

IEMA TRANSFORM

A BRIEF GUIDE TO WRITING ARTICLES

PREPARATION

1. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE: Demographics - seniority, experience, age, region

Who is your target audience? This maximises the relevance and impact of your content, helping you communicate your ideas effectively. Understanding your audience helps set the style and tone of voice of your writing.

Formal tone or informal tone – which will suit your audience and convey your message best? *Tone of voice: sentence structure, word choice, punctuation and context.*

Research is everything. If writing for a specific audience or readership; check out associated websites and previously published articles. What are the key issues affecting the sector/audience?

2. WHAT IS YOUR UNIQUE SELLING POINT (USP)

What is your objective? Is it to provide new information, offer suggestions and advice, or does it aim to influence and urge readers to think? Search for topics that are unique and relevant. Do a gap analysis – has the topic already been covered? If so, what's my USP? It's easy to stray into areas that are not relevant to the objective of your article while writing – clarity of purpose is very important!

WRITING

3. SIMPLICITY

Keep it simple, concise, straight to the point, direct, and professional. It is the key to understanding. Short words in short sentences bolsters reader engagement and comprehension. Discard unnecessary information and embellishment.

Watch out for repetitive words or ideas. If the same point is made more than once without adding value, remove it. Avoid unnecessary words that don't contribute to the meaning of the sentence i.e. very, really, actually, and restating sentiments. For example:

Terrible tragedy - Tragedy implies terrible

Large in size – Large indicates size

Green in colour – Green is a colour

4. ACTIVE VOICES

Use an active rather than passive voice, it encourages conciseness i.e.

Passive: The ball was tossed into the air by Huey

Active: Huey threw the ball in the air

Passive: The boat has been destroyed by a hurricane.

Active: A hurricane destroyed the boat

5. FLOW IN WRITING

What is flow? Briefly, it is style of writing that is smooth, logical and seamlessly transitions from one idea, sentence or paragraph to the next to engage the reader and enhance the understanding of the content. How to create effective flow in your article:

- Create a structure with an introduction that sets context, through to the key points in the main body, to the conclusion that ties everything together.
- Create a clear and well-structured progression of ideas that supports the overall narrative.

6. TECHNICAL INFORMATION

- Stick to all copy deadlines and word counts. You may be asked to supply a draft outline or synopsis first. Late submissions may result in the content being rejected.
- Any information that may be time-sensitive must be highlighted and if later edits are required, the author will liaise with the editor to ensure the most up-to-date information appears.
- Please ensure the FINAL content has been approved by all internal appropriate stakeholders i.e. line managers, comms teams, etc.
- By submitting content for publication you confirm that:
 - You (and/or other named contributors) are the sole author(s) of the content.
 - The content is original and has not previously been published (unless you advise otherwise and is accepted).
 - You have not previously licensed the use of the content you submit.
 - The content submitted will not infringe any third-party rights, be defamatory or in any way illegal.
- All submissions should include:
 - Authors' contact details, byline, high resolution photo (if requested)
 - Confirmed source for any charts, graphs, additional data, and images to avoid copyright infringement.
 - All images must be of high quality and sent as a separate file with the final submission.

READING & REFERENCE LIST:

The Art of Explanation: How to Communicate with Clarity and Confidence
Ros Atkins (2024)

The Economist Style Guide – 12th Edition (2018)

Writing with Style: The Economist Guide
Lane Greene (2023)

Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The zero tolerance approach to punctuation
Lynne Truss (2008)

TRANSFORM's Feature Guidelines 2024 can be obtained upon request from the editor:
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