

The Official Blog

PUBLICATION GUIDELINES

Updated June 2020



OH, HEY THERE!

So glad you decided to visit our Official Blog Publication Guidelines for our editorial content. There are three reasons you might be reading this document: you want some guidance on how to write for our blog, you were told to read it, or you clicked it by accident. Whatever the reason is, we're glad you're here and we hope this will be useful to you!

THESE GUIDELINES WILL HELP BREAK DOWN:

- A.** Our vision and purpose for our editorial content as a whole.
- B.** Our voice and tone for what we publish: to help you communicate in line with who we are.
- C.** Types of articles and content that we publish with suggested structures.
- D.** Expectations in writing for us and during the editing process.

A. VISION AND PURPOSE

VISION

Our vision as the Power to Change Students Official Blog is to be a familiar, trusted voice for students who wish to engage with topics and ideas relating to meaning, purpose, spirituality, and everyday life.

We write because we want people to know, discover, and grow more in love with the person of Jesus Christ. We seek to tell others about him. As we do that, we share personal stories and experiences, and relate gospel themes to real life. Because Jesus is relevant to all of life.

You can read more about [why we write here](#).

We also want to work with writers to help them develop and grow in their craft, and provide a platform to engage others with their content.

PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES

The purpose of these publication guidelines is to help you structure your submissions to fit with the purpose and vision of our website. We invite creativity and a variety of writing styles, but want to give you a basic example of what we most often publish.

B. VOICE AND TONE

“IT’S NOT WHAT YOU SAY, IT’S HOW YOU SAY IT.” THAT’S WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, IN A NUTSHELL.

We aim to platform diverse voices and perspectives. This applies to our editorial team, our writing mentorship program, and our growing group of contributing writers. We value diversity because God created us in his image in diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives. One day in heaven, at the end of all things, every nation, tribe, and people will be praising and worshipping God in all languages (Revelation 7:9). Culture and diversity matter to God; he has no desire to wipe out cultural differences.

And yet for those who place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, we are all unified and one under Christ. We hold the same intrinsic value, mission, and purpose in life and humanity: to worship and bring glory to God and help others do the same.

There is a natural tension here; we are one in Christ and yet diverse and different in perspective. This tension lives on our blog and in our content.

Each article published on our website first and foremost reflects the thoughts, experiences, and ideas of the author. Just like when we study the Bible, authorial intent matters. While we publish this content, we know that other perspectives and thoughts co-exist side by side. We are open to publishing multiple ideas on one topic, even if they differ. Ultimately, each piece needs to be grounded in the Bible, highlight personal experience, and relate back to gospel themes.

OUR PERSONALITY TRAITS

While each writer will have their own distinct voice and tone, there will be a few personality traits that will be common throughout all of our content. This section will explain the personality traits we are adopting as a writing team.

HUMBLE

We don't have all the answers. We aren't the best ministry in the world. We might be wrong sometimes. That's just reality, and we need to write with an awareness of that reality. That doesn't mean we lack confidence or don't stand firm in truth. It means we don't present ourselves as the snooty know-it-all who has an answer to every question. Inherent in being humble is the mindset that we can learn from everybody, there's always room to grow. Sometimes we get it wrong, and we never look down on others when they fail or get things wrong.

AUTHENTIC

If we aren't writing authentically from our experiences, we won't connect with people. Our writing must be vulnerable, open, and real. There is nothing we should feel shame in addressing. Showing our imperfections in our writing will help us connect with more people, and win the trust of those that will relate to our articles. For example, when you are sharing about biblical principles you've learned, tie it to a personal story to make it more human and relatable.

COURAGEOUS

We want to promote courage, bravery, stepping out of comfort zones, and breaking barriers. Our content should challenge and encourage students and compel them to action. If we want students to do things that scare them and step out of their comfort zone, our writing should reflect that as well. We used to solve this by having an explicit "Your Turn" section at the end of the article where we called students to action. We still want that, but try and integrate those action points into the actual article when possible.

KNOWLEDGEABLE

If you do not have knowledge on a subject, make sure it is well researched/fact checked before you write/submit the article. If we want to be trusted, we have to at least look like we know what we're talking about. If someone else could speak on a topic better than you can, interview them and use their voice in the piece. Writers should aim to be experts on what they're talking about, but they can only know so much. Don't be afraid to talk to people smarter than you.

Pro-Tip: Anytime you are quoting someone, a statistic, or any externally verifiable piece of information, ask someone to fact check for you. Even better, cite your sources when it's appropriate to do so.

INCLUSIVE

At P2C - Students we have a history of jargon, abbreviations, and funny language. We must be conscious of the words we use. If the word or acronym wouldn't make sense to the average non-Christian, don't use it. If you use P2C terms, explain them. For example: "This year at Plus our KSL told her DG members that someone PRC'd in DR! PTL!" is exactly what we are trying to avoid. If reading that sentence you don't even know what it's talking about—even more so.

EMPATHETIC

Try to empathize with the reader. For example, get into the mind of a student who just can't believe in God if you're writing something apologetic. Make a point in your article to show that you understand the people who disagree with you. Don't minimize the feelings of a potential reader.

FUN

Have fun with prose. Make jokes and bad puns (as long as they are self aware). If the article is fun to read, more people will read it. If your own article is boring you, think of ways to spice it up. We're communicating with students, and students want fun. There's a time to be serious, but our content often leans that way naturally. Be conscious of the tone of your last few pieces. If they've all been super serious and deep, think of something a little light hearted for your next piece. Fun is not wrong, and it's not antithetical to Christian content (believe it or not).

TIMELY

We have traditionally heavily-favoured "evergreen" content, which is articles that can be published and promoted at any given time because they aren't related to any specific current event. While evergreen content is important and necessary, we will grow to include more timely and relevant content in our publication cycles. We should be talking about what students are talking about. Read the news, stay current, and allow your cultural connectedness to begin influencing your writing and the topics you decide to address. If a hashtag is trending globally, talk about it.

GOSPEL—CENTRED

Last but not least (possibly most), our stuff needs to be gospel centred. Every article should reflect gospel truths in some way. We don't need to communicate the gospel completely in every article, but each article should always point to Jesus and reflect his love.

C. ARTICLES AND CONTENT

On the Official Blog we post a variety of article styles and content. There is creative freedom in pitching ideas and thinking outside the box—we welcome it gladly! However, if you’re looking for some examples of work that we typically publish, it would include:

1. NORM-FORM:

Normal articles are between 650 and 1000 words and are often editorial in their content. That means they can be based on your experience or your opinion (as long as it’s not presented as fact). They have a short introduction or a “hook” and each point is summarized as a bold header. The flow of thought is concise and clear, with a strong conclusion, including natural takeaways or action steps for the reader.

2. JOURNALISM:

Journalistic articles seek to tell a compelling story about an event, an issue in culture/society, or something ministry related. They should include direct quotes to convey your points, and researched facts to support the story if necessary. These stories should not be slanted by the writer’s opinion.

3. REVIEWS:

Journalistic articles seek to tell a compelling story about an event, an issue in culture/society, or something ministry related. They should include direct quotes to convey your points, and researched facts to support the story if necessary. These stories should not be slanted by the writer’s opinion.

4. CREATIVE EXPRESSION:

This is where “out-of-the-box” thinking gets fun. This could be publishing a photo essay, heavy on photography with captions that emphasize a story you seek to tell. Or using a drawing or cartoon to express humor, irony, or satire to the reader, inviting them to think deeper on a topic.

D. EXPECTATIONS

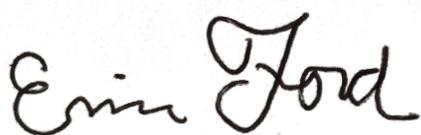
When you fill out the application to [write for us](#), you can expect that someone on our Editorial team will be in contact with you within 2 business days with next steps.

If your pitch is approved, please submit your finished article directly to your assigned editor. Please submit all work as a Google Document or as a Word Document. We will be working through edits solely within our Google Doc system.

When your editor gives feedback on the Google Doc, please reply to their suggestions within 48 hours, as it helps the editing process progress in a timely manner. Please feel free to “approve” suggestions (clicking the checkmark) but never “reject” the suggestion (clicking the X). If you have an issue or disagree with the suggestion, please comment on the suggestion itself to communicate with the editor.

After content editing is finished with your assigned editor, the article will move through a copy editing stage before it can be prepared for publishing.

We are excited to help create amazing content and are blessed to have people like YOU consider working with us. Thanks for being awesome.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erin Ford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Erin Ford
Editorial Manager, P2C-Students