

HOW TO CONSTRUCTIVELY CRITIQUE AN ARTICLE

HOW TO GET A **FLOOD OF ONLINE TRAFFIC**
WITHOUT SPENDING \$1 / DAY

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Get better rankings for your articles by studying those your competitors have already!

To be able to critique an article in an effective way, you need to know what makes a good one.

Instinctively, we tend to know a good article if it's interesting or engaging.

Why?

Because it's written with you in mind!

But what elements went into that article, page or book, that made you feel that way?

Any article, whether written for a newspaper or magazine, homepage or medical journal, needs three main elements.

- 1 It needs to be *informative*.
- 2 it needs to have *authority*.
- 3 (And most important), it needs to *captivate*.

Without these three qualities, the chances of any article being read is poor.

There's very little point writing an article you feel important to share if it isn't read!

**This checklist will assist you in determining
how your article is likely to be received.**

Whenever you compose an article, it's worthwhile organizing how you expect it to pan out.

Like any good book or movie, an article should have a beginning, middle, and end - a conclusion.

- **THINK ABOUT YOUR SUBJECT.**

Read what others have written and make notes of things you found interesting.

Not necessarily on the subject matter itself, but how it has been expressed.

Read bundles!

The more you read, the more you'll understand what others feel about the subject.

Looking at blogs and forums on the subject matter too.

If you have a new take on it, express it.

- **MAKE NOTES OF POINTS YOU WANT TO INCLUDE BEFORE YOU FORGET THEM.**

There's nothing worse than completing an article only to find you've missed out an important point. If you try to wedge the point in somewhere later, you risk the article looking disjointed.

- **BEFORE YOU START, TRY TO PRIORITIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF EACH POINT.**

If you feel it's easier to let it flow, do that too! The beauty of writing online in today's world is we waste very little ink. It can all be organised later!

- **SPELLING AND GRAMMAR IS STILL IMPORTANT!**

If you don't have a good grasp of this, there are really good free software aids for both. Hemingway is especially easy to use and it assists you in determining the reading age for your article and how often you repeat words. It often offers alternative words, and helps article layout.

Grammarly is another brilliant aid for helping you write your article. The light version is free, and there is a premium option for extra features.

- **PEOPLE LOVE VISUAL!**

Let's face it, text can be boring!

Engaging images, graphs, and cartoons can explain certain points. Don't be scared to use them.

Use images to break up thought provoking text or long paragraphs.

Paragraph writing rules don't apply as well online as it they do on paper. It's better to break up paragraphs to 2-3 lines if you can as they appear more readable in digitized format.

How is my article Informative?

Ask yourself...

Does my article offer information the reader didn't otherwise know?

Chances are, if you can include something a reader wasn't aware of at the beginning of an article, they are more likely to continue reading as you have whetted their interest.

Has it strengthened or lessened the reader's convictions relating to the main theme?

People generally like to have their egos rubbed from time to time, so it doesn't hurt to corroborate commonly agreed concepts.

But if you are trying to get an alternative finding across, you really need to back up your findings with some form of proof.

Give credit where it's due to where your research came from and don't be afraid to link to their article.

Don't hold back your conclusions until the last paragraph.

Sometimes, a reader will pan down the page and speed-read an article.

They might also do this to determine if they read it due to it's length! If you let them in on a finding early on that already interests them, they are more likely to read it through.

This is generally due to two reasons.

Either they agree with you and want to substantiate their own belief -or disagree and want to know how you got things so wrong!

Use anecdotes to get your point across.

Recall a moment when something happened in your life or others you know, led you to your beliefs.

This helps the reader picture you better and makes you more human, more credible.

Write as if to one person and with one aim, and one goal.

This can depend on the type of article, but as a general rule, it holds true.

Imagine the person you are writing for.

If you personalize your content to engage one individual, you aren't looking for that 'one size fits all' ethos. You become more creative and less concerned about a little cynicism now and then.

How is my article authoritative?

How much do you know related to what you are writing about?

It is possible to write about something you know little about and seem authoritative. But in the end you are sure to be found out.

Others will quote articles that refute your claims and some already more know more than you do!

Be prepared to back up any findings you may have with evidence.

Quote from other authors and credit them, or carry out your own research.

Structure your article to the point, avoiding jargon and long sentences.

There's nothing more false than pretending to know something you don't by boring the reader to death!

If you know an expert in your field, ask them for their opinions too.

You can get quotes from them or their findings. Naming them will help your authority too!

Offer some practical advice for free.

Yes I know it goes against the grain nowadays!

But offering free advice goes some way in building trust in your readers.

It doesn't need to be much- a practical tip or two would suffice.

How do I make my article captivating?

MAKE THE FIRST POINT OF YOUR ARTICLE THE MOST IMPORTANT.

You need to grab your reader's attention and intrigue them, making them want more. Around 30 words will optimize its effect.

2 THINK ABOUT USING INTERROGATIVE WORDS TO START YOUR ARTICLE.

Words like 'who', 'what', 'where', 'how', and 'when' are good starts for captivating reader's interest.

3 USE ACRONYMS WISELY.

If you are going to abbreviate a set of words (for example SEO for Search Engine Optimization), ensure you explain the abbreviation at least once first.

If the article is long, it might be better to do it more than once to refresh the memory of the reader.

4 BE HONEST!

If you've ever read an article and found out that it's been made up or is untrue, you feel duped.

All credibility is lost for the author and you are likely to never believe them again.

5 BE INVENTIVE.

Think outside the box if you can. If humor is out of place in your article, don't use it. But if you feel a little bit of lightheartedness may break the tension of a piece- go for it!

Try anything to engage your reader. Get feedback from them as a great method of learning what works and doesn't.

A Summarized critique checklist

(It's much better to get others to critique than to do it yourself. You wrote it so you're bound to have a bias even if it's against yourself!)

Use this checklist to determine your article's overall strength.

- 1) Is your article informative? No Yes
- 2) Is your article authoritative? No Yes
- 3) Is your article captivating? No Yes

If you've answered these three - there's no need to go any further!

(But if you're unsure, and you probably should be...)

- 4) Will your article compel the reader to perform the action you want?
- 5) Will it convert someone who is skeptical to believe in you?
- 6) Do you have a summarized closing argument?

YOUR HEADLINE

- 7) Does your headline grab -it is both powerful and emotional?
- 8) It is clear what you are going to write about?
- 9) Does it propel them into relevant content?
- 10) Have you over elaborated when less words would carry the same weight?

SUB HEADLINE

- 11) Could your article do with a sub headline to strengthen and retain your opening headline?
- 12) Can you narrow down your reader target by qualifying with the subheadline?
- 13) Does your sub headline help or hinder your article?

THE VALUE OF YOUR ARTICLE

- 14) Is the value of your article clear?
- 15) Does it resolve a desire: a want or need?
- 16) Does it touch on a sore point but be the bandaid for it too?
- 17) Can you show a proof of findings at least once -somewhere?
- 18) Have you shown a different take on a well known issue?
- 19) Are you targeting the audience you want with it?

SUBHEADINGS

- 20) Are your subheadings clearly defined?
- 21) Do they highlight key factors within your article for skim readers?
- 22) Is your article constructed to take advantage of screen size?
- 23) Does each paragraph scan well and lead into the next?
- 24) Does your final concluding subheading relate to your header?

CALLS TO ACTION (CTA)

- 25) Does your article carry one, clear and visible CTA?
- 26) Is it actionable and easy to read?
- 27) Does it clarify what to expect after being pressed?
- 28) Is it concise and easily read?
- 29) Does it carry a guarantee for peace of mind?
- 30) Is it optimized for usability, function, and form?

ARTICLE WRITING STYLE

- 31) Are you consistent with your style of writing?
- 32) Would the article pan when read aloud?
- 33) Did you write to one person, with one goal, about one theme?
- 34) Is your article easy to read and jargon free?
- 35) Have you explained any technical terms well?
- 36) Are you coming across as authoritative - or a condescending know all?

ARTICLE ARGUMENTS

- 37) Does your article address a pain your target reader has?
- 38) Have you touched on tangible emotions to draw them in?
- 39) Do you explain and apply the benefits within your article?
- 40) Can you backup any claim you make with proof?
- 41) Have you used emotive words to help your article with overdoing it? Emotive words list