



# TIPS ON HOW TO WRITE A BLOG FOR THE FEDERATION

## Step 1: Understand your audience.

Before you start to write, have a clear understanding of your audience. Who is the blog intended to reach? What do they already know? What's new about your topic? That information is what separates you from blogging about the generic content your audience *really* wants (and needs) to hear.

## Step 2: Start with a topic and working title.

Before you do anything, you need to pick a specific focus for your blog post. The topic can be pretty general, but it is essential to come up with a few focused ideas to get you started. What is interesting, unique, unusual, or special about this program, person, or event?

After you choose your specific focus, you need to create a working title (you'll refine it later). Why is that important? A topic is general, while a working title is specific and will guide your post as you start writing.

## Step 3: Write an intro (and make it captivating).

If you lose the reader in the first few lines of the introduction, they will stop reading even though they haven't given your post a fair chance. So set the stage and get right to the point. How?

- Grab the reader's attention. Try using empathy (the reader feels an emotional resonance); humor (sets a tone of fun); or a fact or stat (the reader wants to find out more).
- Present the context of the post: an existing problem or situation, a personal experience, a specific event, program, or award, etc.
- Briefly mention how the post will address that context: a solution, its significance or implication, the revelation of a change or follow up, an action to take, etc.

This will give the reader a reason to keep reading and provide them with a connection to your post.

## Step 4: Organize your content.

Here's the basic construct for each paragraph:

- **Introduction to overview of issue** — what is the issues or challenges you are working to solve or engage people with?
- **The middle**— discusses what your program or event is and how it addresses that challenge? The impact its had thus far, and **how** the Federation’s support helps.
- **The bookend**- Going forward, do you plan to take further action on what you learned? Are you partnering with Federation? Does it apply to other aspects of your life, society?
- **The finish** – what should be in the call out box? More background information on the topic or contact information?

Sometimes, blog posts can have an overwhelming amount of information -- for the reader *and* the writer. The trick is to organize the info, so readers are not intimidated by the length or amount of content. Organization can take multiple forms – sections and sub-sections, lists, tips, chronology, whatever is most appropriate. But it *must* be organized!

To complete this step, all you really need to do is outline your post. That way, before you start writing, you know which points you want to cover, and the best order in which to do it.

## Step 5: Write the content.

The next step—but not the last—is actually writing the content. Now that you have your outline, you're ready to fill in the blanks. Use your outline as the guide and expand on your points as needed.

But, remember: **Keep it short**. Three to four paragraphs are ideal, each paragraph having only 3-4 sentences (about 300 words). Use hyperlinks to other webpages, documents, photos, historical resources, etc., to provide further related information so that your blog remains as concise and on focus as possible.

And to make your blog post accurate and interesting, you might need to do additional research:

- Email a person for their bio and photo.
- Research the history of your topic.
- Get detailed information and testimonials about a program or event. (Testimonials and quotes not only provide vital information, but also personalize your blog.)
- Gather statistics and numbers.

## Step 6: Make it visually appealing.

As mentioned earlier, organizing your content breaks up long content. The organization methods—lists, sections, sub-headings, etc.—also create an interesting layout. Other ways to make your blog visually appealing are:



- Photos that reflect your specific topic: recipient's photo, action shot of program participants, historical photo, etc.
- Additional visuals or graphs that complement the different sections of your post
- Stand-out quotes and testimonials

## **Step 7: Pick a catchy title.**

Now it's time to refine your working title to make it catchy, one that will grab the attention of your reader. Here's what to consider:

1. As you start to edit your working title, keep in mind that it's important to keep the title accurate and clear.
2. Then, work on making your title interesting -- whether it's through strong language, alliteration, or another literary tactic.
3. Finally, see if you can shorten it at all, around 50 characters (not words). No one likes a long, overwhelming title.
4. Finally, view some of our current blogs for direction and inspiration.

Lastly, thank you for taking the time to write up your blog submission.

*Please note that blogs are subject to edits, review, and final approval by the Federation's Marketing department before posting.*