A handful of times in the last five years I’ve tried to start a blog. Every single time I have face planted after the initial phase of setting up the blog. The hope is to change that trend with this attempt.

You might have been in the same situation before. A sudden spurt of inspiration makes you start a project that will take a lot of effort consistently. Usually, for me at least, everything is going well for about a week. After a week of everything being on the up-and-up real life hits. When real life hits you realize you never had time for the project, to begin with.

Anyways, that probably be repeated with this attempt. If you are reading this that is a good sign - at least the server is still running. Increasing my chances even further is the fact that I’ll do a post-mortem below. Post-mortems have shown to drastically reduce the chances of repeated failures, I think...

## **Why did I fail before?**

### **Implementing habits**

Implementing new habits is significantly proven to be hard.

Looking at the rate at which new year's resolutions fail - 8 out out 10 - gives a decent picture of how hard it is. Most new year resolutions will be pretty simple in theory - like meditating every day or stop smoking. At the same time habits do not stick.

Another example would be the leading cause of death in the world right now - obesity. If changing habits were easy it would not be a problem. People would just start eating healthy and exercising. At the same time, anyone who has ever been overweight knows that it is not that simple. Changing is hard.

The main reason why changing is hard is that you have to “manually” change the habit for about 3 weeks before it becomes automatic.

Going back to me the problem has been that I’ve never been able to stick to the habit long enough for blogging to feel natural. That is why I have committed to publishing an article every week. No matter how bad.

Reading up on sticking to habits, committing publicly seems to be positively correlated with success. That brings me over to my next point...

### **Getting feedback**

The problem with implementing new habits is that you have to stick to them for about a month \_manually\_ before they become \_automatic\_. Going back to the example above. Eating healthy food for a week does not help, two weeks will be better but still not help, eating for a month will probably give you a lasting effect.

In summary: Don&#39;t try to implement a habit you cannot stick to for a month.

With this in mind, committing to writing every week is the only way to keep this blog alive. More specifically, I&#39;ve committed to writing one article that is &quot;good enough&quot; every week in May. Hopefully, I will be able to do that.

## How do I improve?

Another reason for my previous failures is that I didn&#39;t get any feedback. Feedback is the only way to improve, but it&#39;s hard to get good feedback. You can ask a friend what they think about your blog, and they will probably say it&#39;s excellent. You can request feedback from a stranger, and they will probably not take the time to give feedback.

To solve this problem, I&#39;ll create a newsletter with a form where people I know can send anonymous feedback. Hopefully, that will give me tons of constructive feedback. This also serves as a great way to get the effect of &quot;publicly committing&quot; to a habit.

The newsletter will be my way of getting slow feedback, but instant feedback is also useful. This is why I have looked into sources of instantaneous feedback. My current solution for that is Grammarly - where I&#39;m writing this. It gives me immediate feedback on my writing, which helps me write better quickly.

In summary: Committing to the habit of asking for feedback every week is my plan.

Moreover, a lack of structure is a clear pattern from the information above. There has been no clear structure to my writing process. I would just start writing, and nothing would really happen. That is why I have decided to structure the process of writing.

## So what is this magical process?

I&#39;m glad you asked. A lot of research has gone into finding a process that might work.

My research started when I found a [course](https://developers.google.com/tech-writing) from \_Google\_ on technical writing. The course had a lot of tips on how to make your text easier to comprehend. For example, in the last sentence, I could have written, &quot;It had a lot ...&quot;, but &quot;The course had a lot ...&quot; is much easier for a reader to understand.

Besides, I read a lot of different books - from universities, companies, and other sources - about how to write better. The typical process appeared:

1. Collect the information.

2. Write a draft.

3. Revise.

4. Profit!

With this blog being more casual, it felt a bit too strict. Posts like this one are not really based on information from external sources, but rather my personal anecdote. When you are writing about a library you are writing in Rust, collecting data is not useful.

The next source I looked at was courses on writing. I found a course on \_Coursera, which\_ was terrible. On \_Udemy\_, a site I hate to love, I found 3 great courses:

- Ninja writing: The Four Levels Of Writer Mastery ([link](https://www.udemy.com/course/ninja-writing-the-four-levels-of-writing-mastery/))

- Writing Tools &amp; Hacks: Copywriting/Blogging/Content Writing ([link](https://www.udemy.com/course/writing-tools-hacks/))

- 3-Step Writing System: Blogging &amp; Writing Secrets [2020](<[link](https://www.udemy.com/course/3-step-writing-system/)>)

These courses have been the primary basis for my process and approach to improve my writing. The ninja writing course is really dense, and my usual method of going through courses at 2x speed did not really work. The same cannot be said about the two others, which are more a set of useful tips.

The process I landed on looks like this:

### 1: Collecting ideas

The first step is finding stuff to write about. I have many sources of inspiration. I&#39;m currently in the process of starting a software company, so there are a lot of ideas stemming from that. There are also a lot of ideas coming from other places.

### 2: Curate and organize ideas

This is where I&#39;ve been naughty before. The idea behind this post is to explain my writing process.

### 3: Develop the ideas

This is where the actual writing comes in.

1. Create a mindmap.

2. Extract structure from the mindmap.

3. Write a draft with that structure.

4. Revise as many times as you need.

5. Profit!

### 4: Profit!

Publish the article to \_Complex Codes\_ and get feedback!

That is my process. If you are reading this article, the process worked :D

## I&#39;m confused, what is this blog then? An experiment?

The goal of this blog is to write articles that I can learn from and that others will find useful. My theory is that if I write about the topics, I&#39;m most passionate about that my writings will be helpful. Those topics are mainly technical.

Because I&#39;m a Software Engineer, this blog will be hard to understand if you are not one.

### Topics I want to cover:

- Databases

- Software engineering

- User interactions

- Projects

I also want to prepare talks on those subjects, but that is for a separate article.

## This seems like a struggle for you. Why all the drama?

There are three main reasons:

- I want to get better at writing.

- I want to be able to communicate more efficiently.

- I want to have a blog as a chill side-hustle.

Thank you for reading. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at \_hfb@complex.codes\_.

<https://jamesclear.com/habits-fail>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/articles/199702/body-image-in-america-survey-results>