



# Communicating your research through **BLOGS**

*Disseminating your research via blogs is a great way to communicate important or interesting findings, relate your research to current events, and draw attention to important questions in different research fields. Blogs provide an informal platform for researchers to develop public communication skills and help to increase the visibility of your research.*



## What is a blog?

A blog is an opinion piece written in a conversational style. A blog is usually around 500-1000 words long. It doesn't have to be a finished argument – it can pose a question or be a commentary. You simply want to engage the reader and get them thinking.

As blog posts are written in a non-technical style, they are accessible to interested members of the public, including individuals who may not have previously been interested in science or research.



## Why blog about research?

- Blogging can support researchers to inform academics, clinicians, patients and the public about your work and to further engage with your activities.
- It provides an online forum for engagement and discussion around a topic.
- A blog post increases the visibility of research by bringing attention to topics which are under-reported in the wider science media.
- Blogs have been found to stimulate social media activity (X/Twitter), which has been linked to increased impact.



## What makes an article a good fit for a blog post?

Below are some key points to consider when preparing to write a blog post about your research article:

- Would the article be of interest to people outside of your research area?
- Does the article have an interesting angle? Is it about a novel or unusual research topic or does it have an interesting methodology?
- Does the article contain visual elements, such as an engaging figure or diagram?

- Does it relate to a major ongoing initiative that you could tie the blog into, such as the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), awareness days (i.e. [World Evidence-Based Healthcare Day](#)), or global campaigns?



### Best practices for blogs

As readership varies widely, blogs should be written at a level that a non-expert can digest. These tips offer general advice for blogging about your research while targeting habits common to researchers.

#### Remember your audience

Who are you writing for? What are they interested in? Whoever you are aiming your blog at, try to imagine a specific person who fits in that target audience and write as though you are speaking directly to them.



#### Avoid jargon

Jargon (technical terminology) can be alienating for many audiences. It is relatively easy to avoid jargon with some effort. For example, rather than “polyethylene,” write “plastic used in shopping bags.” Not only does this avoid technical terminology, but you can also provide a relevant context.

#### Use a relaxed and conversational tone

Researchers need to break their habit of formal writing when writing blogs. Why? Formal writing sounds rigid and encourages bad practices such as long, jargon-heavy sentences.

Instead, use a relaxed, conversational tone. How would you explain the topic if you were talking to a relative or a coworker without your technical background? That is what you should aim for when blogging about your research.

### **Tell a story**

Where a blog post differs from formal research writing is that it tells a story. It is about you and your personal research experience – so write in your own voice.



Think about how you might use personal examples or metaphors to get your point across or engage in aspects of popular culture to illustrate your key message.

Show the human (rather than technical) side of research. For example, explore the “why” of your research. Why is the research important? What was your motivation for conducting the research?

### **Have a clear purpose**

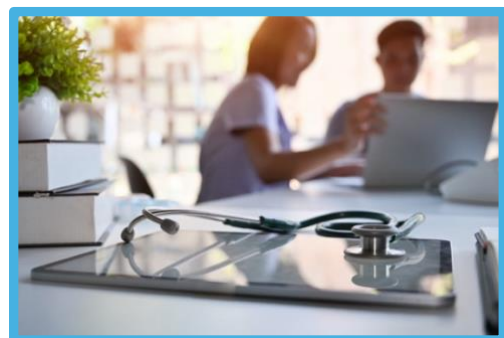
Your blog should keep to a single subject or point and have a clear purpose, relevant to your experience and expertise. If you have different things you want to cover, consider whether it would be best to cover them in separate blogs, or as a series of blogs.

### **Write a catchy title**

Your title (or ‘headline’) is the first piece of information to ‘hook’ the reader – be creative! It is crucial to attracting both humans and search engines, so make sure it’s enticing and naturally contains words and phrases that people are searching for. Remember to select ‘H1’ for your headline so that it is discoverable by search engines.

### **Write an introduction**

Grab the reader’s attention with a compelling opening paragraph. If you lose the reader at this point, they will navigate away from the blog and are unlikely to return. Some researchers find it easiest to write the first paragraph last, once everything else is written, because the act of writing a blog can clarify your thoughts and key messages.



### **Subheadings and shorter paragraphs**

People love to scan articles online. Subheadings throughout your blog will help readers navigate through it, skip to sections which are of particular interest and encourage them to keep reading by highlighting interesting and compelling points. Subheadings make even the longest pieces seem easy to read. Select ‘H2’ for your subheadings so that search engines can easily identify your blog’s sub topics.

Writing short paragraphs also helps readability. It is much easier for people to scan when there are small chunks of content to look over, so make sure you are keeping your paragraphs short and sweet. Aim for paragraphs that are four or five lines maximum.

### Use in-text hyperlinks

Using in-text hyperlinks to cite sources can make the reading experience more interactive and dynamic, allowing readers to explore related content effortlessly. Hyperlinks allow readers to quickly access the source material or related content with just a click, providing immediate access to further information.

If a URL cannot be provided then a traditional reference is acceptable, although strongly discouraged. Links should be descriptive. Avoid using the word 'link' in brackets after a sentence or linking from the word 'here', where an alternative is possible. For example:

- The director-general of the World Health Organization, Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, championed the need for [research evidence to inform policy and decision-making](#) in dealing with COVID-19.

### Follow basic search engine optimisation

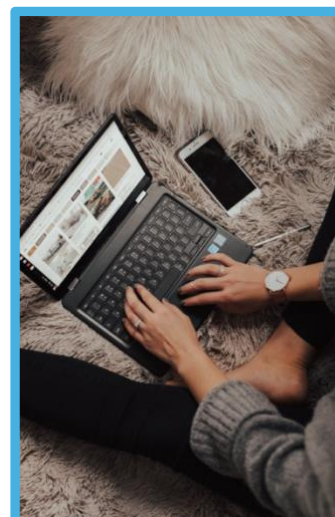
While we all use search engines daily, few people understand how search engines work. Search engine optimisation (SEO) is a specialised field that aims to maximise search engine (mainly Google) performance. SEO can get technical, but as a novice, you can focus on a few essentials:

- Pick one keyword for each blog post. You can use [Moz keyword explorer](#) and other [free keyword research tools](#) to help find relevant terms.
- Ensure the keyword is in your title, URL, at least one subtitle, and a few times in your text.
- Add in-text hyperlinks to your research articles.

### Use images and videos

Images and videos can help to visualise concepts, making your blog more accessible. They can also make a big difference to the attractiveness of your blog post and help to make them more 'scannable'. Normally, blog posts will have a large, featured image at the top.

You should always make sure you have the rights to use every image and video in your post and that you are properly citing the source. There are many sites you can use to find images. For example, search on [Creative Commons](#), [Pixabay](#) (which only has copyright free images), [Flickr Commons](#), and [Wikimedia Commons](#).



### Edit

Re-read and edit your post. Reading your blog out loud can be a good way of spotting when a paragraph doesn't flow. Explain any jargon (or avoid it entirely if possible) and check for typos, grammar or the repetition of particular words or phrases.

## LinkedIn blogs

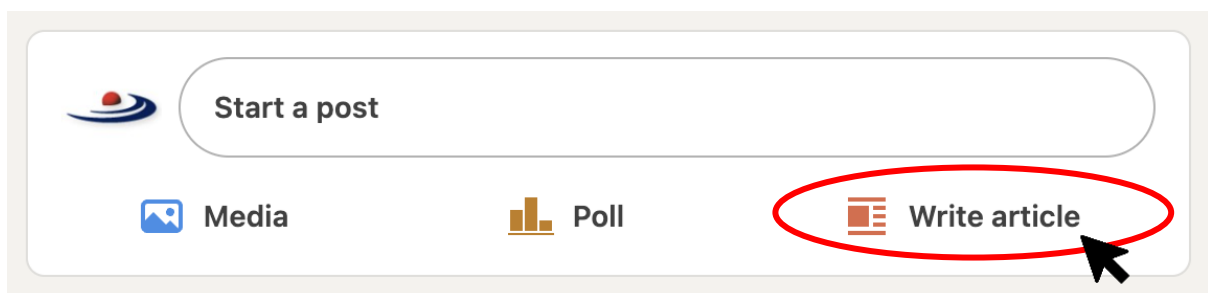
One of the best features about blogging on LinkedIn is that the platform does a lot of the work for you. While you would normally have to share your content multiple times on social media, and again in email newsletters, LinkedIn automatically lets your connections and followers see what you've posted. Hashtags, comments and shares will spread your blog even further.



Posting blogs on LinkedIn is also great for SEO — since LinkedIn is considered a high authority domain, your content has a better chance of ranking well in search results than native blog content.

### How to post a blog on LinkedIn

Posting on LinkedIn is simple. Navigate to your feed and you should see the 'Start a post' widget at the top. Click on 'Write article'.



This opens LinkedIn's blog publisher. Like WordPress and other blogging platforms, you can format your copy, provide quotes, select different headings (i.e. H1, H2) and more. You can also add a header image.

When you are done, just click 'Publish'. While you can't preview your content before publishing, the editor does show you a very close representation. You can also easily edit your blog after it has been published.

## Tips for blogging on LinkedIn



### Optimise your profile

A simple but impactful task, looking at your profile before you start posting will make you look more trustworthy and reliable. Make sure your work history is up to date and that your 'About' section is relevant to your industry. Upload a recent photo of yourself and make use of your background photo to showcase your personality.

### Treat it like any other publication

Yes, LinkedIn is a social media platform, but that doesn't mean you have to treat it like one. Make sure your writing is high quality, proofread and follows best practice in blogging outlined in this guide. Your name and possibly your organisation are attached to your LinkedIn content, and therefore considering your professional or your organisation's reputation is important.

### Make shareable content

Posting on social media can be like sending content into a void – there's so much going on that your work could be missed. To combat this, consider your content's shareability potential.

You want to encourage other LinkedIn users to like, comment and share so your blog post can reach new people. Consider asking questions or asking for opinions. You can even include a poll.

### Keep your posts short

Attention spans are getting shorter and shorter. Keeping hold of readers for long periods of time just isn't viable anymore, especially in the fast-paced world of social media. Make sure your posts are of a reasonable length (500-1000 words) and that they keep readers engaged until the very end. Remember to add informative sub-headings (H2s) to break up the content and make your content scannable.

### How to cite:

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