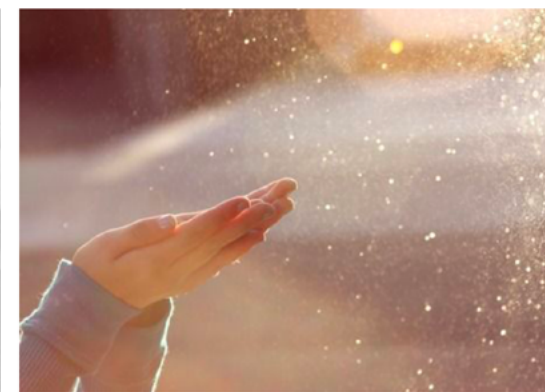
Understanding, Knowledgeable, Assured, Guiding - The Sage is a seeker of truth, knowledge and wisdom. Their drive comes from the desire to not only understand the world, but to then share that understanding with others. They are life-long learners and enjoy expressing their knowledge with philosophical conversations. They are more likely to pass on their wisdom to someone who can use it to change the world, rather than change the world with it themselves.

Sage drive

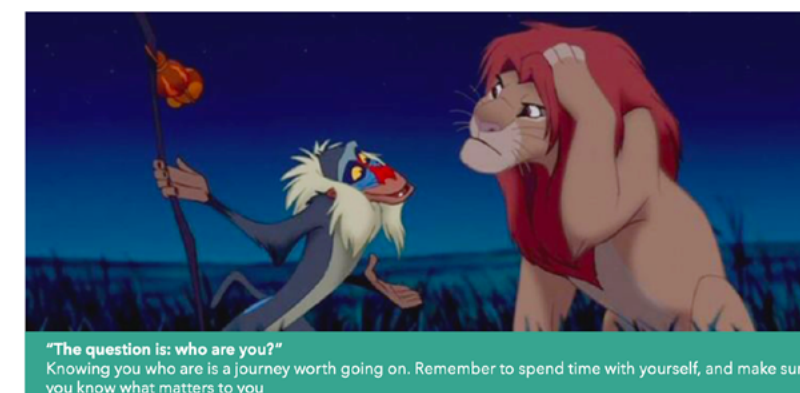
Wisdom, intelligence, expertise, information. Motivation: To nurture the next generation

Sage strategy

Show the path to wisdom, Celebrate lifelong learning.



You are looking toward the outside, and that above all is the one thing you should not do at this moment. Nobody can give you advice and help you. Nobody. There's only one way. Go within yourself.



"The question is: who are you?" Knowing you who are is a journey worth going on. Remember to spend time with yourself, and make sure you know what matters to you



THE CAREGIVER

The Caregiver is moved by compassion, generosity and selflessness to help and serve others. Motivated by nurturing and caring for others, they epitomize remaining calm in a crisis, friendship and optimism. They are protective, compassionate, nurturing, and generous.

Caregiver personality

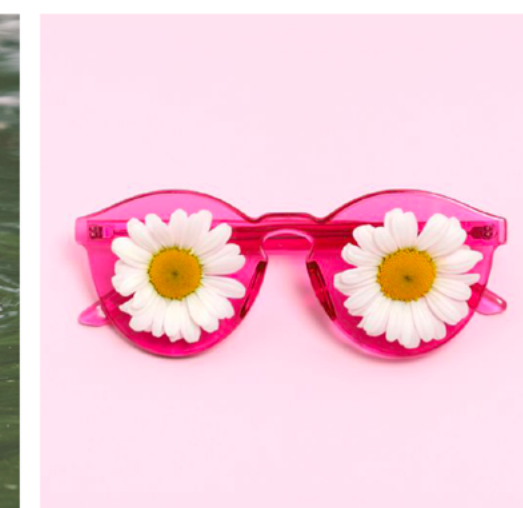
Caring, warming, reassuring - The Caregiver is a selfless personality who is driven by the desire to protect and care for others. They are often maternity figures and take those who are in need of care, under their wing until they are stronger to take care of themselves. Caregivers are not just reactive, they are also preventative and tend to be in and around an event of harm, before or after.

Caregiver drive

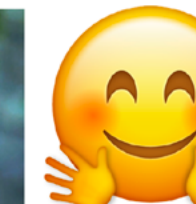
Support, help, service, gratitude.

Caregiver strategy

Others before self.



Salus (Latin: salus, "safety", "salvation", "wellfare") Roman goddess of safety and well-being



No BS, Average Jane

ARCHETYPE INFLUENCE

- THE EVERYMAN
- THE OUTLAW
- THE SAGE
- THE CAREGIVER

PERSONALITY TRAITS

- Approachable
- Plain
- Open-minded
- Skeptical of authority

She's your down to earth friend who isn't interested in making life so complicated. For her, people are good, you should help who you can, and we shouldn't get caught up in the stories that divide us. She's down to make a little trouble, so long as it does no harm - a little positive graffiti on the overpass or a moving speech during public comment at city hall. She's the first to welcome a new teammate, but also the first to listen. Consistently non-judgemental, she reminds you, "there is no normal," when you're worried about fitting in. She's the person you confide in because their mere presence is welcoming to whatever comes.



Radical Mentor

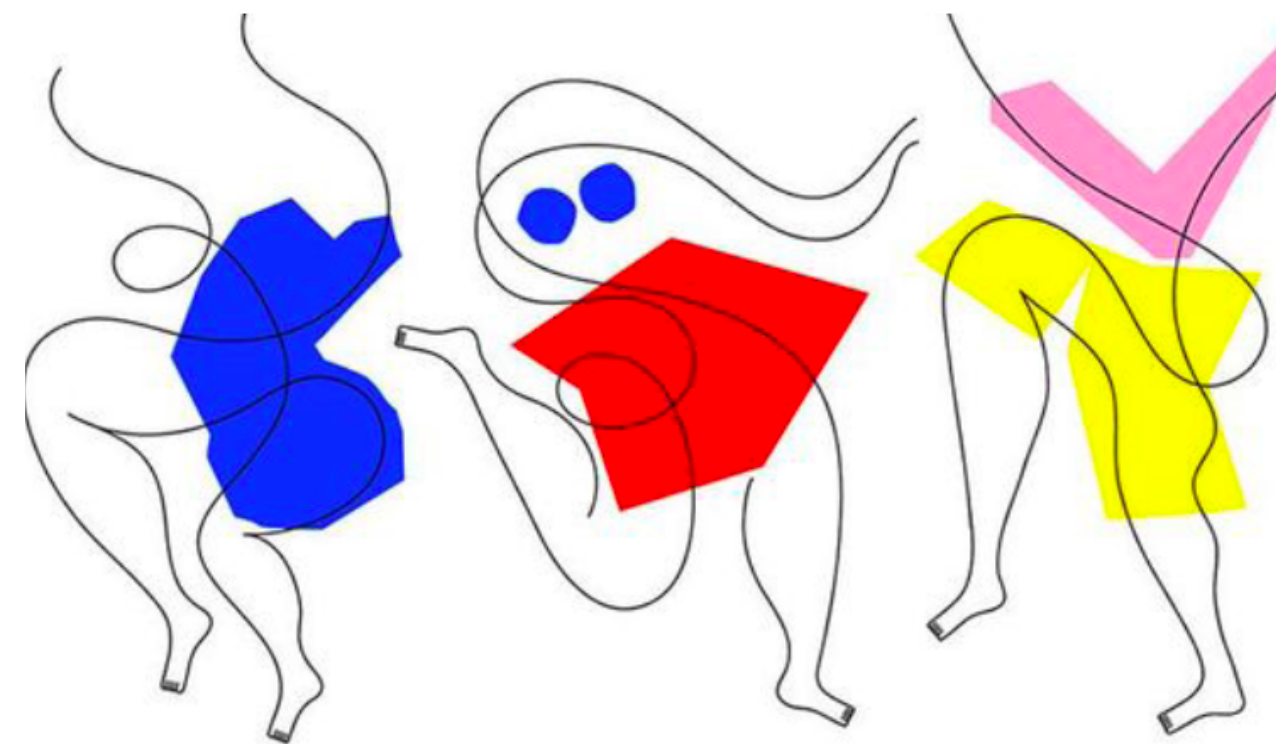
ARCHETYPE INFLUENCE

- THE SAGE
- THE OUTLAW
- THE EVERYMAN
- THE CAREGIVER

PERSONALITY TRAITS

- Wise
- Encouraging
- Inspired
- Confident

She embodies mischievous wisdom. She's earned her knowledge, and has a few greys to show for it. What strikes you most is her near-mystical connection with the world around her, she is present wherever she is. She inspires you to live our own truth, and will encourage you to do so with a lighthearted question and a wry smile. She gets her kicks from shifting people's perspective to see their calling more clearly...she calls it "positive disruption." She points in the direction of an answer, but doesn't give you detailed instructions. She believes life is an experiment, and each of us has a journey ahead.



Kindness Warrior

ARCHETYPE INFLUENCE

- THE CAREGIVER
- THE OUTLAW
- THE SAGE
- THE EVERYMAN

PERSONALITY TRAITS

- Loving
- Determined
- Passionate
- Gracious

She loves fiercely. She's the friend who puts the phone down and holds eye contact; who's always the first to reach out or or listen or belly laugh. She could command a courtroom as boldly as she can be honest about the pain of her past. She takes her love of life seriously, herself - not so much. She'd be the first to tell you about her favorite aisle at Kohl's, and that she preferred the library over the bar in college. If she does drink, she'll talk about her time in Peace Corps and how she lost her voice at a protest in Barcelona. When she talks to you no one else exists, and you get the sense that their top priority is truly to help.



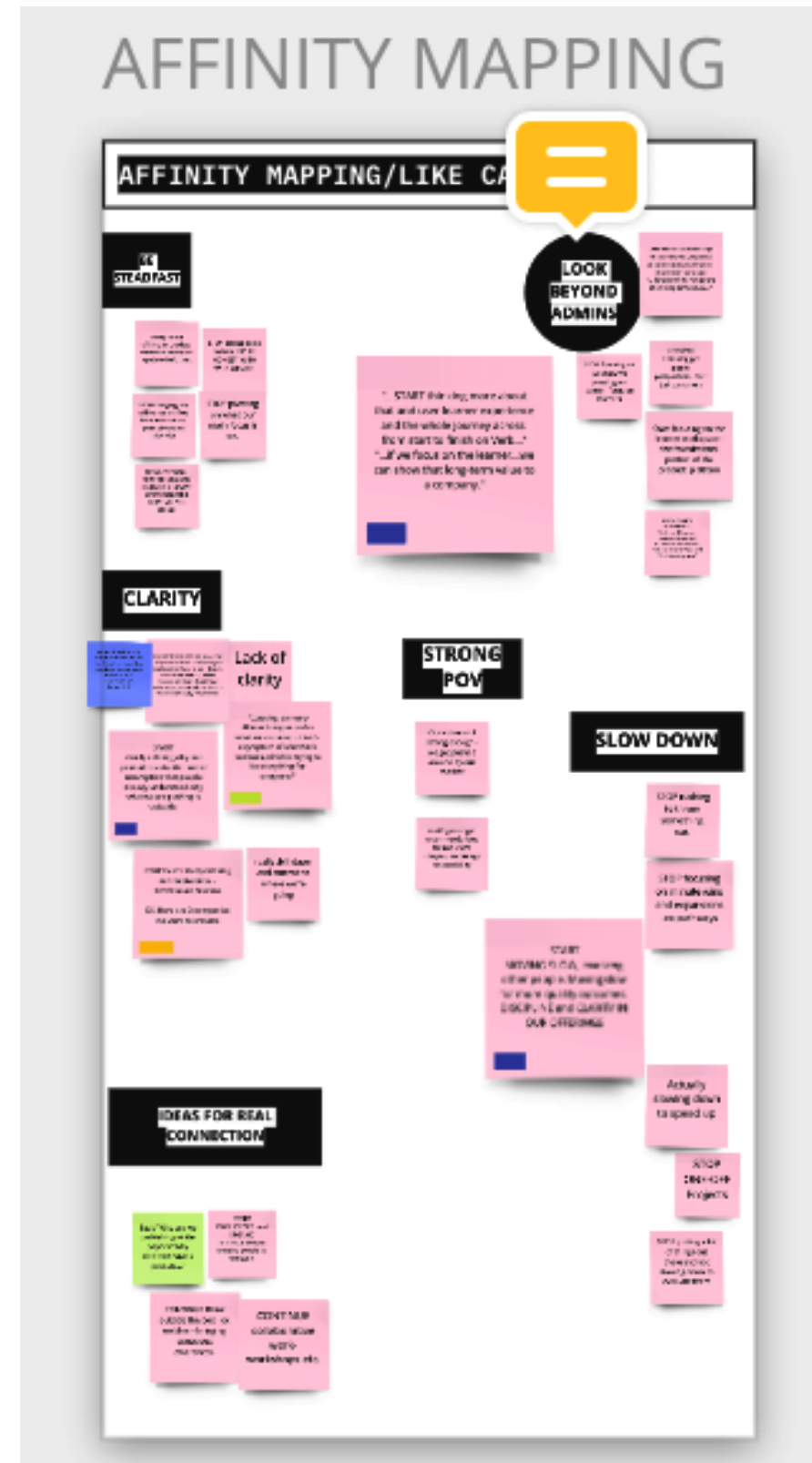


Own our expertise

- Push for a **stronger voice**
- Please make **stronger recommendations**

Focus on the learner | Slow down to speed up

- **Lean into Listening.** Get **global perspectives.** Not just customers
- **Consider learner experience** and user journey across Verb platform from start to finish when implementing feature requests or starting new pathways and programs
- **Less new projects and initiatives in favor of evaluating outcomes more closely** and iterating based on findings for an experience that best serves users



Simplicity and order

- **More defined process and roles** when working on projects with customers.
- **Clearly defining why our product is valuable,** in a way someone unfamiliar with Verb can understand.

Verb's brand personality

The Playful Sage

EVERYMAN SAGE OUTLAW CAREGIVER

Wise | Grounded | Inspired | Challenging

Her philosophy is simple: live deeply, help who you can, and don't be afraid to make a little trouble. What strikes you first is her near-mystical connection with the world around her, she is present wherever she goes. She is practiced in following her truth, and rejects the idea that a fulfilling life is reserved for the lucky few. For her, life is about finding and living your purpose, the opinions of others be damned.

She moves through life confidently. Even in new situations she is grounded; stabilized by her optimism, guided by a compass of justice, and calmed by an open and accepting mind. She's as down-to-earth as she is inspiring. When she faces a challenge, the solution is always found through her well-tested values. Knowing her is to know a friend, a mentor, and a lover of life. She takes your personal growth seriously. Herself, not so much.



We are:

WISE

GROUNDED

INSPIRED

CHALLENGING

Brand Voice Principles

How do we communicate as the Playful Sage? Our voice principles help guide us in bringing her voice to life.

1 Lead with Insight

We've earned our wisdom and are driven to share it with others. Whether it's about our company, the state of leadership or a piece of content, sharing insight is our focus and mission. We speak from a position of knowledge, but never to show off to prove we know something. We are confident, clear, and provide knowledge people can use.

2 Keep it Simple

It is a magical thing to take challenging concepts and make them so gettable they can't be misunderstood. We cast spells of simplicity throughout everything we communicate - through clear explanation, a little humor, and simple storytelling. With the spirit of invitation and hospitality, we invite folks into knowledge, making it easier and making it make sense.

3 Describe What's Possible

We tip the scale towards a positive, bright outlook because we believe with the right knowledge we can create a better future. We frequently help our audiences imagine the results of their work and the progress they make along the way -- always driving towards a future that looks better than our present.

4 Challenge Assumptions

Often, the barrier between ignorance and knowledge is a wrongly held assumption. Couched in the right level of care and confidence, challenging assumptions can create clarity. When the time is right, we push our clients' thinking on process, outcomes, and understanding by pushing on old assumptions or unhelpful cultural stories.

HOW DO WE
“Describe What’s Possible”

DO

Describe in **specific terms** what positive outcomes can result from our training, e.g. greater respect and trust among teams, clearer communication between leadership and teammates, less turnover

Share our aspirations for societal impact as a company, e.g. less burn out, more empowerment for employees, more empathetic leadership around the world, less exploitation, pro-human businesses

Encourage learners along the way by reminding them of their goals, and their ability to persevere when challenges arise

DON'T

Describe “what’s possible” in **intangible, utopian platitudes**, e.g. “a better world,” “peace on earth.”

Use exclamation points too frequently to show our optimism and excitement about the future, e.g. **describing “saving time with clearer communication” vs “work smarter!”**

Share more than one to two examples of what’s possible in a single instance, **the goal is to intrigue not overwhelm**

How we deliver our voice

Helpful tools: Describe What’s Possible

We use this principle to

Help prospective clients imagine the benefits and outcomes of our work

Make tangible ideas like “conscious leadership” and “whole person development”

Emphasize the tangible results that come from developing soft skills

Potential Use Cases:

- Introductory website copy
- Presentations
- Case studies

We use words and phrases like

Higher productivity

Effective and efficient communication

Reciprocal relationships

Open, safe dialogue

Sustainable

Imagine if...

Future

Possibility

Save time

Inspire employees

Tactical applications can include:

Balance descriptions of verb tools with specific outcomes that result from each

When talking about ourselves as a company, paint a clear picture of the work environment we hope conscious leadership will bring to life

Describe a specific problem that leaders face and articulate the 1:1 connection between our tools and solving leaders’ problems

Before + after

New voice + tone in play: buyer persona pitch sample

Before



Suzi Sosa
SDR

Buyer Persona Pitch

Like I mentioned I really loved your article about intrinsic motivation.

As you may have seen, our company and platform empowers managers and leaders to scalably develop a world class team. One of our big areas of focus is how to tap into and expand intrinsic motivation. We find that it can vary considerably across a company. What have you found to be the most successful drivers of intrinsic motivation at [company name]?

We have found that cohort based learning is very effective at tapping into learners' intrinsic motivation. Learning alongside peers and other leaders reminds learners about the "why" of learning. We have done over a year of research into how to use cohort learning to increase engagement. Would you like to hear more?

After

Buyer persona pitch

I love how your article highlighted just how important inspiring employees is to retention.

Lead with insight

Name something specific to demonstrate real engagement

As I'm sure you know, we help leaders develop world-class teams, and we've found inspiring intrinsic motivation is tough. It varies from company to company, but we discovered when people learn in groups, they're reminded of why come to work, and what they learn really sticks.

Keep it simple

Simplify business jargon, and move to the point quickly

Describe What's Possible

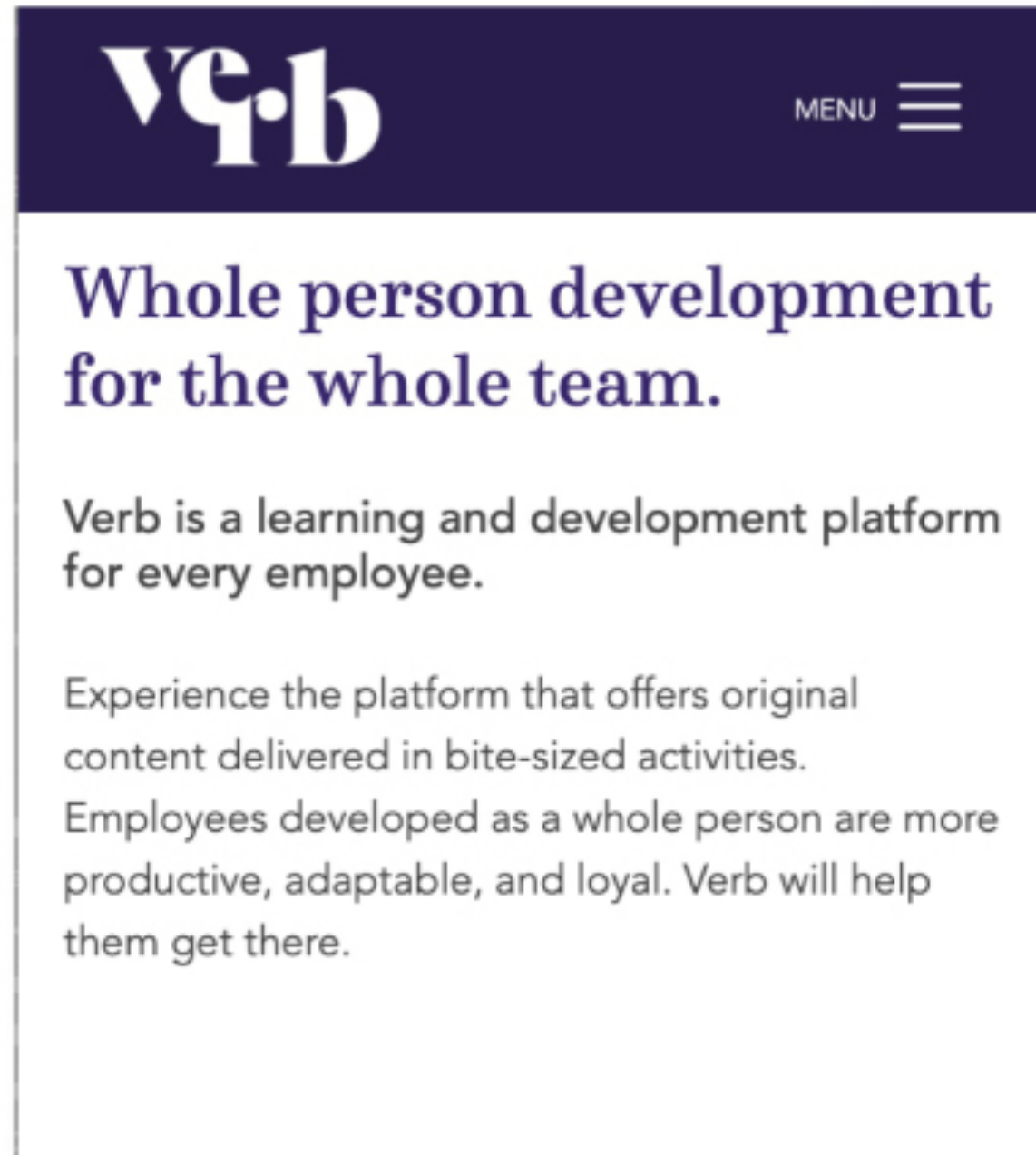
Name specific outcomes to create maximum clarity

I'd love to learn more about how you inspire your teams, and see if what we've developed can help.

Before + after

New voice + tone in play: website copy example 1

Before



After

Developing the whole person is a whole lot better

Verb is a learning platform for all employees to develop as people not just workers.

We call it "whole person" development. We go beyond technical skills, exploring emotional awareness, bias, and communication. Because learners developed as whole people are more productive, flexible and they stick around longer.

Lead with insight

We hint at the effectiveness of our approach, inspiring further reading

Keep it simple

Introducing the term helps establish clarity

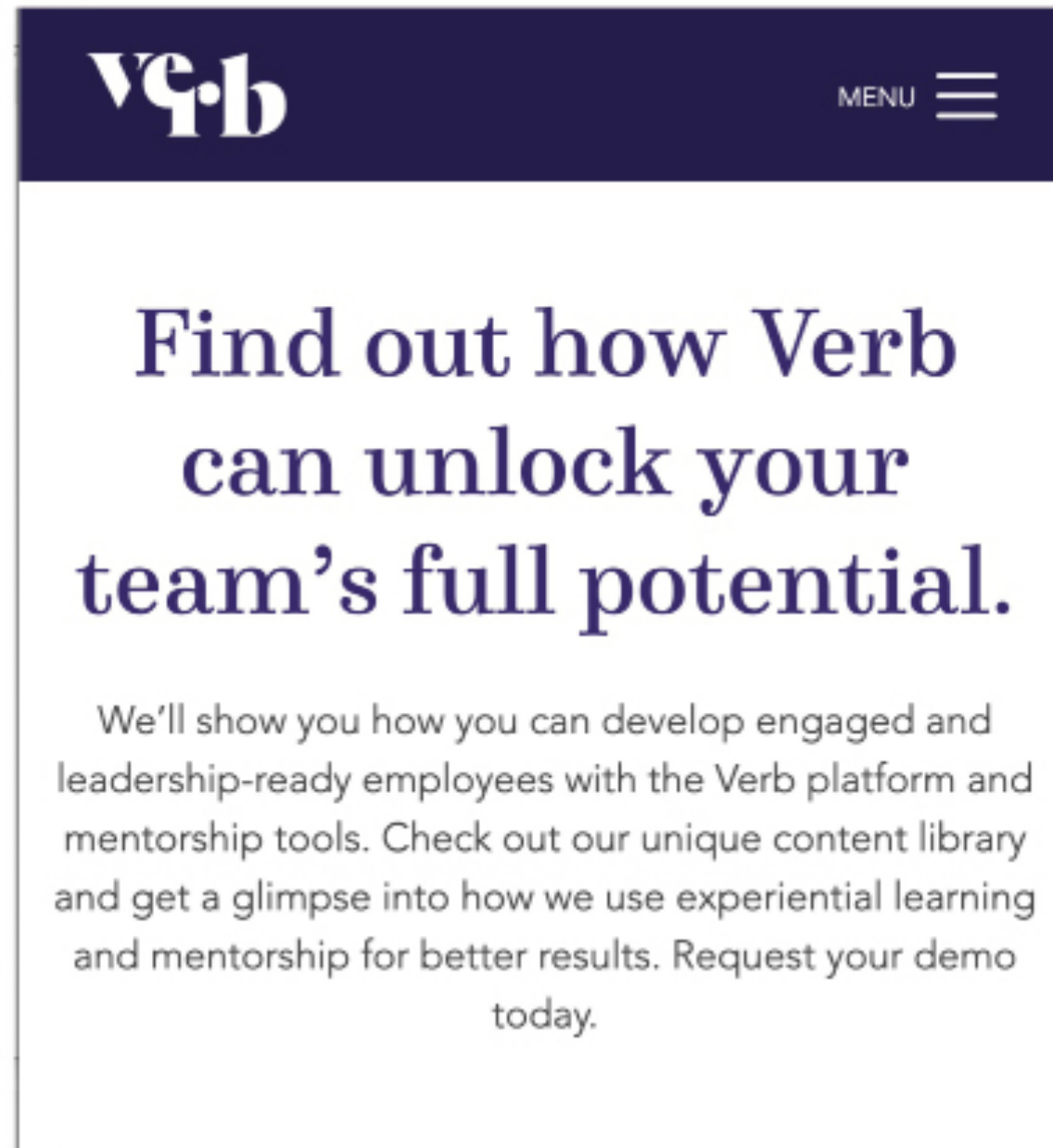
Describe What's Possible

Describing the tangible outcomes of our work, in an approachable way

Before + after

New voice + tone in play: website copy example 2

Before



After

You can unlock your team's full potential. Let us show you how

Lead with insight

Beginning with a statement of impact can spark interest

Experiential learning and mentorship develop more engaged leadership-ready employees. Request a demo and see how our unique content helps employees develop communication, feedback and mindfulness skills that unlock new potential.

Keep it simple

Simplify language to provide maximum real estate for valuable content

Describe What's Possible

Name specific outcomes to create maximum clarity

We are:

WISE

GROUNDED

INSPIRED

CHALLENGING



Core values



Magic



Curiosity



Design



Celebration



Leadership



Authenticity

verb

Bringing brand to life



Verb learners trust in our **wisdom**. We gently nudge them to **challenge the assumptions** they hold and **lead** them to the edge of their own **curiosity**.

Our goal is to gift **magic**. A swift exhilarating tectonic shift - the lightbulb moment when a person, **grounded** in a new found autonomy of the mind, watches the world open up before them.

It is in this space that their idea of **what is possible** expands, and the learning cycle begins again.

04 Audience: Learners

