

How to Write a Blog Post Easily Every Time (And why it's so dang hard sometimes!)

When I ask people their biggest, most urgent frustration around blogging, most answer that actually writing the damn posts is their number 1 problem.

So it makes sense that when you Google “How to write a blog post” there are lots of templates and frameworks and “5 simple steps” to tell you how to actually write a blog post.

And yet. *And yet...*

I don't think that's what people are actually saying.

I believe what's really going on is less a problem with their writing or with them as writers, and more a symptom of not having the foundation and systems in place that tell them WHY they're writing and how it all connects to their ultimate goals (mo' money).

And for that, no amount of templates or “simple steps” to writing can save you.

You need something more fundamental than that.

First, let's address the elephant in the living room:

You don't *have* to write blog posts for your business.

Say whaaaaat? No, it's true. If you hate blogging with the white hot passion of a thousand suns, nothing I say is going to change your mind. And besides, if blogging isn't your jam, there are plenty of other ways to get your message out to the world. You can podcast, you can do video blogs, you can do infographics, etc. etc.

But — and you knew there was going to be a but —

You don't have to blog, but you do have to write.

If you're running an online business, I can't imagine a single scenario in which you will not have to write *something*. Could be your website, could be emails, could be a sales page, could be some tweets, but at some point, you're going to have to write something.

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Unless and until you decide to hire someone to do your writing for you (which is totally legit, and a service I offer) you're going to have to learn to manage at least SOME writing for yourself.

All that to say: If you hate writing, you can avoid blogging, but you can also apply all the following advice to any writing you have to do for your business.

Why is it so hard to write a blog post (and how do we make it easier)?

If you DO choose to write a blog for your business, you are in good company, and for good reason:

- More than 60% of U.S. online consumers say they've made a purchase as a direct result of reading a blogger's recommendation. (Factbrowser)
- B2B marketers who blog gain a 67% increase in lead generation over their peers that don't. ([Insideview](#))
- According to 78% of chief marketing officers, custom content will be the champion of marketing tactics in the future. ([HanleyWood](#))
- 65% of daily internet users read blogs. ([U.addresstwo](#))

For many internet-based business, blogging is the *best*, easiest, and most efficient way to collect email addresses, which are basically sales leads. That means that each blog post could lead to new sales over time.

Everything — and every expert I've talked to — agrees that content marketing, especially to generate email leads and then sell via email, works extremely well and aren't going anywhere.

So if it's all so friggin awesome, *why is writing a blog post so dang hard??*

There are several reasons, which fit into two main categories: psychological and physical.

Part 1: Overcoming the psychological problems (no, you're not crazy)

I would say that nine times out of 10, if you are struggling with how to write a blog post, it is a psychological problem, not actually a writing problem or a problem of not having enough time (which we will come to in part two).

If you're writing in a language other than your native language or have a learning difference like dyslexia, you get a pass: it may actually be the writing that's your problem.

All the rest of y'all just crazy.

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KIDDING!

But only sort of.

Because there are all these limiting beliefs that tend to pop up when we face a challenge, and for many people, writing and marketing are a challenge. A limiting belief is any belief that constrains or holds us back in some way. They're all about *defining* you: what you can and cannot do, what you should or should not do, or how the world works.

And what all limiting beliefs have in common is that they *limit* you (hence the name). They hold you back because they are incorrect or at least incomplete. They sometimes come when we form false conclusions based on experience or education, because of faulty logic, because we're looking for excuses, or out of fear.

But uncovering and naming these limiting beliefs can help you bust through them and start getting stuff done. So let's name some of the most common:

1. "I'm not a good writer."

When I was in elementary school, we had this thing called the President's Physical Fitness Test (Millennials — I know y'all feel me here) wherein every year we had to do a series of tests to see how fast we could run a mile, how long we could hang in a pull-up, how far we could reach to touch our toes, etc.

And I'm just going to be real with you here: I *hated* it. One big reason was that I had asthma and wasn't very athletic. Another big reason was my sadistic P.E. teacher who made us line up in order of how fast we ran the mile so that everyone could see who was last — me.

But what I didn't understand at the time, what didn't occur to me until shockingly recently, was that I could have practiced those skills and improved. Nobody told me that. I thought that you could either do a pull up or you couldn't — end of story. I thought until sometime in my 20s that I physically could not run a full mile. Until I could.

The point is, many people have similar stories that they've told themselves — maybe since childhood — about being a bad writer.

But like running or drawing or cooking or playing an instrument, writing is a *skill* and one you can improve with practice.

And, just as it was pretty stupid for my P.E. teacher to think any of us would improve at pull-ups without practice, the only way to improve at writing *is to practice writing*.

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Look up any list of 10 or 25 or 33 ways to become a better writer, and I will bet you five shiny internet dollars that “just write” or “practice” is on every. Single. One. That’s because it’s really the only tip you need — although, the other things in *this* post will also help.

The shorthand for this is BICFOCTAM. Butt In Chair Fingers On Keyboard Typing Away Madly. And it’s the only way anyone ever becomes a writer. Period.

The good news is that blogging is the *perfect* way to practice! It happens on a regular schedule, it’s low risk (compared to, say, writing a proposal or a sales page), and there are methods to help you improve. (See part 2.)

Tip: Look at all your blogging as practice for getting better, and any time you hear yourself telling that old story that you’re “not a good writer,” name it as a story, and go out and do a pull up. Or, just keep writing.

2. Perfectionism

Equally insidious, yet masquerading as helpful, is the story that your blogs are “not good enough.”

It may even be that they are “not good enough — yet.”

This is perfectionism, plain and simple, and it is a story you’re telling yourself — but also a fear.

It’s a deep-rooted fear that *you* might not be good enough. It means that you’re not confident in what you’re saying. And that’s OK.

Because I am.

I’m confident that you started your business because you had a message you wanted to share with the world, that there are people who *need* to hear that message, who need what you’re selling. I’m confident that you have enough passion, moxie, talent, and expertise to deliver on that message.

And I’m confident that what you’ve written for that blog post? *Is just fine.*

Again, this is one way that blogs are awesome: You get another opportunity to work on your message, your writing, your posts *every time you post.* GENIUS!

And I can tell you from experience, it does get easier to put yourself out there. But it takes practice. And you have to actually *post* something for it to count, OK?

Now, go clear out that drafts folder...

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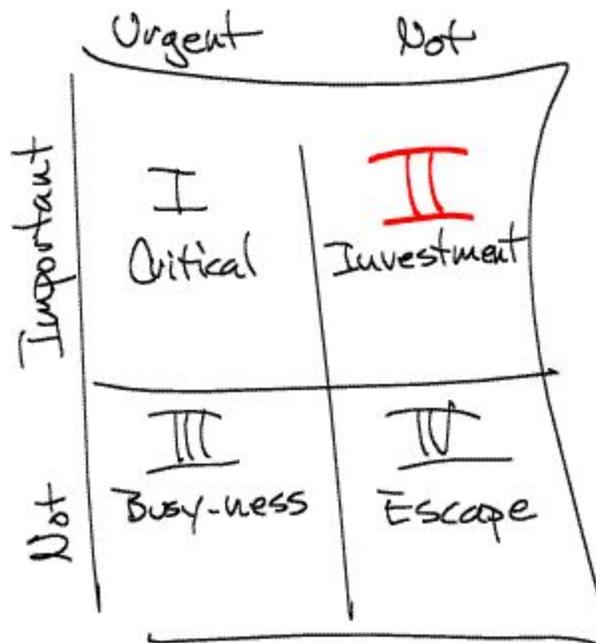
3. Belief that it's not as important as other things in your business

When I was in the first year of this business, I had one month that was my best. Month. Ever. And then the following month was totally dead. It was a terrible cash-flow roller coaster. I was subscribing to a monthly call with a business coach at the time, and so I asked her what was going on.

She asked me, "Well, how much marketing were you doing last month — during your best month ever?"

Uhhhhh...

The answer, predictably, was zero. I was so busy onboarding new clients, doing sales calls, etc. that I had completely neglected my marketing. And surprise, surprise — it showed the following month.



I find that a lot of business owners find it hard to prioritize their marketing tasks (including writing content) for two reasons.

First, it falls into quadrant II of the time management matrix popularized by Stephen Covey: meaning that it is important, but not urgent.

Many business owners spend so much time in the other quadrants that they never “get around to” the tasks in quadrant II, which include planning, strategic thought, and lots of marketing tasks. The result is that we’re always *busy* but never making much progress because we never make time for the tasks that constitute an investment in our business.

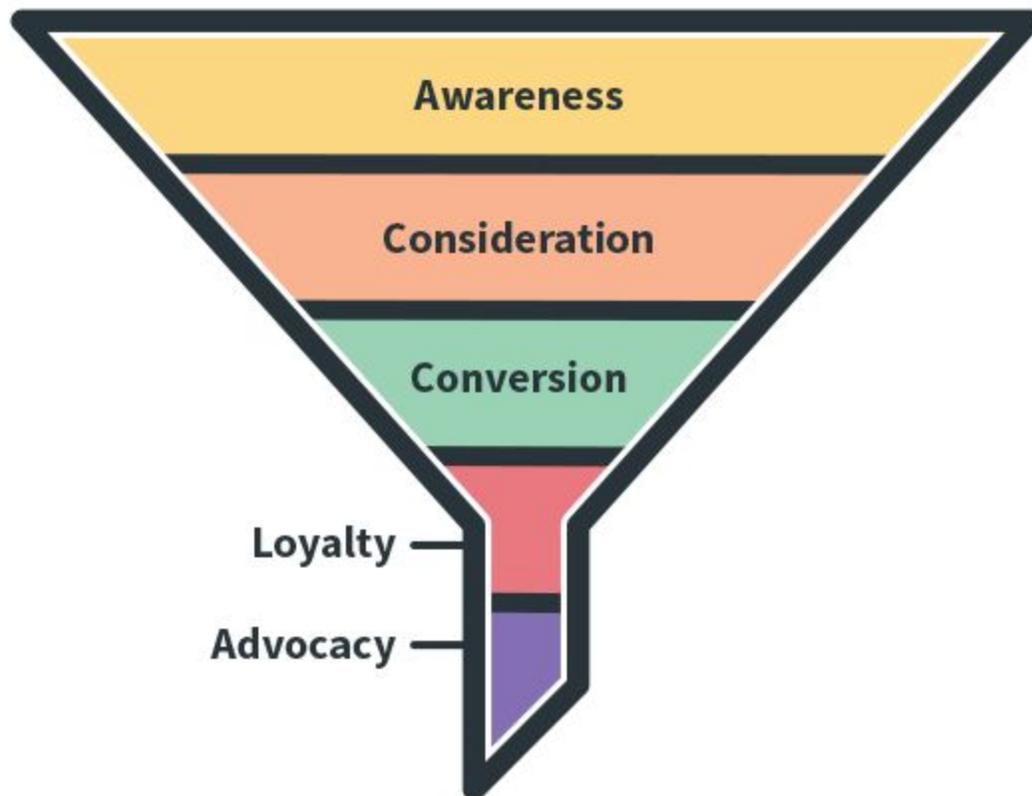
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Second, I suspect that many business owners don't connect blogging to making money. They prioritize tasks for which they can easily connect the dots between the task and money in the bank, ie: client work, creating new products or services, launching, etc.

And it's true: blogging rarely leads directly to a sale in the sense that you don't put a big "BUY NOW" button on a blog post and expect any sales.

BUT. For most businesses, blogging is one of the *best* ways to generate new leads, and those leads *do* lead directly to sales.

If you think of your business as a funnel, you have to fill the top with new people who have just become aware of your business or your product or service, as in this image from [Aweber](#).



Just like what happened after my "best month ever," when I neglected my marketing efforts, I wasn't filling the top of my funnel, and so it wasn't long before the leads ran out and there was no one left to make sales to.

4. Belief that blogging is dead or “doesn’t work”

Many business owners understand the funnel concept of content marketing, and want to put it to use for their business — but they don’t see any results from blogging, and get discouraged.

They’re blogging regularly, they’re writing good content, they’re sharing with their audience, but somehow it’s not working. **They think they’re doing everything right, but they can’t connect their blogging efforts to any increase in leads and sales.**

And so they give up — or think about giving up.

The negative experience they’ve had with blogging causes them to have the limiting belief that blogging doesn’t work, or that maybe it works for other people, but not for them.

But here’s the catch-22: if you *believe* blogging doesn’t work, *then it won’t work*.

However, if you open yourself up to the possibility that blogging *does* work to build businesses, then it becomes a question of *how* to make it work, rather than whether or not it works at all.

Once you get to that place, you can start testing and working on your strategy. A good place to start is with my book, [Make a Killing With Content](#), which lays out my strategy for creating content marketing that works.

Overcoming limiting beliefs

Did any of these sound familiar? If so, you may be fighting with some limiting beliefs around blogging or writing in general. If you think you may be wrestling with a limiting belief, try:

- **Identifying the belief:** Whenever you feel you are limiting yourself in some way, see if you can name the belief that is leading to that limit.
- **Seeking the source of the belief:** Try to think back to the first time you had this belief. Was it an experience or education of some sort that led you to this belief?
- **Recognizing the falsehood.** Loads of times limiting beliefs lead us to make false assumptions or use faulty logic. Can you identify the falsehood to help you see the limiting belief?
- **Flipping the belief.** What happens when you flip the belief around? For example, if you believe you aren’t a good writer, what happens when you think you *are* a good writer?
- **Beginning “as if.”** After you’ve flipped the belief, try beginning as if it were true. For example, if you flipped “blogging doesn’t work” to “blogging does work,” how would you proceed as if that were true?
- **Gathering evidence of success.** Important to validating your new beliefs is to gather evidence of success, so set yourself up to test and measure your new actions to prove their success.

Part 2: Physical reasons blogging is so hard or BICFOCTAM

As I mentioned above, one of the best and only ways to get better at writing and blogging is BICFOCTAM: butt in chair, fingers on keyboard, typing away madly. (In other words, just *doing* it.)

But many times — *loads* of times — that's much easier said than done.

This is when the physical excuses start cropping up — that you don't have time to blog, that it takes too long, that you don't know what to write about, etc.

P.S. Can you see how each of these is *actually* a limiting belief? What happens when you turn those beliefs around? ie: You *do* have time to blog, it does *not* take too long, you know *exactly* what to write about, etc...

If you mostly feel you have trouble with these physical restrictions around creating blog posts, try this:

1. Plan first

I'll admit it: I'm a little type-A. (Yes, those are my friends and family laughing hysterically at the thought that I'm a "little" type-A...) But I genuinely believe that *everyone* can benefit from planning their blog posts before they sit down to write.

According to productivity expert Brian Tracy, "Every minute you spend in planning saves 10 minutes in execution."

That's a 10x return on your investment! That means if you spend 1 hour planning out your blog posts, it will save you 10 hours in the creation of those blog posts later on. That's incredible!

Plus, planning allows you to implement that strategy we talked about above so that you can be certain you're filling the top of your funnel at the right time with the right kinds of customers.

Planning is what my Content Intelligence Academy course is all about, and it's something I will continue to preach as long as I'm in this business (and probably even beyond!).

2. Use time blocking & figure out how long things actually take

Consider this: if you don't know how long a task takes, how can you ensure you have enough time to complete it?

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(Short answer: you can't.)

If you don't know how long it takes you to write a blog post — or do any of the other tasks associated with blogging, like finding an image, and uploading it to your website — it's time to gather some data.

You can use free online tools like [Toggl](#) and [Rescue Time](#) to time how long you spend on certain tasks. Remember: we're not *judging* ourselves for how long anything takes, we're simply gathering data.

Once you know how long it takes you to write a blog post, you can more confidently find and block out time in your schedule. Treat it like any other business task or appointment. Even if you need to break it up over several days, give yourself enough time to complete the task.

Over time you can look for ways to make your writing faster and more efficient; for now, don't try to cram 10 pounds of flour in a 5-pound sack, as my mama would say. If it takes you 6 hours to write a blog post, don't kid yourself and only block out one.

3. Use the Pomodoro technique and other things to help you focus

If you do find it takes 2, 4, 5 hours or more for you to write a single blog post, don't despair — and don't try to tackle it in one long, continuous burst. That's a recipe for hating writing if I ever saw one!

Instead, use the [Pomodoro technique](#) or something similar to break your work time into manageable chunks. You'll have to experiment to find out how long a chunk of work time works best for you. Suggestions for how long your productive times should be vary from 25 minutes to 90 minutes, but all suggest a break in between sessions.

There are Pomodoro timers and apps to help you time your productive sessions. Other helpful tools might be apps that block distracting websites (I use [SelfControl](#) to block Netflix during my work day, because once I start I can't stop!), timers to track your productivity, or one of my favorites, Brain.FM which creates music and soundscapes to help you concentrate.

Experiment with what works for you. And remember to add in time for breaks to your estimated completion time in step 2!

4. Write a crappy first draft

If you identified at all with the perfectionism psychological block, this will be the toughest step for you! (It certainly is for me!)

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As a perfectionist, I don't want to complete a "draft" until it's as close to perfect as I can make it. I'm notoriously bad about editing as I go, which limits my forward progress dramatically.

But the more you can push through and do whatever it takes to get one draft *finished* — even if it's crappy! — the further you will be toward your goals. And, having a crappy first draft is what step 5 is for.

5. Get an accountability reader or an editor to create deadlines

I don't know about you, but I work best when I have hard and fast deadlines — otherwise, tasks can creep into that quadrant 2 box, never to be dealt with.

What I am *less* good at, however, is keeping deadlines I set for myself. I need an external source of accountability to motivate me.

That's why, whether you think of yourself as a pretty good/clean writer or someone who needs a lot of help, it can be extremely helpful to have an editor or even just an accountability reader who "proofreads" your blog posts for you.

Not only does it get an extra set of eyes on your writing to find the inevitable typos, but it also creates an external deadline; you know that other person is waiting on you to be finished.

Not for nothing, but it's extra motivating when you're *paying* the editor for her time. (A service we would be happy to offer. Just sayin'.)

6. Write less, but better

If you have been getting my emails, you know that I took the bold step this month and committed to writing less, but better.

That is, I will be posting less frequently (once a month instead of once a week), but hopefully you will find my posts more in-depth and useful.

This was a pretty scary decision for me, because my *job* is to be a blogger! It's kinda my jam. So saying I was going to blog *less* felt radical.

At the same time, it feels right at this moment, for various reasons. (If you're curious, I'll be going into some of those reasons in my weekly emails this month.) And I realized that believing that I had to blog more was a *limiting belief*. So I flipped it.

If you find it difficult to churn out a blog post every week, it may be time to reexamine whether blogging that frequently is a good use of your time. Perhaps you could dedicate one day per

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month to creating a really EPIC piece of content, and then use the additional time during the month to promote that content, and see even better results.

Which brings us to...

7. Understand your KPIs

KPI stands for “key performance indicators” which is a fancy way to say know your numbers.

And I put this one in here because I think many, many people don’t understand how effective their blogs already are or could be for their business.

The only way to know is to decide what your key performance indicators will be — that is, which numbers will you track and look at to tell you whether or not your blog posts are achieving the results you want.

My favorite KPI is email opt-ins, because I know that once someone opts in to my email list, I have a much better chance of converting them to a customer. This will be a common KPI for lots of businesses, but only you can decide what’s important to your business.

And once you’ve chosen your KPI, be sure to set up the mechanisms to track it, like Google Analytics or other apps.

8. Create a system (checklist) for yourself — or steal mine

Finally, the best way to get anything done is to create a system around it.

Sometimes the word “system” is misleading, but in this context, it simply means a list of steps or actions you take to complete a task.

In other words, a checklist.

If you have a checklist you don’t have to try to do everything for your blog post all in one go. You can start and stop and know both where you left off and what you have remaining. You can easily outsource certain steps of the process. You can make sure you don’t forget any steps. And you can eventually hand the entire task over to someone else, if you choose to.

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Writing Plan and Checklist

Create your plan:

Topic:

Type/Format:

[AIDA?](#)

[Sales Cycle?](#)

Business goal:

Proposed publish date:

List what you need to do to create this post and estimate time needed for each step:

Research your topic.

- Create a single place to keep all your notes and research.
- Remember to save sources for attribution.

Organize your thoughts

- Start with an outline
- Fill it out with your research, ideas, and thoughts

Write your first draft

- Write as though you're addressing one person.
- Start in the middle with sub-headings.
- Develop your introduction.
- Write a strong conclusion.
- Include ONE call to action.
- Spend a good deal of time on your headline. Use [Headline Analyzer](#).

Take a break! Yay!

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- Edit
 - Read through the whole article from the perspective of your ideal reader.
 - Is it useful?
 - Is it in-depth?
 - Is it unique?
 - Is it emotional?
 - Is it better than what's already out there?
 - Does it improve your readers' lives?
 - Will it have a measurable impact for your business?
 - Can you agitate the problem more? Focus on the pain points?
 - Are there places where you could show instead of tell?
 - Can you tell a more compelling story?
 - Are there any bathroom scenes you can cut?
 - Fix organizational problems first. Rearrange sections or sentences as necessary to create a more logical flow.
 - Look at your introduction next. Make the first sentence and paragraph as intriguing as possible. Stick to your main point.
 - Finess language next.
 - Make your verbs active. Replace "is, are, was, were, be, being, been" with active words wherever possible.
 - Wherever possible, replace adjectives with more specific nouns.
 - Cut unnecessary words and phrases.
 - Simplify complicated sentences and paragraphs. (Aim for an 8th grade reading level.)
 - Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Promotional Plan:

- Ask for the share
- Include share buttons
- Include Tweetables
- Schedule social media shares
- Share to groups and forums:
 -
 -
 -
- Email your list
- Email people/companies you mentioned

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- Tag people you mentioned on social
- Submit to social bookmarking sites and directories:
 -
 -
 -
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- Syndicate your content on [Syndication Sites](#)
- Self-Syndicate:
 - LinkedIn
 - Medium
 - Quora
 - Examiner
- [Comment on related blog posts](#)
- Comment on related social media conversations
- Set up paid promotion
- Submit to link-roundups
- Media outreach
- Other:
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