

# WRITING BLOGS PEOPLE WILL READ

Tips for engaging employees  
with your blog on COWnet

DON'T THINK OF IT AS WRITING — THINK OF IT AS TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING YOU'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT.



# AUDIENCE: WHO ARE YOU WRITING FOR?

The answer is not “everyone.”

Who do you really want to hear your message; who will be most interested in what you have to say?

Is your target audience based on demographics, job function, location, etc.? This may differ depending on the message.

Remember to keep your audience in mind when moving forward.

# HEADLINES

Stephen King spends weeks, months, even years on the first line of his books. He asserts, “An opening line should invite the reader to begin the story. It should say: Listen. Come in here. You want to know about this.”

8 out of 10 people will read headline copy, but only 2 out of 10 will read the rest.

The headline is a mini advertisement for your work. Take a few minutes before hitting publish to make sure your title is going to do everything it can to maximize the chances that people will actually read what you’ve written.

**HEADLINE TIP:** Problems interest people more than benefits. We are more keen on avoiding a problem or solving one, than gaining a benefit.

# HEADLINE EXAMPLES

Spring driving tips —————>

Have you ever hydroplaned? Here's how you can avoid it

Spring auction pick up —————>

Spring cleaning time: Do you have items for the auction?

Start contributing to your retirement today —————>

Get the numbers: See how just one year of saving can impact your retirement

Interview question of the week —————>

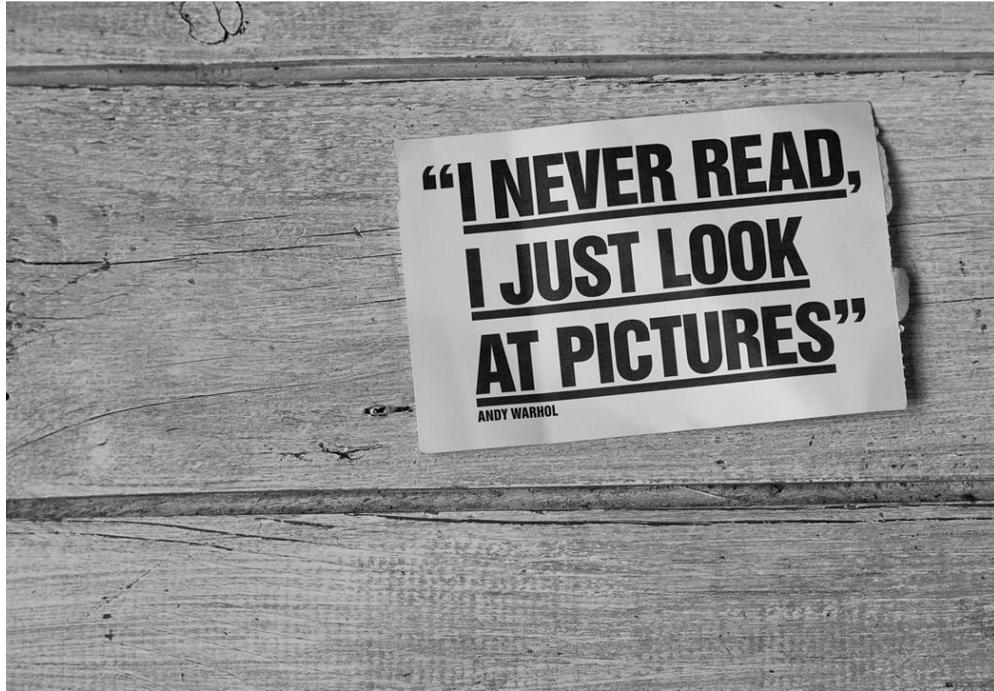
Do you convey honesty and accountability in your interview?

# CONTENT

Is your content interesting? Obviously you are interested in it, otherwise you wouldn't be sharing it, right? So how do you get others to also find it interesting?

- Use language your readers will understand
- Bring real-life examples into your blog
- If you're explaining something complicated, use case studies, testimonials or infographics to help simplify
- Provide testimonials; people want to hear from others "like them"
- Use humor when appropriate
- Tell a story; use a short narrative to draw them in
- Incorporate news and entertainment media
- Use shocking facts or stats
- Ask for opinions. People love to share their insight, so let them do it on your blog

# USING IMAGES & VIDEO



Images and video can convey your message in a quick way, increasing the chance your message will be received.

Don't use images and video just for the sake of it, make sure the image or video adds to or complements your content.

When possible, embed the image or video directly on the page; the less a user has to click, the better.

# IMAGES & VIDEO

When using video, infographics, pdf attachments, etc. you're asking someone to invest additional time to click a link and review more content. Introduce the video and give a brief description of what they are going to see/read.

If it's a video, tell them how long it is. Tell them why THEY must watch the video...pay attention to audience; why is this video important to them.

Generally people will click the link the first time they read your post, don't expect them to come back later and look at it – you have to grab them....right now.

# IMAGES & VIDEO

[Click here](#) to view an infographic about the importance of retirement.



Did you know only 5 in 10 people under the age of 40 have started saving for retirement? Are you one of these people? [Check out this infographic](#) for a quick look at what this means for your plans of sitting on the beach enjoying retirement.

[View this video](#) for more exercise tips.



[View this 2-minute video](#) with five tips on exercises you can do at your desk, presented by Michael Phelps, the most decorated Olympian of all time. A few of his ideas might make you laugh.

# INCENTIVE

At the end of the day, people love stuff. They also love to win. Consider incentivizing people for completing an action you want from them. Offer small prizes or hold a drawing for those who:

- Leave a comment
- Ask a question
- Share a testimonial



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<http://www.flickr.com/photos/jeremybrooks/2075432398>

# CREATIVITY

Scour the web and find out what others are doing to encourage engagement.

- The “caption this” photo contest was an idea grabbed from Facebook. We received more than XX comments on the four images we posted. But it wasn’t all about engagement, employees loved that the DH group was willing to put themselves out there for a laugh.
- Public Works did a blog entry about Drinking Water Week and asked for pledges from employees to drink from the tap. They offered a prize drawing for all who commented. They received XX comments on their blog entry.
- Instead of simply providing information to people, ask them questions. Wellness asked employees who might be interested in a cycling club; this post garnered XX comments.