



Students and New Professionals

Write your CON-SNP blog post in 5 steps

Welcome to the Canadian Obesity Network Student and New Professional (CON-SNP) blog writing guide! Follow these 5 easy steps to write your SNP blog post.

#1 Choose a topic and create an outline:

- **Stay focused**
Determine what you want to write about (one thing!) and stick to it. This will ensure that your post is focused and clear. Use the blog's Monthly Themes as inspiration!
- **Balance length and brevity**
You should keep your post brief, as well as give enough context to hook readers and keep them interested.

#2 Write to engage your audience:

- **Be yourself**
Since this is a blog post, you can let your personality shine through. At the same time, remember that you're also representing a larger organization (the Canadian Obesity Network and possibly your school or workplace).
- **Think about your audience**
It is important that the content be accessible to the general public, regardless of background or prior knowledge. This means avoiding jargon, or explaining any technical or scientific terminology in a way that a layperson can understand.
- **Make your first sentence a good one**
People are constantly filtering through information when browsing online. Having a great first sentence is necessary to capture the reader's attention and interest.
- **Use people-first language**
The use of people-first language is the standard for respectfully addressing people with chronic disease, rather than labeling them by their illness (e.g. "people living with obesity," not "obese people").

For more information, there are many articles and references on the subject. For example:
<http://www.obesityaction.org/weight-bias-and-stigma/people-first-language-for-obesity>

- **Use proper grammar**

Write in full words and sentences with proper grammar as much as possible. Having typos and/or spelling or grammar mistakes can distract the reader and may cause them to lose interest.

- **Less is more**

Paring down your writing into simple, easy to read sentences will make your writing more effective. Simple writing is more likely to engage the reader.

- **Give credit**

If you have facts/references in your blog post, make sure you cite them in any format you chose, as long as it is consistent.

#3 Craft a title:

- **Make it attention grabbing without contributing to misinformation/headline hype**

Titles can be really difficult to write. Submit a couple title ideas and we can help pick the best one!

#4 Add visuals:

- **Use non-stigmatizing photos/images**

Images are a great way to make your post visually appealing, break up the text, and help explain complex topics. In addition to using people-first language, it is also important to use non-stigmatizing images. The CON website has an image library that is free for anyone to use: <http://www.obesitynetwork.ca/pg.aspx?pg=143>

- **Give credit**

Ensure photos and images the rights and attribution requirements are met. When in doubt you can use *Photo credit: Name or website* (e.g. Photo credit: Canadian Obesity Network)

- **Format**

Use a .jpeg or a .png no bigger than 100kb to ensure proper loading of the photo

#5 Edit, edit, edit:

- **Self-edit**

Reading your post out loud can help catch mistakes and see how well the text flows.

- **Editing by others**

If you have time, get some friends and colleagues to give you feedback. Plus, members of the CON SNP Executive will always read and edit your post to help engage readers as much as possible.

Examples and Resources

Check out previous SNP blog posts for examples:

<http://www.obesitynetwork.ca/snblog>

Other blog examples:

Plos1 Blog: <http://blogs.plos.org/>

Weighty Matters: <http://www.weightymatters.ca/>

Obesity Panacea: <http://blogs.plos.org/obesitypanacea/>

Dr. Sharma's Obesity Notes: <http://www.drsharma.ca/>

Mr. Epidemiology: <http://mrepidemiology.com/>

Ask A Nutritional Scientist: <http://www.askanutritionalscientist.com/>

Food Politics: <http://www.foodpolitics.com/>

Resources:

Obesity Action Coalition on People-First Language for Obesity:
<http://www.obesityaction.org/weight-bias-and-stigma/people-first-language-for-obesity>

CON Image Bank: <http://www.obesitynetwork.ca/pg.aspx?pg=143>

[The Elements of Style](#) by William Strunk Jr.

50 Tips to blog writing: <http://leavingworkbehind.com/bloggers-style-guide/>

Health Line's Best Obesity Health Blogs of 2015: <http://www.healthline.com/health-slideshow/best-obesity-blogs>