

# Blogging: writing an effective blog post

This guide offers some advice on how you can go about writing an interesting and engaging blog post. Blogs are an important way for you to develop your online, professional profile. A good blog will not only raise your profile amongst people with similar interests; it will help to demonstrate your knowledge, skills, interests and expertise to potential employers and colleagues.

## What is a blog?

The term 'blog' derives from 'weblog', a website made up of a series of posts or entries, usually written by a single author. A blog functions as an online journal: the posts or entries are listed on the website in reverse chronological order as the author adds new ones. Since it is online and readers can usually comment on posts, a blog allows you to communicate with other people and thereby establish professional connections and build communities of people with shared interests.

## How is blog writing different from academic writing?

Since a blog is largely intended to entertain a reader, a post is usually written in a conversational or even 'chatty' way. Academic writing, on the other hand, is written in a more formal way; it is less conversational since its primary purpose is to communicate an argument in a persuasive way.

## Creating a blog post

An effective blog post has a number of features, but the process begins with choosing a topic.

### Choosing a topic

At the heart of the planning stage is finding the topic or subject matter you intend to write about. It is unlikely that an effective blog post will simply summarise basic ideas relating to a specific topic or what has already been said by others. However, this does not mean that you have to write something new or original. The secret is writing something *fresh* by finding your own voice. In other words, focus on what you think about the topic; the freshness will come from your perspective on it. Choose something you find interesting to write about. It is much easier to write in an engaging way if you are interested in the topic.

### Planning

At the planning stage, it is vital that you research (i.e. check your facts) and organise your blog post carefully. This will include thinking about the appearance and design of the post. These aspects of the post not only underpin the other features listed here. If your blog post isn't easy to read, or doesn't look appealing, viewers are less likely to read what you have to say.

### Framing

Framing is about setting up your blog post. What is its title going to be? A title is very important as it will either grab the reader's attention or prompt them to click away. A title should also have a tag line – a subtitle, in other words – and perhaps some keywords to illustrate the content. Also, who are you? Provide a short biography. Is your blog linked to other social media platforms? Blog posts shouldn't exist on their own. You can give your posts more impact by linking them to tweets or other blogs, for example.

### Structure and readability

It is a good idea to organise the text of your blog post into either clearly marked paragraphs or sections with their own subheadings. This will enhance the readability of the post, something that is very important when most readers look at blogs quickly and are often accessing them via mobile devices. Also consider the language you use. Blog posts should be conversational; make the text easy to read. If images enhance the impact of your point, include some; if you are adding them to make the post look nice, it might be better to leave them out.

### Frequency

Writing too often can lead to repetition and your posts will eventually lose their impact. Writing when you have something to say will ensure that your posts are relevant and meaningful.

For more information on writing blogs, visit our pages on Study.