**Instructions:**

Complete the tasks below. Bring your homework to the next lesson.

Task 1: Read this blog on how to write a blog.

**How to Write a Blog Post: A Simple Formula to Follow**

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Step 1: Understand your audience.

Before you start to write, have a clear understanding of your target audience. What do they want to know about? What will resonate with them? This is where creating a persona comes in handy. Consider what you know about your audience’s persona and their interests while you're coming up with a topic for your blog post. This is what separates you from blogging about generic stuff to the stuff your audience *really*wants (and needs) to hear.

Step 2: Start with a topic and working title.

Before you even write anything, you need to pick a topic for your blog post. The topic can be pretty general to start with. For example, if you're a plumber, you might start out thinking you want to write about leaky taps. Then you might come up with a few different working titles -- in other words, different ways of approaching that topic to help you focus your writing. For example, you might decide to narrow your topic to "Tools for Fixing Leaky Taps" or "Common Causes of Leaky Taps." A working title is specific and will guide your post so you can start writing.

Let's take a real post as an example: "How to Choose a Solid Topic for Your Next Blog Post." Appropriate, right? The topic, in this case, was probably simply "blogging." Then the working title may have been something like, "The Process for Selecting a Blog Post Topic." And the final title ended up being "How to Choose a Solid Topic for Your Next Blog Post."

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

First, grab the reader's attention. If you lose the reader in the first few paragraphs -- or even sentences -- of the introduction, they will stop reading even before they've given your post a fair shake. You can do this in a number of ways: tell a story or a joke, be empathetic, or grip the reader with an interesting fact or statistic.

Then describe the purpose of the post and explain how it will address a problem the reader may be having. This will give the reader a reason to keep reading and give them a connection to how it will help them improve their work/lives. Here's an example of a post that we think does a good job of attracting a reader's attention right away:

Blink. Blink. Blink.

It’s the dreaded cursor-on-a-blank-screen experience all writers -- amateur or professional, aspiring or experienced -- know and dread. And nowhere does it plague writers more than their intros.

### Step 4: Organize your content.

Clarity is vital in a blog post – it must be clear and easy to understand. Organization can take multiple forms -- sections, lists, tips, whatever's most appropriate -- but it must be organized!

In the post, "How to Use Snapchat: A Detailed Look Into HubSpot’s Snapchat Strategy", there is a lot of content in the post, so we broke it into a few different sections using the following headers: How to Setup Your Snapchat Account, Snaps vs. Stories: What's the Difference?, and How to Use Snapchat for Business. These sections are then separated into sub-sections that to go into more detail and also make the content easier to read.

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 next step -- but not the last -- is actually writing the content. We couldn't forget about that, of course.

Now that you have your outline/template, you're ready to fill in the blanks. Use your outline as a guide and be sure to expand on all of your points as needed. Write about what you already know, and if necessary, do additional research to gather more information, examples, and data to back up your points, providing proper attribution when incorporating external sources.

### Step 6: Edit/proofread your post, and fix your formatting.

When you're ready to check your formatting, keep the following advice in mind:

Make sure you choose a visually appealing and relevant image for your post. As social networks treat content with images more prominently, visuals are now more responsible than ever for the success of your blog content in social media. In fact, it's been shown that content with relevant images receives 94% more views than content without relevant images.

Use specific keywords that describe a post. Refrain from adding a laundry list of keywords to each post. Instead, put some thought into a tagging strategy. Think of keywords as "topics" or "categories," and choose 10-20 keywords that represent all the main topics you want to cover on your blog. Then stick to those.

### Step 7: Insert a call-to-action (CTA) at the end.

At the end of every blog post, you should have a CTA that indicates what you want the reader to do next -- subscribe to your blog, download an ebook, register for a webinar or event, read a related article, etc. Typically, you think about the CTA being beneficial for the marketer. Your visitors read your blog post, they click on the CTA, and eventually you generate a lead. But the CTA is also a valuable resource for the person reading your content -- use your CTAs to offer more content similar to the subject of the post they just finished reading.

Task 2: Follow the advice above, write a blog post about a category you’re interested in.

Task 3: Summarise your blog in a short, 140 character (35 word) summary.