

# Writing a Blog Post & Completing Peer Review

# Objectives:

- >> Decide on a structure for a blog post on your project and your Mod 4 learning
- >> Initiate and complete peer review on your blog post
- >> Utilize tools for revising your blog post

# **Deliverable:**

A completed blog post on both your technical and professional experience with your module 4 project.

This blog post should also exhibit some aspect of peer review. In your portfolio, please include both:

- >> Your completed blog post
- >> Feedback from at least 1 classmate on the blog post

# Opening

Why do developers write blogs? The biggest reason is to **build relationships**. Just as with open source projects, blog posts are another way to share knowledge and invite collaboration from others.

Writing a blog post about your experiences is a valuable way to share your knowledge and build your network.

Here's how you can do it.

# Template It Out: Decide What Your Post Is

Start with a template to help define your intent in writing  
*(adapted from emptysqua.re/blog post “Resources for Writing About Programming” by A. Jesse Jiryu Davis)*

**Disclaimer:** Your blog post does not have to fit into any of these templates. These are just suggestions.

All of these have a clear opening, body, and closing. No matter how you choose to write your post, you should aim to structure your blog post in a similar fashion -- your reader needs structure to follow your thoughts.

# Story:

*"I'm going to tell you a story about \_\_\_\_\_, how it taught me \_\_\_\_\_, and led to \_\_\_\_\_. First this happened, then that happened. And that's the story of \_\_\_\_\_."*

## Examples:

- >> I did this project and learned this thing. I found out this thing about myself.
- >> I used this technology, and here's what happened.
- >> I utilized agile practices in this way, and here's what happened. I learned this lesson.

# Opinion:

Structure:

1. Thesis
2. Evidence to support Thesis
3. Response to likely objections
4. Restate Thesis

Focus on not only having an opinion but also crafting a compelling argument to support it.

Tip: Think about how your experience with this project has

# How-To:

How-Tos must be motivated by something. Begin by telling your reader when and why this how-to is important to know.

“Doing \_\_\_\_\_ is important under the given conditions: \_\_\_\_\_. *I’m going to show you how to \_\_\_\_\_.* Do this, then do that. There, now I’ve shown you how to \_\_\_\_\_. *You should go out and do \_\_\_\_\_.*”

Hint: Any time you solve a problem, write about how you did it!



# How Something Works:

There doesn't need to be a clear motivation here other than what are you interested in learning?

When you're trying to figure out how something works for a project or to describe a project management strategy that you are using in your project, writing an explanation of how it works is a good excuse to dive in and find out more.

“Do you wonder how \_\_\_\_\_ works? I'm going to show you how \_\_\_\_\_ is implemented. It does this and that. Now I've shown you how it works.”

# Review:

Use reviews to describe and analyze instead of evaluating. It's tempting to evaluate projects or processes on a good-bad axis, but this isn't very useful. What is this thing *good for*?

“I used or implemented \_\_\_\_\_. *This is what it is. This is what my experience was like.* \_\_\_\_\_ has these strengths and weaknesses. In conclusion, it's best when using these certain criteria to evaluate it.”

# Writing Resources

Writing is like coding -- you have to practice at it. And just like with coding, you should utilize your resources to help you through the writing process:

- » Power Thesaurus: Stuck on a word? Power Thesaurus is a crowdsourced tool that provides users with a ton of alternative word choices from a community of writers.
- » ZenPen: If you're having trouble staying focused, check out this distraction-free writing tool. ZenPen creates a minimalist "writing zone" that's designed to help you get words down without having to fuss with formatting right away.

- >> Cliché Finder: Feeling like your writing might be coming off a little cheesy? Identify instances where you can be more specific using this handy cliché tool.
- >> Hemingway App -- Analyzes your sentence structures for readability and improvements.
- >> Wordcounter.net -- In addition to counting your words, it also calculates reading time.
- >> Here are more tools to help you with your writing

# Peer Review

The peer review process is similar to soliciting feedback on a project. As you draft your post, here are some tools to help you stay on top of revisions:

- >> Start your draft on Medium
- >> Share with peers for review
- >> Peers can leave feedback through Notes

Use this checklist when you read through your partner's post in order to give thoughtful feedback.

# Free Write & Share

Decide on a structure for your blog post and think about your audience -- who are you trying to reach?

Reference these prompts:

- \* Getting software into production and real usage
- \* Working with code out of the team's control
- \* Making smart use of and contributing to open source
- \* Adopting "brownfield" code when possible
- \* Working in tight iterations to deliver value throughout the project and what project management strategies help with that
- \* What it's like doing a completely new project in M4 and how you've navigated that

## **Pair & Share:**

After you have some initial ideas outlined, pair up and share.

Your partner is looking for:

- >> What is your partner's topic? What are they trying to say?
- >> Do they have a clear outline for a beginning, middle, and end in their post?
- >> Who is their audience? Who do they want to connect with? As one of their readers, what could they do to engage you fully?