



# Why justified text is killing your proposals

and how left alignment can save it

## The hidden problem with justified text

Picture this: you've spent hours crafting the perfect proposal. Every argument is sharp, every benefit is clear, and you hit send with confidence. But when the recipient opens it, their eyes glaze over before they've even read a word. What went wrong?

Chances are, it's not your content —it's the justified text. Yes, those neat, perfectly straight margins may look appealing at first glance, but they're secretly working against you.

If you're still justifying your proposal text, let me explain why it's time to stop for good.



## Justified text breaks the flow of reading

Human brains love predictability when it comes to reading. Left-aligned text offers this by creating a consistent starting point for each line, letting the reader's eyes glide naturally. Justified text, however, introduces uneven spacing between words. This creates awkward gaps (dubbed "rivers" by designers) that force readers to adjust their focus constantly.

Proof? Studies in typography and user experience show that left-aligned text aligns with the natural reading pattern of languages like English. This reduces cognitive load, making it easier for readers to follow the content without unnecessary effort. On the other hand, justified text disrupts this flow with irregular spacing, slowing reading and frustrating the audience.

1

### It's psychologically frustrating

When we read, we want to engage with the content—not wrestle with formatting. Uneven word spacing caused by justification subconsciously frustrates readers. This might seem minor, but small irritations add up, leaving the reader with a negative impression of your document—even if they can't pinpoint why.

Left-aligned text, being more natural, is less likely to disrupt attention or cause frustration. This subtle cue positively influences how the reader perceives your professionalism and the overall quality of your proposal.

2

### Left-aligned text is a proven persuasion tool

Think of left-aligned text as the calm, confident voice of your proposal. It's clean, approachable, and effortless to read. When your audience doesn't have to fight the formatting, they're free to focus on what you're saying and why they should choose you over anybody else.

Proposals aren't just about facts; they're about persuasion. Left alignment supports this by keeping your message front and centre without visual distractions.



The British Dyslexia Association recommends left alignment without justification, stating that it “makes it easier to find the start and finish of each line and ensures even spacing between words”.

# 3

## Justified text looks more old-fashioned than professional

While justified text might have ruled the roost in old-school print layouts, it's fallen out of favour in modern design. Why? Because it prioritises aesthetics over function, readability trumps everything in today's world.

Left-aligned text has a contemporary, professional vibe that shows you understand not just what you're saying but how it's presented. It's subtle, but these cues matter, especially when competing for attention.

# 4

## Your proposal's success hinges on clarity

At the heart of every great proposal is clarity. You're trying to convince your audience that your solution is the best one for their needs. If they're tripping over awkward gaps in justified text, they might miss critical points—or worse, give up entirely.

Aligned with natural reading patterns, left-aligned text ensures the reader's focus stays on your message, not your formatting. It reduces unnecessary effort and makes it easier for readers to stay engaged.

## The bottom line: Left-align, every time

Justified text might seem tidy, but it's sabotaging your proposals in ways you might not even realise. From disrupting readability to creating unnecessary frustration, it's time to retire this relic of old-school design and embrace the simplicity and professionalism of left-aligned text.

So next time you're working on a proposal, ditch the justification. Your readers—and your bottom line—will thank you.



### TALK TO US



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