
The secrets to writing a great blog

Blogging takes a little time and a little practice but a good blog can dramatically drive your business results and your personal brand.

Blogging is writing. In business, it is writing online with a purpose. Business people who blog are usually doing two things:

1. Promoting themselves as an expert in a particular field.
2. Trying to attract people to sign up to a newsletter so they can promote their goods and services.

Before you start business blogging, you should be aware of a few essential, yet helpful, realities.

1: Leave your ego at the door

Some people assume a wordy alter ego when writing (have you ever read a thought piece drafted by a lawyer?). Don't try and be someone else. Allow your authentic voice to shine. If you try and be someone else through your writing, you will not have many readers.

2: Why should people care?

This is the question you must ask yourself and be honest when answering. If the answer is "They won't care" then perhaps it's best to step away from the keyboard.

When producing content online you are entering the world where a video of a cat 'playing' a piano is 'bigger than Elvis'.

If you want an audience, you have to write for them. Remember the bit about leaving your ego at the door? If you want anyone to care about you, you must first show you care about them. Ask yourself: who am I writing for and what can I do for them?

3: The emotional hook

How do you appeal to your readers on an emotional level? The headline of your post should be an emotional hook. For example, if you work in recruitment a headline could be 'The seven most difficult questions ever asked at interview'. If you are in the restaurant business, 'Five super foods you can grow at home'. What about car repair? 'Why your car will fail the NCT and what you can do to make it pass.'

Your headline will win or lose you readers. Make sure it packs an emotional punch.

4: Cut, cut and cut again

Get rid of all those words. Use very plain English. Heed the advice of Earnest Hemmingway: 'Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away.'

Don't worry about editing while writing; but always edit when you have finished writing. Be ruthless. In writing circles it's called 'killing the darlings'.

5: Convert readers to followers

Retweets and likes of your blog posts are all very well but are pretty useless when you want to carry out an effective business promotion.

You need followers and people who have signed up to a newsletter for more information. You must gather emails. If your blog doesn't get people to look for more advice, then you have to look again at your content and your writing style.

The End

An excellent blog takes work. Don't be discouraged by early 'failures'. Keep working at it and try to enjoy it. Writing should be fun, and if your readers feel you are enjoying the blog, they will enjoy it too.

Before you start blogging, make sure you have a decent website. [Here's a simple guide to getting online.](#)

Also, here's a handy [guide to creating great content for social media.](#)