The Blogging Template Job aid

The Blogging Template will help you follow the key steps and write great blog posts faster and easier.

Take time to plan out what you want to write about so that you can stay focused on topic and keep your readers engaged. It's best to open the template in Microsoft Word and use the template to draft your content. That way you can save your progress, come back to it later if need be, and copy and paste from your template document into the CSPS blogging platform. Click in each box to add your content. The boxes will expand. You can save your document and return to it at another time.

Step 1: Identify Your Audience and the Purpose of the Blog Post

Who are you writing this blog post for? What is the purpose of the blog post? What kind of blog post are your writing? (a How-to Blog, A List Blog, a Curated Content Blog)

Step 2: Identify The Key Takeaway

What do you want your audience to know after reading your blog post?

Step 3: Brainstorm a Few Possible Titles

You don't have to pick the perfect title before your blog post is done, but it helps to jot down a few ideas to help keep you focused during the writing process.

Choose a <u>working title</u> - a title that you can "work" with that guides your post, and helps you stay focused. Once the post is complete, you can fine tune the title to reflect the post content, and grab potential readers' attention.

Use the space below to craft a few possible blog post titles, and then choose one as your working title. Don't worry about finalizing your title until you're done writing. Return to this step after you have finalized your post to select and refine a final title.

Step 4: Create an Outline

The typical blog post consists of:

An introduction: Sets the stage for what you plan to teach your readers how to do.

A body: Explains the key points of the blog post.

A conclusion: Wraps up your post with a brief statement that's reflective of what your readers just learned.

Write the Introduction

When writing your introduction, you want to keep one question top of mind: *How can I establish credibility and empathize with my audience to introduce my topic?*

Feel free to leave the introduction for last, too. Sometimes it's easier to introduce your post after you've written the main content.

Use the following outline to write your introduction in the right hand space.

Steps to Writing Your Introduction	
1. Write a compelling opening that empathizes with the reader on a problem or difficulty.	
2. Explain the problem/issue or topic in further detail.	
3. Explain how you'll address the problem by teaching the reader how to do something, or how to find information on a topic.	
4. Transition into the body where you'll elaborate on the topic in more detail.	

Write the Body

Remember, the body follows through on what you promised in the introduction. Your body can be written in paragraphs, with bullets, numbered lists, multiple headings, or a mix of all of these. You can make use of whichever format is easiest for you.

Just be cognizant of this question: *What are all the main points I need to include in order to avoid confusion, and can I add any visuals that will make learning easier for my readers?*

Steps to Writing Your Body	
1. Write a heading that will indicate to readers you're getting into the meat of your post.	
2. Outline the main points in your topic. Transition from one step to the other by using words like "after," "next," and "then."	
3. Transition into the conclusion.	

Write the Conclusion

Your conclusion is where you'll paraphrase the key takeaway you outlined earlier in the planning stages and/or prompt your reader with a question.

Steps to Writing Your Conclusion	
1. Let the reader know they've arrived at the end of instruction.	
2. Summarize what the reader learned or how they benefitted from reading your post.	

3. Ask a question to encourage the reader to leave a comment or react if the blog format has a Comment field.	
4. What do you want readers to do after they've read your blog post? Do you want your readers to sign up for a course? Request more information? Use suggested resources? Participate in a Discussion Forum? Download something? Post a comment?	

Step 6: Format your content

Now that you've gone through the exercise of outlining and writing your blog post, you want to prepare it for publishing. Now's the time to make your blog post scannable by using headings, bold text for key points, insert hyperlinks, and images/videos where applicable.

Step 7: Edit, Edit, Edit!

Everyone can use a second set of eyes to look over their post before publishing it, so have a colleague look it over.

Step 8: Post using the *eSchool Process for Posting Your Blog*