

Writing Your Blog

Get Setup with Medium

Create an account on [Medium](#) (if you don't have one). Once you have an account, request to join the HashiCorp Medium blog as a writer via [this Jira board](#). Under the "Request to be a Writer" section, make a task that includes your **name & your Medium user name**. Once we add you to Medium as a writer, you can start creating your first story! Additionally, you can join the Slack Channel #se-medium-blogs for guidance, questions, and feedback from the team as you work on your blog posts.

Topics

Your Medium blog can span a variety of topics and types of content. Including but not limited to:

1. SE Hangouts & Webinars

1. Ideally, blog posts will be written as a companion to each SE Hangout episode. Webinars have proven to be a great way to reach practitioners directly. However, following webinars hands-on can be difficult for people trying to move the cursor back and forth; the same goes for the content as it's not searchable or indexed. Creating a blog based on every SE Hangout unleashes the webinar to its maximum reach and effectiveness. You can sign up for an SE Hangout [here](#).
2. To write a blog accompanying a webinar, [create a new Jira task on the HashiCorp Medium Blogs board](#) with the information detailing your topic and the due date of when you will complete it by (before the day of the webinar).

2. Prioritized Blogs

1. These are blog topics available in [this spreadsheet](#) that the HashiCorp Editorial+Content team are looking for (use the tabs to look at different product/persona topic areas - there are also other documents link in there that include high priority topics).

3. Guides on GitHub

1. All of our guides are stored within GitHub. Some of them are public, some of them are private, and some of them lack structure, however, the content is precious and could be written into a blog that could be a great benefit to many of our customers or prospects.
2. To write a blog from a guide, [create a new Jira task on the HashiCorp Medium Blogs board](#) with the information detailing the guide topic and the due date of when you will complete it by.

4. Thought Leadership & Freeform Blogs

1. These are freeflow types of blogs, initiated directly from the SEs with no governance on the content. To write a free blog, [create a new Jira task on the HashiCorp Medium Blogs board](#) with the information detailing your topic and the due date of when you will complete it by.

Writing Process & Blog Structure

Strongly Recommended: Write your blog drafts in **google docs** so that it's easier to receive feedback from reviewers and publish on different platforms (Medium, HashiCorp.com/blog) from one source document.

All blogs should follow a proper structure to make it easy to understand and follow. Try to keep read time to <15 min, otherwise, it becomes hard to follow and lengthy to read.

Here is our [company Style Guide](#).

Structure

All blogs should include most of the following, depending on the style of the blog:

- **Overview:** Describe what the blog is about, what you are trying to achieve, and who the suitable audience is.
- **Prerequisites:** Describe if there are any prereqs needed (e.g. software download, 3rd party products, etc.; not applicable to freeform blogs)
- **Code Snippets:** Include when possible rather than free text, just like what you would do on Slack (not applicable to freeform blogs).
- **Illustrations:** Make sure to use drawings or screenshots. Keep in mind for some of the steps or for the result, there is nothing more boring than a non-imagery blog, and usually, it doesn't attract enough viewers.
- **Conclusions:** It's always a great idea to have a summary of what you showed, how this can make it easier for the practitioners, and how it compares to alternatives. Conclusions are short and targeted to why you wrote the blog.
- **Links back to HashiCorp website:** Try to include as many hyperlinks to our website as possible in order to guide readers to HashiCorp. Hyperlinks may direct to an article, a document, a software download, or even a more resources on the topic on the HashiCorp website. The more clicks we get to our website, the more successful we will be with our Medium publication.
- **Tags:** Medium allows you to have up to 5 tags. Tags are key for people searching for blogs and are how blog posts are indexed. Make sure HashiCorp is one of the tags, followed by the product you are blogging about, followed by the main features you are describing, and possibly a tag for “DevOps” or something similar to attach the blog to a certain topic.
- **Animated GIFs** are a great way to show a capability, many tools out there can help you create this. A good one can be found [here](#).

Style and Grammar

While we want you to write your blog posts in a way that expresses your personal style, we do want blog posts to sound professional and use good grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. Of course, the blog editors can help with the latter, but doing your best up front will help them publish your blog posts more quickly. Here are some tips:

- Read the relevant sections of the [HashiCorp Style Guide](#)
- Titles and section headings are **sentence case** - This means you don't capitalize every word in a title or section heading - only what you normally would in a sentence.
- Capitalize products. DON'T capitalize feature names
- Use section headers.
- Also, be sure to click the . . . icon while editing your story and set the following:
 - display title / subtitle
 - featured image
 - tags
- Note that if you change your title at the top of your post, you also have to change it in the display title /subtitle setting.
- Please avoid long run-on sentences.
- Avoid over-using commas, but use them where needed.
- Don't use hyphens or dashes when a colon should be used.
- If you're unsure which of two verbs or nouns to use, Google "<word-A> vs <word-B>". You'll usually find at least one page describing their differences.
- Think about whether phrases can be removed without changing your meaning. Shorter is usually better.
- When you first reference a technical term, capitalize it and boldface and add a link to a doc page that describes it.
- But then use lowercase from then on unless the term is actually a product name such as Terraform or Sentinel.
- Of course, all rules have exceptions: so, when you should use "Terraform" when referring to the product but "terraform" when giving a CLI command such as "terraform apply".
- ****For any method, file, or other term that's found in code but that you're using within standard paragraphs, highlight the word and press the back tick (`) just like you would in Slack. This will format it as a monospaced font and it looks much more readable.**
- Include longer code snippets in code sections that you start by typing 3 back ticks (```) just like you would in Slack.
- When pasting code, try to avoid extra blank lines. It might help to first paste the code into a simple text editor and then paste from there into your post.
- Please spell-check your blog post. Would you believe that I mis-spelled both "capitalization" and "punctuation" in the first paragraph of this section? It's true and embarrassing! (And I'm glad I double-checked after adding this bullet because I also mis-spelled "embarassing".) While Medium's editor does not have spell checking, you can always paste your blog into Word and use its spell checker. I also check the spelling of words by googling them. I even googled "googleing" and learned that "googling" is correct.

Remember: It's "HashiCorp" NOT "Hashicorp"

Peer Review

Ask one of your technical teammates who you think knows the technologies your blog post covers to review your blog post for technical accuracy. Or ask for volunteers in the Slack channel, #se-medium-blogs. Once someone agrees to do the peer review, assign the Peer

Review sub-task of your task to them. And ask them to mark that sub-task complete after they have finished their peer review and communicated their comments to you. **Please do NOT mark the Peer Review sub-task done yourself.** We want there to be accountability and tracking regarding who did the peer review. Note that it is possible for people to leave private comments on your blog post. You will then get notifications from Medium about those private comments. That is probably the best way for your peer to review your blog post. But if you prefer to give them a Google Doc version of it, that is fine.