

PGR Tips on writing great blog posts

[What's up doc?](#) is a new blog to stimulate informal discussion on the doctoral experience, from procrastination to online presence. Nathan Ryder, who ran the training day for contributors, has provided these tips on how to write engaging blog posts and stimulate discussion. Look at the terrific posts already on the [blog](#) and add your own, using these tips.

Be focused

Have a goal for your post: you could write a list of smaller points that support your mini-thesis, but make sure that they all feed into the main point. Be clear, what is your opinion?

Be relevant

Think about your readers as you write. What are their needs and expectations? You have freedom in picking your topic, and freedom in whatever opinion you have, but you need to communicate effectively with your audience.

Think about your title

This is what people will see first. A good title captures a reader's attention and makes it easier to begin the process of engagement.

Be original

Even if you're following on from something written previously by someone else, or if you're re-blogging or linking to another post or article, think about why you're doing that: what can you add to the debate?

Invite discussion

Show that you care about what other people think. Your topic might be something that starts a debate naturally, but if not try to weave in some questions that you're throwing open to people reading

Structure and edit your post

However good your insights and material are, they will shine brighter with a good, readable structure. Use punctuation. Before you hit post, look over what you have written at least once

Write in your own voice

A blog post is not a text book or academic paper, and should not be written in the style of either. You should edit and check things over, but it does not have to be perfect. An authentic post is better than a "perfect" one

Link to other blogs and sites

This provides your readers with more information, adds to the discussion and also can be used to back up your argument if you're trying to make a point. Linking to other blogs also helps with building up a community

Be funny

Using humour increases engagement generally, and can also be a great way to start a discussion

Be brief

With blog posts, less is more. Longer articles or rants can have their place, but generally shorter posts are taken up more easily by readers. Besides, you can always write another post if you want to follow up the topic!