

## Writing Advice and Templates

Congratulations, you have taken the first steps to getting yourself published, but let's face it, if you want to be a writer, you'll have to start writing so let's get into it.

Below you will find three simple steps to get you started if you want to write an article for possible publication. These are:

- ✓ Choose a topic or subject matter
- ✓ Choose a structure
- ✓ Choose a title

Once you have written those down there are several ways a budding writer can plan, structure, and write nonfiction articles. Remember the key is to actually write something. Even if it's terrible, start writing and improve it as you go. Below you will find some advice and some templates to get you started.

### Standard Magazine Article Structure

A magazine article is a diverse way of telling a story, sharing an experience, disclosing a professional opinion, discussing a topic, interviewing someone or simply creating a media release. Standard articles are usually made up of three main parts with multiple paragraphs. Paragraph typically consists of three elements: a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence. Subheadings are sometimes used to signpost the content of each. As a guide, most magazine articles are 500-1000 words.

- ✓ Introduction – engaging the reader, or outlining the main point of the article to follow
- ✓ Main Part / Discussion – making clear and interesting points about the topic
- ✓ Conclusion – a concluding paragraph that draws the points together

### Case Study

A case study (case report) is a way to share experiences or cases that are unusual or haven't been described before. It is imperative that these are de-identified. A case study should contain at least 4 sections and as a guide, can be anywhere from 1000-1500 words

- ✓ Introduction - Introduce the main purpose of the case study and briefly outline the overall problem to be solved.
- ✓ Description of the case - Write a brief description of the case and outline of the main issues involved. Always assume that your reader knows nothing about it.
- ✓ Discussion – This is where you can explain and discuss the issues identified using academic literature to support your claims. Please use Vancouver referencing for readability.
- ✓ Conclusion / Recommendations - Finally, summarise the conclusions you have drawn and give recommendations to resolve future issues such as identified in the case. Ensure you justify any recommendations.

## Critical reflection

A Critical Reflection (reflective essay) is a writing process that allows the writer to identify, question, and assess deeply-held assumptions about a specific topic or subject matter. This includes our perceptions of events and issues, and our beliefs, feelings, and actions. This is sometimes structured with simply - What? So What, and What now, and as a guide, can be anywhere from 800-1200 words.

- ✓ Description (what)– What happened?
- ✓ Analysis (so what) – Why did it happen? What were you feeling? What theories might help explain what happened? Are there other perspectives that challenge your views?
- ✓ Outcomes or Action (what now)– What did you learn? What would you do differently next time?

## Notes on Research Articles and Reviews

Whilst we are a publisher, we encourage anyone with a finalised research paper to submit to a peer reviewed journal as a primary source of information. The Shift Extension is not established to conduct the academic rigour required to publish peer reviewed work. That said, we occasionally will publish small research papers and reviews that are submitted by university students that has already gone through a marking review for credibility.

A few notes:

- ✓ The language of an article depends upon the purpose and audience
- ✓ A catchy, memorable headline is essential to grab your readers' attention and entice them to read the whole article so make a good one.
- ✓ Grammatically we require articles to be written in Standard English, but colloquial sayings or phrases might be used to emphasise a point.
- ✓ If you are still struggling, copy and paste one of the templates above and add some dot points. Once you have a few dot points, expend each dot point into a few sentences. Once you have a few sentences, build your paragraphs by structuring a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence. Also use subheadings to assist you define each part of your article (i.e. Introduction, Main body, Conclusion). Before you know it, you have the elements of a building manuscript to improve.

You can also reach out to the editorial board on our website for more support.

[www.theshiftextension.org](http://www.theshiftextension.org)