



MOJA

ADULT EDUCATION AFRICA

COMMUNICATIONS HANDBOOK FOR ADULT EDUCATORS



*MOJA was established by a network of African partners and supporters
and is part of the African Continental Project.*

This publication forms part of the capacity building programme of the African Continental Project – MOJA

Communications Handbook for Adult Educators, 2023

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MOJA is an online resource for adult learning and education professionals and practitioners in the public sector, private sector, civil society and academia in Africa. www.mojaafrica.net

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DVV International


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 Federal Ministry
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1. FOREWORD

According to UNESCO, there are still more than 750 million illiterate adults in the world today. The majority are women, and impoverished and marginalised populations are disproportionately affected. This is a huge obstacle as countries roll out national development plans to tackle the many challenges that we face in today's ever-changing world. Furthermore, there are millions of *semi-literate* people who possess only rudimentary education. With this, the numbers rise even higher.

However, adult education is more than just literacy and numeracy. While these are foundational skills necessary for further learning, alone they are insufficient to navigate in today's complex world. Adult learning and education (ALE), which is now the globally accepted term, is a multi-sectoral discipline that enables people to make informed decisions, and to act together to contribute to creating a better world (ICAE, 2020).

The concept of ALE is still poorly understood in many countries, with most people viewing it through the narrow lens of 'adult literacy'. By definition, all learning and education that adults take part in is ALE. This is true regardless of what sector it takes place in. ALE takes place in the sectors of health, agriculture, labour, climate justice, and fisheries. It also includes education for citizenship, conflict resolution, life skills, and gender equity, among others. As long as we limit our definition of ALE to 'literacy', we are overlooking a key contributor to national and global development.

Today, throughout Africa (and beyond), there are countless ALE projects being implemented. People's ingenuity and innovativeness as they devise new approaches to tackle the challenges around them never fails to amaze me. Many of these projects have great potential for adaptation and replication in other places. However, first they must be documented and shared, and it is here that we too often fall short.

This handbook is designed for all those working in ALE, but who may lack the guidance or know-how to effectively document and share their work with others. It explores how to write simple articles, conduct interviews, and produce material for print and social media. The materials can also be used when conducting media trainings for other ALE practitioners and stakeholders.

The handbook can contribute to increase the body of materials and information being shared on ALE in African countries. These innovative projects are often known only by those directly involved. By building the capacity of ALE practitioners to document and share their work, it is hoped that more media for exchange and sharing on ALE in Africa will become available, and which can be published in diverse print and social media, such as the MOJA Adult Education Africa platform. Lastly, the ability to document our ALE work is essential if we are to mobilise greater participation and attract greater support from potential donors. This is key as we strive to create sustainable ALE projects.

I hope that this handbook becomes an important and useful tool for you in your ALE work, and that it helps to enrich the body of materials on ALE in Africa. May we all continue to learn from one another as we work to strengthen Adult Learning and Education on the African continent.

David Harrington, Project Manager, African Continental Project

2. INTRODUCTION

This handbook is a guide for adult education practitioners who want to create their own media for websites, such as MOJA, for newsletters and other print mediums and for social media platforms. It is also a set of materials that facilitators can use when conducting media training for adult education with stakeholders and networks in adult education.

“MOJA” is the Swahili word for “one”. The word is rich in meaning and resonance, drawing on the power of unity. Adult Learning and Education advance through partnership, knowledge-sharing and collaboration.

Building on the blended learning concept, this handbook links to video and online materials which trainers and practitioners can use when teaching face to face or online.

MOJA is a continental website that brings together resources and news that is useful for adult education practitioners, policy makers and people in government and civil society - anyone who has an interest in building a professional network of adult education practitioners. You can also use the website to share experiences and individual and group stories about issues in your working lives and to link up with other adult education practitioners from across Africa. MOJA allows members to upload resources, articles and events that will make it easy for you to collaborate and participate with your colleagues on the continent. The hope is that this handbook will enable you to tell your own stories on websites whether you do this using text, video or photos.

You do not need any experience in the media to use this handbook. Even if you do not enjoy writing, and find it stressful, this handbook is also for you! It will show you how to turn your passion for educating adult learners and your experience in the field into fascinating stories that can inspire other adult education practitioners from across the continent.



3. HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

Producing your own media is a valuable skill. When done with skill and integrity, it can get people thinking, talking, sharing and learning more about the topics that you cover in your media production.

You do not need to be an experienced writer to produce media! You also do not need to own any fancy equipment - what is important is motivation, basic know-how, planning and accuracy.

A media project is not only a long article, but can be a combination of voice and video clips, photos and text that you can even produce on your phone.

You can produce very engaging media projects alone or in groups with your colleagues. You can do this without any experience, and in any language of your choice!

This handbook is for adult educators to use alone as learners, or in groups of learners in planning and producing media. It is also for adult educators to use in developing media training programmes for large groups.

The handbook is composed of activities and information, with graphic tips for people learning how to produce media. It can be used on its own, with you and your colleagues working through the information and activities in a workshop where you learn together, section by section. Or you can work through it on your own, in your own free time every day, practising media production using the activities as a guide.

You can also use the different sections of the toolkit to hold short one or two hour workshops, teaching others the different components of media production, such as research, interviewing, editing and style-checking. If you want to do this, we recommend that you cover one section at a time.

BECOME YOUR OWN JOURNALIST

Workshop Outline

SESSION 1

Planning and researching media projects:



- Work through sections 3 and 4
- Do the activities together
- Pick a topic and plan how to research it

SESSION 2

Foundational writing Skills:



- This section will get you started as a writer
- Work through section 5
- Discuss what a story is
- Spend some time free writing
- Do the 5W's and H activity

SESSION 3

Editing your work



- Read and discuss the Style Guide
- Edit the articles provided using the editing table

SESSION 4

Conducting an Interview and Being Ethical



- Work through sections 6 and 7
- Split into pairs and interview each other
- If you are alone, fill in the interview template
- Brainstorm the ethics and consent scenarios

SESSION 5

Advocacy and Campaign Communication



- Do the 'Campaign Message' activity
- Watch the campaign media videos
- Discuss the campaign media examples

SESSION 6

Mobile journalism and writing for social media



- Read and discuss the examples of well written and badly written social media posts
- Do the mobile journalism exercises
- Prepare your own social media posts



4.

GETTING STARTED

4. GETTING STARTED

Have you ever really wanted to speak about something or express yourself but weren't given the chance to? Citizen journalism allows you to express yourself by sharing your opinions and thoughts.

Producing your own media creates the opportunity for you to raise questions and share information about the adult education sector. It is a powerful position because through media you can ignite important conversations that may not otherwise have taken place.



What do you want to achieve with your media?

You might want to:

- speak out about a particular issue affecting all adult educators, i.e. use media to reach a larger community.
- share one of your own experiences that is useful to the adult educator community.
- highlight the achievements of a colleague or a project



Plan, plan plan!

If you know about a relevant upcoming event or there is a new development underway in the adult education sector, it is important to diarise the logistical details of when and where the event is taking place in order to prepare for and report on the story. Ensure that you do some research in order to provide some context for what is happening.



However, having said that planning is key - being flexible is a necessary strength in media production because things can change.

Adjust accordingly

Use this handbook as a guide. In other words, your context is important to keep in mind when using this handbook as a reference to media production.

Be knowledgeable

Research and read up as much as possible about your sector. Keep your finger on the pulse of new developments. In this way the media you produce is timely, reliable and has relevant context.

Idea Development/Choosing a topic

Developing ideas into stories is the same across media such as video, written articles and audio recordings. In other words, exactly how you would develop ideas for your written article, you can do the same for other forms of media too. One way to plan and generate topic ideas is to make a general topics/ideas calendar that you could then use for your articles/videos/photographs.

The first step in choosing a topic is to think about who would read the article, see the video or hear the recording you will be producing. What are their interests, aspirations, and leisure activities? How old are they? What would they like to know?

Where do they get their information? When you think of a topic, think back to your listener/reader/viewer and whether this will benefit or be of interest to them. They are also known as your target audience.

The second step in choosing a topic is to think about the issues that affect the adult education sector. Could these potentially be interesting topics to your audience? Is it relevant to your audience interests? Is it timely? What could your audience learn that they didn't know already?

How could you cover these issues?

There are many angles or ways you can cover your topics. When you think of a topic, ask yourself what aspect of that topic can be explored. Ask yourself who the actors are in the issue and other stakeholders who have a role to play or who are affected.



For example, these could be relevant topics:

- The inability of the State to finance educational institutions for adult education.
- The problems of adult education are generally ignored.
- Poor curriculum design.
- Lack of resources for skills development for adult educators.

Once your topic has been chosen, then the next step is to choose an angle.

You choose your angle by thinking about your listener or audience. A good way to figure out what angle would work best for your audience, is by answering the following questions:

- What aspect is more important or relevant to our community/listeners - in other words your audience?
- What does the audience know about the topic already?
- What do we think our audience would want to know?
- What do we want our audience to learn/be inspired by/take action?

The topic and angle do not always have to include predictable people or organisations to interview or talk to. If you're doing a show on the inability of the State to finance educational institutions for adult education then you could get a perspective on this issue by interviewing a front line educator and what it means to survive on their salary. Therefore, the topic could be, the inability of the State to finance educational institutions for adult education and the angle could be low teachers' salaries with a focus being on an actual teacher struggling to make ends meet on what he/she earns.

The same system used to figure out what topic you want to use is applicable for a written story/audio recording/video/photograph. Ask yourself the same questions when choosing an issue and an angle to work with.



Collaboration

Working together to tell stories can help make the rich and varied experiences of different communities heard louder and clearer. When people from diverse backgrounds come together to share their tales, it creates a fuller, more colourful picture of our world. This kind of collaborative storytelling not only brings out a tapestry of perspectives but also encourages understanding and harmony between communities. It shows that everyone's story matters and that they are all parts of a larger, shared experience.



5.

RESEARCHING YOUR ARTICLE



5. RESEARCHING YOUR ARTICLE

“Good research depends on good questions. But it needs a lot more than that: patience, perseverance, [and] flexibility”.

Gwen Ansell, veteran South African reporter.



[Watch the video](#)



Before you interview, read up on the issue

Before you interview anyone for an article, you should prepare by doing research. This does not mean that you cannot ask basic questions that pop into your mind when you meet your interviewee. It only means you will be more informed when you meet your interviewees and you will be able to ask better questions. You will also be able to include useful context in your article. For example, it is pointless to write an article about problems in adult education in Nigeria today without reflecting on all the developments in adult education in Nigeria since 1965 when the first adult literacy institute was set up. If you read up on this background, you will be able to ask the person you are interviewing how they view the changes in adult education over the decades.

Your research should include googling and reading previous newspaper articles on the subject and scanning these for bias. For example, if you are writing about evictions in a specific community and all the newspaper articles only reflect the opinions of the authorities who are evicting the community, you will be aware that there is another side to the story that has not been covered.



Whose views are left out?

Often you may come across articles about adult education which are all about changes in government policy and do not include the views of the educators at all. This will tell you that you need to find several educators to interview and ask them for their opinions on the changes in government policy.

Make lists so that you do not forget vital information

Asking several probing questions of interviewees – these will make your articles much richer because the variety and depth of their answers will be much greater. And you can only pose these questions if you have done some research first. For example, if you are writing an article about changes to policy or laws or budget cuts that affect adult educators, it is useful for you to make a short list summarising these changes. That will help you explain complicated changes in policies or laws in a straightforward way so that readers understand. It will also help you when you write about adult educators' responses to changes - a list will help you not to forget anything in the story or the interview.

Include the whole story, not only part of the picture

Research also helps prevent inaccuracies in your articles. For example, a community was complaining of not having had water for eight days. A student journalist rushed over to the area and began interviewing community members and produced a story about the water outages. However, because the journalist had not done any research, the story did not mention that this community was regularly without water for up to 12 days (at least once every month). The story became inaccurate and read as if this was a new problem that could easily be fixed.

Keep doing your research even after you have interviewed people

Sometimes you will arrive at a story and you might feel out of your depth and that you do not know enough about the subject. This happens to all journalists! In this case, it is also important to do research afterwards. Take down the phone numbers of the people you interview and explain that you will have to do more reading after the interview and even after you begin writing up the article and you would like to phone them to clarify certain points. Never write something that you are not sure of because the readers won't understand your story either.

Be skeptical in your research

Research is not about typing a phrase into google and copying and pasting the first thing you find into your article. You need to be critical about the sources of your information. Wikipedia is not used by journalists, and neither are chat platforms like Quora. It is much more useful to spend a bit more time reading previous articles written by organisations representing adult educators. You could also look for short papers or popular research or fact sheets written by non-profit organisations on the issue which show that the organisation has explored different aspects to the issue. It is important to read up on all sides of the story so that you are familiar with the different arguments.



Is it a fact?

Look for research that you can easily verify. It must have a credible author or authors. When you research the authors you can see that they are real people, who often work at an institution or community organisation and have a long track record of being published. You will need to spend extra time on your research in eliminating fake news. Long Facebook posts about workplace or political issues that are emotional and sometimes abusive and do not show the names of the author or the dates published are not used as credible research.



Media literacy

Media literacy means having the skills to smartly read, watch, and understand different types of media content, like news articles, social media posts, and TV shows. It helps people to figure out what is true and what might be biased or incorrect.

For example, when reading an online news article, someone with media literacy would think about whether the source is trustworthy. They would check if the quotes and facts are real and notice if the words used show any bias. They would also look at other reliable sources to understand the topic better. This careful way of looking at media helps people to tell the difference between real and not-so-real information, which helps everyone be better informed.

Example 1:

Credible research:		Poor research:	
<p>Story idea: Adult education and the fourth industrial revolution</p>			
<p>Who and what forms part of this story?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adult educators who are using 4IR technologies to improve education, or those who would like to use 4IR technologies but do not have access 2. Any official comment from government departments about adult education and 4IR 3. Activists in the field of adult education and 4IR 			
<p>What research can you rely on?</p> <p>Relevant, from a reliable news source, verifiable and contains facts about your topic:</p>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fact sheets or papers about the countries on the African continent who are adopting systems and technologies associated with the 4IR. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any story or paper that is not relevant to the topic 	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. A list of the technologies associated with 4IR including artificial intelligence, robotics, the internet, nanotechnologies, genomics, virtual reality and more. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Social media posts by ordinary individuals which may be untrue or have no basis in fact. 	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Interviews with adult educators and adult learners who have engaged with any 4IR developments (for example using digital technologies for learning to close the various gaps in education to deliver better quality education for all). 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Information that does not seem to be true (no way for you to verify it) 	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Previous newspaper articles on the subject, such as News 24, (Jan 24, 2022), How South Africa can fix its education system (https://www.news24.com/news24/columnists/guestcolumn/opinion-yanga-malotana-how-south-africa-can-fix-its-education-system-20220123) and University World News (July 2, 2022), Global higher education finds itself at a crossroads (https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20220702071759496) 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Random comments on the online pages of newspaper articles which contain unproven statements such as “technology must be stopped before it takes over the world”. 	

Example 2:

Credible research:		Poor research:	
<p>Story idea: Building community education programmes</p> <p>Who and what forms part of this story?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adult educators involved in building community education programmes 2. Adult learners who have participated in a community education programme 3. Universities or organisations who have worked in this field and written research or fact sheets <p>What research can you rely on?</p> <p>Relevant, from a reliable news source, verifiable and contains facts about your topic:</p>			
<p>1. Fact sheet by a university which focuses on building Community Education Programmes [https://cipset.mandela.ac.za/ABET-FET-Resources/Community-Education-Programme]</p>		<p>1. Any story or paper that is not relevant to the topic</p>	
<p>2. Community Education Manifesto [https://cipset.mandela.ac.za/getmedia/ae50fa93-1880-44bc-8c3a-e09c64672110/2014-03-19-CEP-manifesto-final-ISTE-V2-(3)?disposition=attachment]</p>		<p>2. Anonymous texts (writing that has no author, no institution or organisation, no date)</p>	
<p>3. Interviews with adult educators who are building these programmes</p>		<p>3. Unclear if it is true (there don't seem to be any facts that you can verify)</p>	
<p>4. Newspaper article about an adult learner in one of these programmes [https://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/skys-the-limit-for-karel-mabuye-2022-07-14]</p>		<p>4. No interviews with relevant people such as adult educators, adult learners, adult education support organisations and academics</p>	

Now you can fill in this template to plan your own story topic and research:

Story idea:	
Who and what forms part of this story?	
1. 2. 3. 4.	
What research can you rely on?	
Relevant, from a reliable news source, verifiable and contains facts about your topic:	
Credible research:	Poor research:
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.



6.

**FOUNDATIONAL
WRITING SKILLS**

6. FOUNDATIONAL WRITING SKILLS



This section is divided into five parts:

- What is a story?
- Getting started with free writing
- How to write a story
- How to document an event
- Using pictures to accompany your written story

[Watch the video](#)



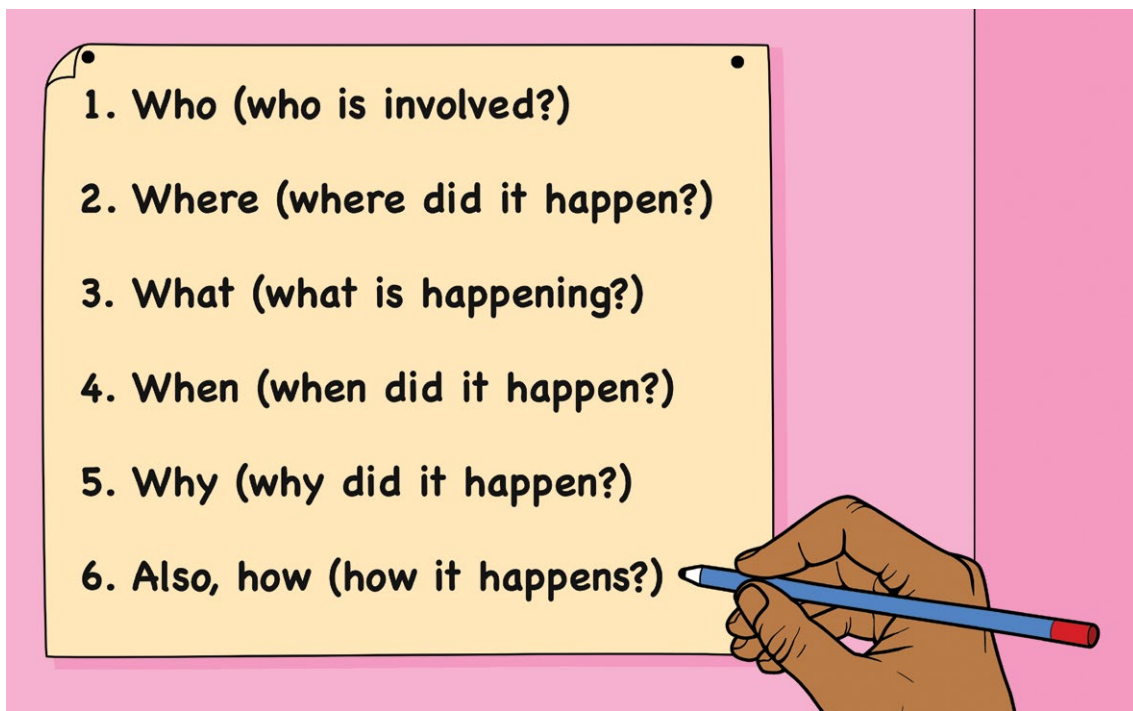
6.1. A story - What is it?

A story should make you care! It's the “so what?” question. What is the story about?

Storytelling always involves the presentation of a story—a narrative. Narrative means the telling of the story. This refers to the sequence of events in your story. Such as, the beginning, the middle and the end.

The stories we tell convey information, some education and entertainment. You can EMPHASISE one more than the other depending on your audience and their preference.

REMEMBER! Storytelling is interactive. Your story doesn't exist in isolation. It lives when readers understand it and have made sense of it for themselves.



It is important to think through the following when at the starting point of writing a story.

- Ask yourself if the story you want to tell is timely, significant and relevant to your audience?
- Consider who your audience is. What do they already know about the topic? What do they need to know or would like to know more about?
- Next, who are the relevant and more importantly, reliable (and trustworthy) people who can provide you with accurate information about the story? How can you contact that person/persons?
- Do your research! For example, check other news stories that have already been written about the topic.
- Prepare a list of questions to ask about the story and arrange to get the information that will answer the questions you listed. For example, plan for and schedule the interviews with the relevant people who can answer the questions you have.
- Do the interviews. Ask follow up questions during the interview/s and remember to do further research for the story you are putting together.

Now that you have all the information, before writing a story, it may be useful to write an outline of the story first:

- The lead sentence is known as the 'hook' because it's supposed to entice the reader and get their attention straightaway.
- When you write your introduction it is important to include the necessary facts that will anchor your story. It is in your introduction that you point your readers to where and when the story is happening.
- It is useful to include quotes from reliable and relevant people to the story that you are writing about. After your introduction, you can include your first quotation. This quote should provide your readers with the awareness of who the main stakeholders are of the story and their thoughts and feelings.
- The main body of the story is the point at which you begin to describe the substance of the story.
- After the main body of the story, you may include a closing quotation from another stakeholder. This may be the closing quote.
- The conclusion is a brief summary the story.

When you are ready to write your story, consider the first attempt your first draft.

Ask yourself:

- Is my writing too informal or formal?
- Am I expressing two ideas in one sentence? Keep your writing clear by using only one idea in one sentence.
- Am I using too many acronyms? Did I explain them - in other words, written them out in full - the first time I used the acronym?
- Have I deleted extra words or sentences that do not add value?
- Have I checked spelling, punctuation and grammar?

Other writing tips include:

Avoid JARGON. Try to eliminate it and use alternatives. For example:

- Engage and engagement (alternative words to use include: talk about, deal with)
- Enable (alternative words to use include: allow for, create)
- Empower (an alternative word to use: opportunities)

There are also other UNNECESSARY WORDS that are best suited for report writing, not for media stories. These words or phrases include:

- “In terms of...”
- “furthermore, therefore, moreover.
- “due to the fact that...”

Do not use any overly big words that can be simplified. For example, written articles do not follow the same written style as a formal report. Contractions like “can’t” are a no-go in formal writing (including reports/proposals). Rather write out “can not.” However, in a written article the word can’t is acceptable.

Other words or phrases to be mindful of in written articles include:

- Kind of/sort of (informal).
- Literally (it’s almost always used incorrectly. Say what you mean.).
- “The reason why is because...” (unnecessary and clunky).
- And so on... (informal).

Written articles may take the form of blog posts too. Blogs are shorter and create the space for you to share your opinion on something. Remember that even if you are sharing an opinion in a story to ensure that you support your argument with properly researched facts. In other words facts that are reliable from reputable sources.

- A Blog can be impactful
- It has the most current information
- Is updated weekly
- It has a range of categories that can interest any visitor to your website



6.2. Getting started with free writing

Writing is one of the best ways to get new ideas. If you feel intimidated by the thought of writing an article, the best way to get started and used to expressing yourself with the written word, is to start free writing. Once you start free writing, you'll discover your own way of exploring language.



[Watch the video](#)



What is free writing?

It's a simple and straightforward writing method that will help you to get the creative juices flowing. Free writing is a practical method of expanding your imagination and creativity.



Here are a few strategies for getting started with this method:

- Choose a time and location where you can sit undisturbed for about 20 minutes.
- Take a pen, some paper, and a timer, then set the timer for 20 minutes.
- Begin writing continuously, focusing on a prompt such as an event you remember.
- Even better, begin to write about something that you care about.
- Don't worry about your spelling or punctuation! Just keep writing, without stopping.
- Don't give yourself a chance to think about what comes next, just write ideas down as they occur to you.
- Don't stop writing until the timer rings, then read what you've written. Put the results aside and forget it for at least a day before looking at it again.
- Remember, you can only reach your writing goals if you write regularly. So plan to write freely as often as you can! Even if you can only manage five minutes a day.

Free writing is a great way to stimulate your creative mind and find inspiration!

Keep in mind that writing in your mother tongue has advantages in better conveying your creativity and originality. You are more likely to express your thoughts naturally and be original in your mother tongue. When you write in your own language, it is easier to find the right words and express yourself more accurately.



6.3. How to write a story



[Watch the video](#)

Writing for the web

The best way to write for a website is to be descriptive and at the same time restrict your writing to necessary words that are clear and concise.

For maximum impact, it is advisable to write short and captivating stories. This type of writing is not only easy to read but it also quickly engages the reader.

One of the key steps in writing for a website is understanding the audience. This will help you create content that is tailored to them, as well as determine what kind of content should be included on the site.

Keep in mind that understanding your audience is half the job of writing for that audience. Every story, consists of a beginning, middle and end, and is driven by six questions: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How (5Ws and an H)

These six questions will give you the essential information you need to tell any story. Each question may have multiple answers, but you should answer each to form your story. For example:

1. Who (who is involved?)
2. Where (where did it happen?)
3. What (what is happening?)
4. When (when did it happen?)
5. Why (why did it happen?)
6. Also, how (how it happens?)

Five W’s and an H Chart

Use the boxes below to break down an event into its parts. This is a good tool for taking a complex event and simplifying it.

WHO Who was involved?	
WHAT What happened?	
WHEN When did it happen?	
WHERE Where did it happen?	
WHY Why did it happen?	
HOW How did it happen?	

Use the template above to answer the 5Ws and H of a story. This will give you the building blocks of your story.



Writing Format and Example.

There are a few elements to an article that you should follow which are listed below:

- Title/Headline
- Author name/Byline
- Dateline
- Lead
- Body
- Conclusion
- Photo
- Caption

● **Title/Headline**

The headline is the most crucial element of a news report because it attracts readers attention to read the full article. A good headline or title should be:

- Provocative
- Functional
- Simple
- Relevant

Example of Headline:

Government austerity cuts threaten the survival of the adult education sector

● **Byline/Author Name**

For example:

Government austerity cuts threaten the survival of the adult education sector

By: Sharon Goliath

Cape Town, 30 June 2022

- **Lead**

The lead is the most critical section of the news for readers to understand the message of the news story. The news lead is the first and second paragraphs of a news article. A good lead of a news story never exceeds 25-35 words.

Good Lead Example

A captivating lead must have the following 5Ws and 1H rules of news writing.

FORMULA	WHO does WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, and HOW (5Ws + 1H)
Who	= subject, people name, organization name
What	= name of activity and event
When	= day, yesterday, tomorrow
Where	= location name
Why	= background of event, purpose, cause
How	= process, detail of the event, audiences

For example:

Government austerity cuts threaten the survival of the adult education sector

By: Sharon Goliath

Cape Town 30 June 2022

Lead: The adult education sector, which services over 20 million students, is under threat after the Minister of Education [NAME & SURNAME] confirmed yesterday in Johannesburg that the sector is being reviewed as part of government's austerity cuts.

- **News Body or Content**

The news body of the article refers to the main content of the news that describes and explains the facts. It is the main part of the article because it presents the whole story of the issue. If the full report covers seven paragraphs, usually, the body starts with paragraph 3 until 5.

For example:

Government austerity cuts threaten the survival of the adult education sector

By: Sharon Goliath

Cape Town 30 June 2022

Lead: The adult education sector, which services over 20 million students, is under threat after the Minister of Education [NAME & SURNAME] confirmed yesterday in Johannesburg that the sector is being reviewed as part of government's austerity cuts.

Body: Minister [SURNAME] explained: "We have identified cuts in the sector to curtail costs and we regret that this is a decision that we have to make". The Minister confirmed that the restructuring was 'effective immediately' with a view to downsize the sector by the end of the year. Minister [NAME] declined to specify the nature of the restructuring process saying that the matter was sensitive and following due process.

- **Conclusion**

The conclusion again highlights the main facts of the issues that have already been reported on the lead and news body. For example:

Government austerity cuts threaten the survival of the adult education sector

By: Sharon Goliath

Cape Town 30 June 2022

Lead: The adult education sector, which services over 20 million students, is under threat after the Minister of Education [NAME & SURNAME] confirmed yesterday in Johannesburg that the sector is being reviewed as part of government's austerity cuts.

Body: Minister [NAME & SURNAME] explained: "We have identified cuts in the sector to curtail costs and we regret that this is a decision that we have to make".

Minister [SURNAME] confirmed that the restructuring was currently underway with a view to significantly downsize the sector by the end of the year. The Minister confirmed that the restructuring was 'effective immediately' with a view to downsize the sector by the end of the year. Meanwhile, the chairperson of the adult educators council [NAME & SURNAME] confirmed that they will launch a formal appeal against the government's decision.

[SURNAME] said: "The adult education sector is an important contributor towards advancing the prospects of attaining a decent livelihood for many, many South Africans. This is a short sighted decision and we will not let it go unchallenged".

Conclusion: [SURNAME] confirmed that the formal appeal will be lodged next week.

ENDS.

● Using voice notes and video to create your stories

- These days, we receive a lot of information via voice notes and videos on WhatsApp and other electronic platforms.
- Some of it is very useful - first person accounts of events or situations, with photos as proof that an event is actually happening.
- Some of it is not useful - some voice notes talk of events that never happened or that may have happened years ago.
- Before you begin to write your story from information you heard in a voice note or that you have watched in a video, first follow the steps in the Getting Started and Research sections of this handbook to see if the information is credible and true, and to figure out how to fit the information into your article.
- It is important to know the direction in which your written story is going to go.
- You should avoid typing everything you hear in a voice note or everything you see on a video.
- Instead, plan your story the usual way. You should have a clear idea of the 5Ws and an H.
- Once you have that established, then you can take the information from the voice note or videos and fit this information into the introduction, the body and the conclusion.
- As you go along, you may find that many people like to be interviewed by voice note! You can send them questions on WhatsApp and they will send you voice notes in response.

6.4. How to document an event

When you are new to covering news, you might not know where to start. Here are some tips to get you started when it comes to covering a breaking news event.

- Describe the scene. In other words, tell the audience what you see.
- Interview eyewitnesses, and if they are around, interview family and friends about what they saw and how they feel.
- Keep in mind that when reporting breaking news, details are often still emerging and the story can change quickly.

However, if you are covering a planned event, follow these tips

- Ahead of time, find out who is attending the event. This will help you find out who you should interview and what people are interested in.
- Make sure to make a list of other partners involved with the event so that you can interview them as well.
- Find out who is speaking at the event and what they are talking about. You can then use this information to decide which questions to ask them or which topics to focus on during your interviews with other attendees.
- Try to talk with people before the event starts, not just when it ends, so that you have more time for interviews and conversations before things get busy for them.

As a citizen journalist, you are expected to be accurate, unbiased, and ethical when reporting. Here is a list of important journalistic guidelines and standards to follow.

A citizen journalist:

- must not distort or alter the facts;
- must not present news that is known to be false;
- must publish corrections promptly after errors are discovered;
- should not plagiarize or use other's work without attribution, and
- should identify sources clearly when they are used in articles.

- *The Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ)*

Activity: Documenting an Event

1. Who attended the event?	
2. Who organised the event?	
3. Who spoke at the event?	
4. What did they speak about?	
5. Who did you interview?	
6. What did they tell you? (the most important and relevant points)	
7. Tell the audience what else you saw (for example the number of people attending, and the atmosphere or vibe at the event)	

6.5. Using pictures to accompany your written story

There are many different ways that stories can be told, but pictures are becoming increasingly popular. Pictures are a great way to add detail and life to a written story.

Tips for using pictures in your written story:

- Use pictures that are relevant to your story
- Enhance your written story with one detailed picture or use several consecutive pictures that relate to each other
- Use captions which tell the reader who is in the picture and how they are relevant to the written story
- Keep the caption simple and concise.

Pictures can draw in readers and provide them with the information they need to better understand your article.

When taking pictures, take the following into consideration:

- ensure there is enough natural light
- the light should be coming from behind the subject or the side of the subject, but not in front of the subject
- capture the moment
- take photos from different angles
- use filters if necessary
- avoid a cluttered background since it will distract from your subject
- try to fill the frame with your subject and leave a little space around them
- if you are too close to your subject they will be blurry, if you are too far away they will be too small



7.

HOW TO CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW



7. HOW TO CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW



[Watch the video](#)

Before your Interview you have to decide on a topic.

- Figure out what you want from your interview—expert advice or personal experience?
- Find a person who knows about your topic and will be able to give you the information you want.
- Find out as much as you can about the person you’re interviewing before you interview them.
- Write up a few questions to ask, but remember you don’t have to stick to these questions.
- Remember to ask follow-up questions too.
- Make sure your interview has a narrative structure: beginning, middle, and end, like a conversation.

During the interview; ask more open-ended questions than closed questions:

- For example; avoid asking closed questions that require short answers, for example, “What is your name?” Rather ask open-ended questions such as, “Tell me about yourself...”



- Closed questions provoke yes or no answers. If your interviewees respond by saying 'yes' or 'no', always ask 'why'?

While you are interviewing someone, if they say something very interesting and unexpected, ask a follow-up question.

A follow up question can start like this: "Tell me more about...?"

Listen attentively and respond to what your interviewee says. It is best to switch your mobile phone off during an interview - more especially if it is being recorded.

Avoid asking leading questions. That means avoid asking questions that suggest what the answer should be. For example, "Teaching must be fun, right?" A better way to ask this question would be, "Tell me what you think about the teaching profession?"

Don't ask two questions at once, as people often only answer the last one.

Activity

The interview

When you approach the person you want to interview, remember to always be polite and respectful. Clearly explain who you are and what you are doing.

Ask them for their consent to record/write down the interview and broadcast/publish it. Inform them that you may edit the interview too.

Explain what consent means. Even taking pictures of a person requires their consent. Read more about consent in Section 8 on page 40.

Ensure that all recording equipment has been prepared prior to the interview. For example, the batteries of the recorder should be fully charged.

Begin by asking the interviewee to introduce himself/herself and to tell you about themselves, "My name is so and so, and I am this and that..." Let them determine how to introduce themselves, or if you need something specific, then suggest what is needed in the introduction.

Remember to always take the responsibility of holding the microphone/any equipment yourself. You must keep control of the equipment and interview at all times.

From the very beginning try to make the interviewee feel comfortable by being pleasant and attentive and to ignore the fact that there's a recorder in her or his face. Always maintain eye contact with the person you are interviewing!

Sometimes when we are engaged in conversation we have natural responses such as saying uh-huh or laughter. It is very important when you are recording not to be audible yourself. In other words, you should respond to the person you are interviewing with a concerned nod or a smile (which are silent), rather than by verbalising a response.

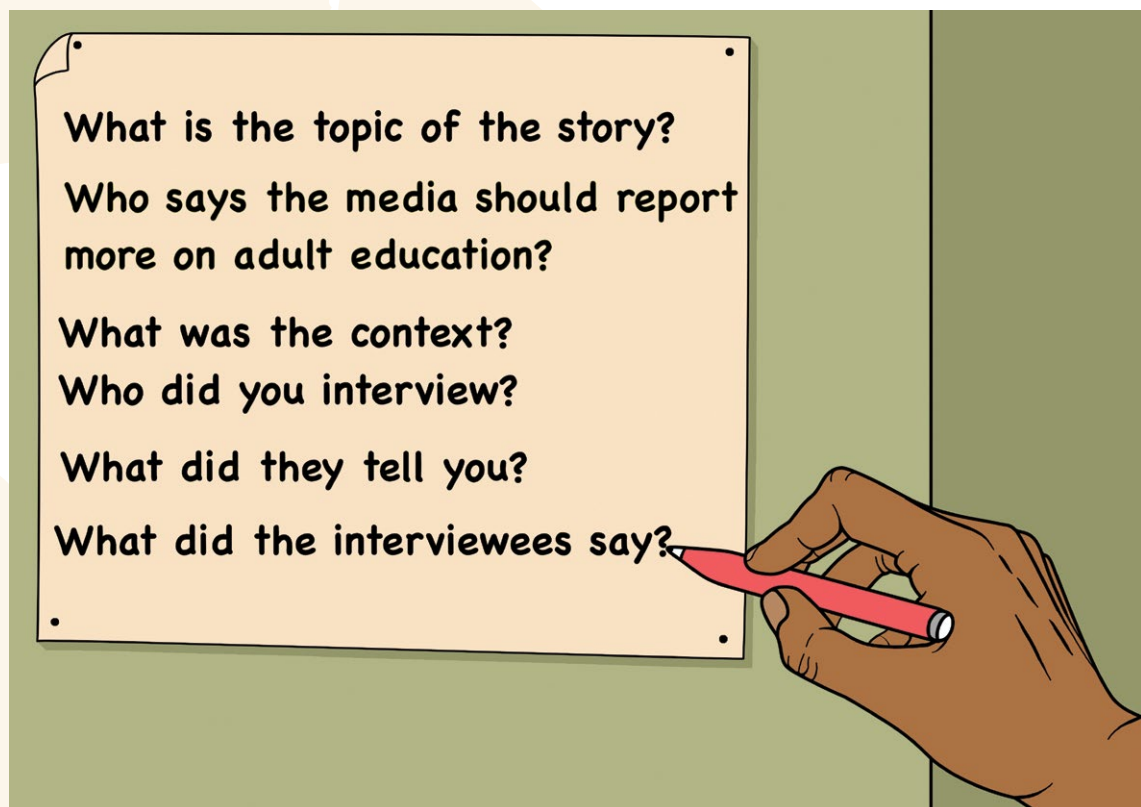
Remember that an interview is not only about asking questions and that you can get the person you are interviewing to do things too. Get them to describe what they are doing or seeing. Have them take you on an audio tour of the location, or the classroom and to talk about things that allow your audience to really understand and imagine the setting and the person.

An interview is also about conversation. Don't just read questions from a list. If a question comes to mind, or something is unclear, ask about it!

Don't be afraid of pauses in the interview because sometimes this allows the person you are interviewing a chance for them to collect and order their thoughts. Give the person you are interviewing a chance to think. The best statements often come out of silence.

Feel free to ask them if there's anything they would like to add. At the end, thank the interviewee, and end the conversation. Don't turn your recorder off until the interviewee has left the room.

- Martin and Middleton, 2011



Example: How interviews become a story



Media encouraged to report more on adult education

Jun 06, 2022

By [Martha Chikoti](#)

Vhs DVV international organization has expressed hope that media reporting on adult education in Malawi will continue to increase and evolve.

The organization's Regional Director for Southern Africa David Harrington made the statement during the handing over ceremony where laptops were being awarded to Clement Chinoko of MJI Publications and Georgia Chirobo of MJI Fm for the Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Category of the Misa Awards on Monday in Lilongwe.



Harrington noted that journalism on adult education in Malawi is becoming more incisive in reporting on the needs of adult learners and the costs to Malawi of not investing in adult education and there is hope that the contribution of the media will continue to increase and evolve in the years to come.

"Historically, ALE in Malawi has been viewed in a way as just literacy and numeracy (as sukuluqza kwacha).

"We need to move away from old-fashioned way of thinking. Literacy and numeracy are foundational skills, but they need to be linked to practical knowledge and skills that people need and use in daily lives," he explained.

Misa Malawi Program Officer Moses Chitsulo said that there is need a to report more on adult education because people out there are not aware of that area.

He also said that journalists should talk more about adult education and involvement of parliament to lobby more funds to fund the noble course.

One of the award winners Clement Chinoko encouraged his fellow colleagues to report such stories in-depth so that they can stand a chance to win such awards.

What is the topic of the story?	That the media should report more on adult education
Who says the media should report more on adult education?	DVV International
What was the context?	A ceremony to hand over laptops to winners in the Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Category of the Misa Awards on Monday in Lilongwe.
Who did you interview?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misa Malawi Program Officer, Moses Chitsulo • Award winner, Clement Chinoko • DVV Regional Director for Southern Africa, David Harrington
What did the interviewees say?	<p>Chinoko encouraged his fellow colleagues to report such stories in-depth so that they can stand a chance to win such awards.</p> <p>Harrington said ALE needed to be linked to practical knowledge and skills that people need and use in daily lives.</p> <p>Chitsulo said journalists should talk more about adult education and involvement of parliament to lobby more funds to the cause.</p>

Activity: Conduct your own interview

You can do this in pairs with a friend or colleague, or you can choose a topic. Find someone knowledgeable and interview them as practice. The more you practice, the better an interviewer you will become!

What is the topic of your story?	
Who is talking about it?	
What are they saying?	
What is the context?	
Who did you interview?	
What did they tell you? (the most important and relevant points)	



8.

ETHICS AND CONSENT



8. ETHICS AND CONSENT



[Watch the video](#)



What is consent?

Consent is about getting permission.

- Obtaining written consent from individuals participating in interviews or appearing in news articles is crucial for upholding ethical and legal standards, (i) explain what the interview will be used for, (ii) prepare a simple letter for them to sign, (iii) explain that the consent may be withdrawn at any time.
- Be balanced, honest, accurate and factual.
- Interviewees/participants must always know how, when and where their stories will be used.
- Get consent from the people you interview or speak to.
- Tell your interviewees what they are being interviewed for, that it will appear online and that it could be broadcast on the radio or reproduced by a newspaper.
- For example, “Hi, My name is ____, and I would like to ask you a few questions about ____ for a programme/blog post/etc. that might be aired on Is that OK with you?”
- Make sure to always get the full name (get the spelling right!), age, and contact details of interviewees (write it in a log book). Let them know if and when their contribution might be broadcast/published. Also make sure they know how to contact you, in case they change their mind and don't want you to use the interview anymore.
- Consent is a two-way street.

why am I doing the story?

Favours?

Payback?

Got an agenda?

A score to settle?

When are stories dangerous/
harmful for yourself and others?

Always get consent.

Be clear on how the material
will be used.



Consent can change:

- Even when people have given you permission to use the media you captured, it's very important to remember that they always have the right to change their minds. Make it clear that their recordings/images may be used in public, unless they tell you they do not want it to be public.

Don't name others in recordings:

- When recording/writing/filming a story, always repeat the importance of not specifically naming other people who are not involved in the interview, especially when talking about sensitive topics, for example: HIV and AIDS or gangsterism. When talking about someone else in a story, use a generic label (friend, relative, teacher, etc.), and avoid real names.
- Bear in mind that in many countries, media may not name or photograph victims of sexual violence no matter their age. You may also not name or include identifying details of the victims (e.g. where they live, who their parents are). Identifying information not only includes their names and photographs but also personal details such as their place of residence, their parents' identities, or any other information that could potentially reveal their identity to the public. Identifying details are pieces of information that can be used on their own or in combination with other information to identify, contact, or locate a person.

The purpose of a consent form

A media consent form is used to make sure that the person being interviewed understands and agrees to how the interview will be used by the media organisation for which the journalist works. The consent form protects the rights of both the interviewee and the media organisation, reducing the risk of misunderstandings or legal disputes in the future.

How to use a consent form

Before you begin the interview, read and explain the consent form to the person you're interviewing to make sure they understand what it means. Allow the interviewee to read the consent form for themselves and ask if they have any clarifying questions.

Explain to the interviewee where their details, photos, or audio/video recordings will appear and how they will be used. Remind the interviewee that they can review and even withdraw their information before it is published or broadcast. Finally, have them sign and date the form, explaining that their signature means they agree to participate under the terms outlined in the consent form. Keep the consent form in a safe place.

Example of a consent form

I, **(full name of the interviewee/person photographed)**, from **(their address)**, give my permission to **(Media Organisation Name)** to carry out an interview with me on **(Date)** at **(Time)**.

The aim of the interview is **(state the purpose)**, and I know that the details collected will be used in **(state where the info will be used, such as: publication, broadcast, website)**.

I allow the media team to record the interview, use my photos, voice recordings, videos, and any digital copies of the interview activities. I agree that any type of these recordings will be owned by the **(Media Organisation)**.

I understand that I can review, give feedback on, or even remove any information before it is published or broadcast.

I'm aware that joining this interview is by my own choice, and I can leave at any time, for any reason, with no costs.

I've read and understood this consent form, and I'm voluntarily agreeing to its conditions.

Signature

Date

Name (Printed)

NOTE: This is just a consent form, not a contract, and you can cancel it anytime. For any queries or concerns, please feel free to get in touch with **(Contact Person and their Contact Details. For example, the Editor)**. By signing this form, you're just confirming that you understand what the interview involves and you're happy to take part under the stated conditions.

Ethics:

As a citizen reporter reporting on the adult education sector there are moral principles and standards you need to follow and stick to. You have a responsibility to produce media that is:

- Fair: the media you produce needs to express different points of view.
- Accurate: the information you use is correct to the best of your knowledge.
- Respectful: shows consideration to the people you interview (even if you don't agree with them) and the topic.
- Accountable: if you make a mistake you must own up to it and correct it.

Community reporters must:

- Not cause harm..
- Never get paid or pay someone for anything (this can also be in the form of gifts such as clothes, laptops, phones and other gifts or even meals at a restaurant or a favour to a family member or close friend).
- Always check your facts.
- Leave out anything if you are unsure.

What does it mean to be broadcast/published?

- It is very important that you fully explain to the person that you interview what it means to have, for example, a recording broadcast on radio or online platforms and shared with the community.
- When a radio/video story is played widely, we say it is broadcast. When an image or article is read or seen widely, we say it is published.
- When an article appears on the MOJA site, it may easily be republished in other newspapers, or by Facebook and social media users. So, never promise someone that their interview will only appear on MOJA, for example.

Why is it important to think about this when talking about consent?

Think about what would happen if you interviewed someone who disclosed their HIV status to you for example but had not disclosed it to his/her friends or family. What would happen if that story was played on the community radio station or published online and suddenly everyone in the community knew of the person's status without them giving permission?

- What might the effects be for him/her? Would he/she want to accept those consequences?
- Even though media may be produced in the privacy and safety of a workshop for example or in the context of doing work in the adult education sector, they can take on a different meaning once they are out in the world.
- Never state the name of someone who gave you information or that you interviewed who asked you not to mention his or her name. Think of the consequences of the media that you produce and how it takes on a life of its own once it is broadcast.
- Always ask yourself: Who benefits from the story? Remember you are producing the media for your audience and people in your community.

EXAMPLE:

Let's discuss some situations and decide on the ethical approach:

Sexual assault

You are informed that a woman who has been sexually assaulted and beaten has been brought to a nearby hospital. The woman is furious and traumatized. Some women from her neighbourhood are with her, furious as well. The woman has torn clothes and she is bleeding, and she wants you to record what has happened to her and the women from her neighbourhood would also like to speak about the issue. What should be done in such a case?

Things to consider:

- Do not name the woman or include information that might identify her.
- When you write the story, read through it carefully to make sure you are not placing the woman at more risk.
- Inform the woman and other women about the potential consequences of being exposed through a public interview, explain the risks to them.
- If she is willing to tell her story, think about framing it within the wider context of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF).

Protecting workers from disciplinary hearings

- Many work contracts have clauses which do not allow staff to speak to the media. In South Africa, for example, this is a breach of the constitutional right to freedom of expression. But employees are regularly dismissed anyway, and most employees who find themselves in that position do not have the funds to challenge their dismissal in the relevant courts or commissions.
- In these cases, it is important to discuss these implications first. You may want to use a pseudonym (false name) for someone who could lose their job from speaking to you. Remember that if you use a pseudonym or a different name for a vulnerable person, you should also exclude identifying details from the article. For example, if there is only one 23 year old female teacher with a certain qualification in a certain workplace, it would be pointless to use a pseudonym for her but then reveal all the other information about her age, gender, workplace and qualifications.

- Even where employees are permitted to speak to the media, they can be disciplined if they bring their employer into disrepute or if they exaggerate a problem. For example, if an employee tells a journalist they have to work three hours overtime every day when this might be happening every second day, their employer may raise charges of bringing the organisation into disrepute and being dishonest (in providing inaccurate information).
- Sometimes you will have to protect people from themselves. If you are covering a story about a long standing grievance and the person speaking to you is upset and distressed, they are more likely to say things in the heat of the moment that they would regret later. You will have to develop your own judgement in this situation. It is fine for people you interview to express strong anger at bad situations but if you can see that a certain statement will land them in a disciplinary hearing, you should discuss this with them.

When you are planning to do a story, ask yourself why you are doing it. Check your internal code of ethics!

- Favours?
- Payback? Got an agenda? A score to settle?
- When are stories dangerous/harmful for yourself and others?
- Always get consent.
- Be clear on how the material will be used.

POPIA

The Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) is a comprehensive data protection legislation enacted in South Africa on July 1, 2020. It is designed to safeguard the privacy and security of individuals and personal information by regulating its processing and providing rights and obligations for both data subjects and responsible parties. POPIA is comparable to other international data protection laws, such as the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and plays a crucial role in ensuring data privacy and protection within the South African legal framework. Read the POPIA legislation [here](#). Different countries and regions have their own legislation.



9.

**EDITING YOUR
WORK**

9. EDITING YOUR WORK



[Watch the video](#)

What is a Style Guide?

A Style Guide is a guideline for writers which provides you with the tools to write clear and accurate stories that meet ethical standards.

This Style Guide aims to set out what kind of language to use when you want to produce writing that is progressive, pro-social justice, pro-working class, anti-racist, anti-homophobic and anti-sexist.

A Style Guide is not a guide to grammar. For a guide to grammar you can consult the dictionaries <https://www.lexico.com/> or <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/>

What style are we aiming for in our stories?

- Our stories are empowered tales of how we strive to change to bring about a better world. They reflect the critical view of adult education stakeholders on the problems in the world and include suggestions for solutions. Therefore our stories represent the struggle for justice and equality in the world.
- We aim to write accurate stories that are not exaggerated and which do not contain untruths.
- We use clear language that is not ambiguous so that readers can understand our stories.
- We examine issues in detail, including enough background information and context for our readers to become well informed.



- Our stories should aim to build solidarity between each other and between ourselves and other working people - we write about collective work and individual achievements while taking care not to represent individuals as saviours who are able to solve our problems.

(Source: www.newframe.com)



What kind of language do we use?

No style guide can cover all situations but this is a basic guide.

- **BLASPHEMY AND SWEAR WORDS** - not usually included in stories without a good reason as these words can offend.
- **USE INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE** - person instead of man; no racist or homophobic terms; avoid stories that sound surprised that someone with a disability is able to achieve what anyone else can. Avoid tribalising people or situations. Do not use xenophobic descriptions of people such as 'foreigner', 'foreign national'.
- **AVOID STEREOTYPICAL LANGUAGE** - such as language which blames rape victims for being raped; blames impoverished people for living in poverty.
- **BE PEOPLE FOCUSED** - there is a place for official comment (government/police and others) in your stories but this should not be included uncritically and should never dominate your stories.
- **PEOPLE SHOULD NOT BE COMPARED TO ANIMALS** - describing people as barking, etc, is a no-no.
- **USE AN ANTI-RACIST FRAMEWORK** - the lived experiences and stories of those who have had direct experience of racism are valuable. Stories about racism should be told from the point of view of those experiencing it, not those denying it.
- **AVOID OPPRESSIVE LANGUAGE** - social categories of race, class and gender overlap, as does the discrimination that members of each of these social groups experiences. Be sensitive in your choice of words. Avoid language that reinforces outdated and oppressive labels and descriptions. Language that has ageist, classist, homophobic, xenophobic, sexist and racist implications devalues and dehumanises people.

(Sources: *Everyday Feminism*, *New Frame*; *Sum of Us*)

MORE RESOURCES HERE:

<https://interactioninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Sum-Of-Us-Progressive-Style-Guide.pdf>

<https://everydayfeminism.com/lgbtqia-articles/>

<https://everydayfeminism.com/tag/health-body/>



A PROGRESSIVE STYLE GUIDE

USE INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

- Never use terms that exclude (eg. “man” when you mean “people”).
- Use gender neutral terms - partner or spouse instead of husband, wife, girlfriend so that you don’t misgender people.
- Do not use racist or homophobic terms either overtly or in a veiled manner.
- Do not use ‘disabled’ for differently abled people.
- Do not use ‘foreigners’, ‘foreign nationals’, ‘immigrants’. Use migrants instead.

VIOLENCE & CRIMINALITY

Violence = physical attacks on people, not damage to material objects.
Drug dependent people, shackdwellers who occupy land and protesters should not be described as criminals simply because they may be breaking a law.

NO TO ‘NON-’

Do not use ‘non-white’, ‘non-European’.
People should not be defined in relation to whiteness.

IMPOVERISHED VS POOR

- Use ‘impoverished’ or ‘people experiencing poverty’ instead of poor
- Do not represent people experiencing poverty as either victims, criminals, or the exception
- Do not use words such as poverty-ridden and poverty-stricken which make poverty sound like a disease.



10.

**AUTHOR'S
GUIDELINES AND
STYLE GUIDE**

10. AUTHOR'S GUIDELINES AND STYLE GUIDE

What is editing?

News editing includes close analysis of articles and videos for factual errors and general content.

Editing can also mean that parts of your story will be moved around. For example, you may have buried the lead (put the most informative parts of the story at the end, instead of the beginning). In this case, the editor will move this information to the front of the story.

Editing also means checking that the story is based on up-to-date information, and does not rely on out of date facts.

Editing also means looking for legal and ethical issues in a story. Here is a basic checklist that you can use to edit your article after you have finished writing it:

- **Are all the sentences complete?**

Example:

“The goals of lifelong education. Education is seen as a lifelong process” – *the first sentence is incomplete which makes it difficult to understand what the writer is saying.*

OR

“The goals of lifelong education are to establish a learning society in which education is seen as a lifelong process” – *a complete sentence.*

- **If you knew nothing about the topic, would you still be able to understand the story?**

This is where you revisit the 5W's and an H to see if you have included the where, what, why, when, who and how aspects of the article. Your articles should not have different meanings for different readers. A vague and unclear article can mean that readers misunderstand the story.

Example:

“We oppose standardisation. Some adult education and learning practitioners are getting less. We are totally against the department of higher education and training.”

OR

“Employees at community learning centres are embroiled in a dispute over the alleged failure by the government to provide clarity regarding new working conditions. According to the employees, the changes include 45% in deductions taken from their salary, which took effect at the end of May. They also express dismay about being expected to work 15 hours per week, over five days. Previously they worked 19 hours, over four days – Mondays to Thursdays.”

In the first example, it is not really clear what standardisation is other than it might involve a pay cut. There is no information about who is affected, or who exactly is to blame for causing the problem.

In the second example, it is clear that employees at community learning centres have been affected since the end of May, and they have experienced a 45% pay cut and had an extra day’s work added onto their week. This is because the government introduced new working conditions which the adult education and learning practitioners do not approve of because they are worse than their previous conditions.



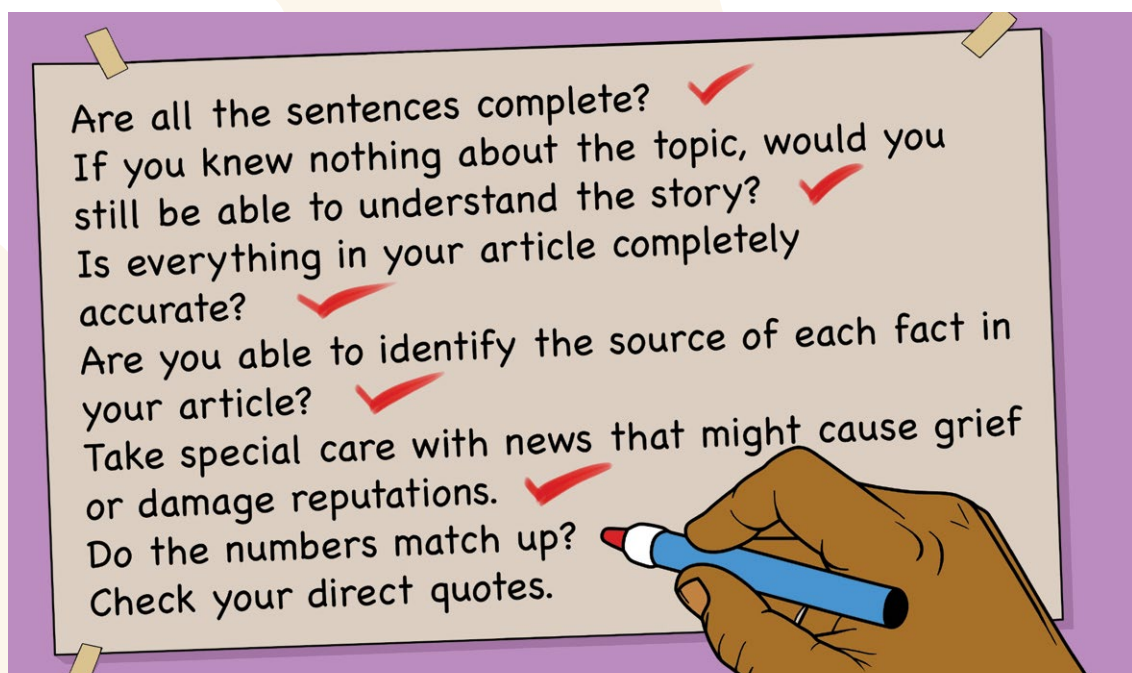
• Is everything in your article completely accurate?



[Watch the video](#)



Mistakes can and will happen but writers need to do their very best to make sure their articles are always accurate. Accuracy is at the core of journalism. The articles you write must faithfully depict reality – from the tiniest detail to the big-picture context that helps put your article into perspective. Follow this basic checklist once you start editing to make sure that your articles are accurate:



- **Are you able to identify the source of each fact in your article?**

Don't include statements of fact in your article if you cannot remember where you heard them. Similarly, every statement of fact has to be precise. For example, you cannot write in paragraph two of an article that adult education and learning practitioners had their salaries cut by 45% if you have no proof of this and if somebody has told you this information third hand.

- **Take special care with news that might cause distress or damage reputations.**

Any falsehoods in our news reports can cause harm. But errors that may damage reputations or bring about distress are especially dangerous, and extra precautions should be taken to avoid them. Generally, when writing about an issue, you should avoid including personal attacks on individuals and stick to the issue.

- **Do the numbers match up?**

Stories sometimes appear in the media which state, for example, in paragraph two that adult education and learning practitioners have taken a 45% pay cut and then in paragraph four that they have taken a 20% pay cut. Once you know what the accurate figure is, make sure you quote it correctly throughout the story.

- **Check your direct quotes**

Sometimes when you sit down to start writing an article, you might mix up the direct quotes of the sources or people you have interviewed. You may even accidentally move a quote mark so that something the person never said ends up as a quote in your article. This can result in a complaint or even a lawsuit against you or your publication.

Once you start editing your article, always go back to your notebook or your audio recording and check that the people you have quoted are quoted word for word. Do not add anything to direct quotes. You are not expected to quote everything that your interviewee tells you. For example, if your story is about an issue faced by adult education practitioners, and they make allegations against their employer, you have to provide the employer with space to respond to the allegations but the bulk of the story will be about the issues faced by the practitioners and not the employer's response. You are also not obliged to include information from interviewees that is irrelevant to your article. For example, if you are writing an article about overcrowded adult education classes and you ask a government spokesperson for a response and they refuse to comment on the crowding issue and instead send you a pre-prepared statement about other aspects of adult education, you are not obliged to include it.

Overall, the quotes you choose from those who you interview must be a fair reflection of the main points of their interview. Always reflect on whether your source would agree with the manner in which you have quoted them.



• Editing your language

Generally, you should avoid redundant language, unnecessary words and phrases, cliches and jargon. Instead, use language that is easy for the general public to understand.

For example, it is redundant to describe a giraffe as a long-necked animal. Simply write 'giraffe'.

It is unnecessary to write that "the minister said at the end of the day, the bottom line for adult education and learning practitioners as his department has decided after consideration and reflection, was that these employees will find themselves in the position where they are looking at a situation where they have to work five day weeks instead of four". Simply write "the minister said adult education and learning practitioners will now work five day weeks instead of four".

A cliché is an overworked word or phrase, which is so overused that it has lost its meaning. An example of a cliché in journalism is "as a society, we feel..." or "critics are quick to point out that..." or "this offers a rare opportunity for...". It is much better to be very specific in your writing because when readers see the same cliches over and over again, they become bored and feel like they might be reading the same story.

Generally, if you are interviewing two Adult Learning and Education practitioners and they both give you the same information, it would be considered repetitive if you quoted them both on exactly the same information.

It is worthwhile spending some time editing your articles before you submit them to the MOJA website or any other website or news outlet for publication. Articles that are already edited and fact checked will have a much better chance of being published quickly. Many websites these days do not have a staff of editors and rely on contributors to provide accurate, fair and interesting copy or articles.

EXAMPLES:

Original article	These are the spelling and punctuation mistakes, and irrelevant and vague and incorrect information noticed during editing	Final edited version
<p>Adult education during Covid</p> <p>MOJA invited adult edcators to a conversatin with Astrid von Kotze, adult educator and activist. until 2009, she was Professor of Adult Education and Community Development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Astrid is an adult educator. She is well known for a long time.</p> <p>The discusion focussed on 'resilience' this is a word which compels people to adapt to hard times and also to adapt to difficult situations.</p> <p>The question was asked: what does 'resilience' mean in adult education? What are community/adult educators' assumptions, and how do they relate to the realities of learner / participants on the ground. Are there new ways of shaping adults educating now that the world has forever been hit by Covid which is a long lasting disease that will always be with us forever</p>	<p>Adult education during Covid</p> <p>MOJA invited adult edcators (<i>wrong spelling</i>) to a conversatin (<i>wrong spelling</i>) with Astrid von Kotze, adult educator and activist. until 2009, she was Professor of Adult Education and Community Development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Astrid is an adult educator. She is well known for a long time. (<i>punctuation; vague and unnecessary language</i>)</p> <p>The discusion focussed on 'resilience' this is a word which compels people to adapt to hard times and also to adapt to difficult situations. (<i>needs punctuation and also repetitive</i>).</p> <p>The question was asked: what does 'resilience' mean in adult education? What are community/adult educators' assumptions, and how do they relate to the realities of learner / participants on the ground. (<i>should be a question mark</i>).</p> <p>Are there new ways of shaping adults educating now that the world has forever been hit by Covid which is a long lasting disease that will always be with us forever (<i>needs complete rewriting because we do not know for sure if Covid will be with us forever</i>).</p>	<p>Adult education during Covid</p> <p>MOJA invited adult educators to a conversation with Astrid von Kotze, adult educator and activist. Until 2009, she was Professor of Adult Education and Community Development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.</p> <p>The discussion focussed on 'resilience', a word which people often feel compels us to continually adapt to hard times we might experience.</p> <p>The question was asked: what does 'resilience' mean in adult education? What are community/adult educators' assumptions, and how do they relate to the realities of learners/participants on the ground?</p> <p>Are there new ways of shaping adult education and learning in the Covid and post Covid era?</p>



11.

**ADVOCACY &
CAMPAIGN
COMMUNICATION**

11. ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGN COMMUNICATION



[Watch the video](#)



Adult Learning and Education practitioners don't exist alone - you share interests with other workers and community allies. A strategic campaign creates pressure to resolve specific problems, while also educating allies and the public. Whether you are writing about problems related to your working conditions, salary or about our vision for a more effective adult education system, it will assist you to frame all your communication as campaign communications - where you communicate to ensure that you get your message across.

What is a campaign message?



A campaign message is a core idea you want people to remember and repeat about your campaign. This is relevant whether you are part of a formal and organised campaign or whether you have decided to get together informally with colleagues to highlight a few of your issues in an article for MOJA or somewhere else. The more people remember and repeat your messages, the more potential you have to influence public opinion, create change, and get the attention of your target audience. The words, phrases, stories, and images you use to communicate your campaign should all connect back to your core messages.

A campaign message states the problem or issue and the proposed solution. It says what action the audience or readers can take to reach a solution. An effective message is easy to understand and remember, and does not confuse the audience. It does not need complicated explanations. It is usually 1-3 sentences and is not the same as a slogan. A **slogan** is a short catchy phrase. A **campaign message** is the public expression of the campaign.





Who is your target audience and how do you reach them?

Your campaign communication is aimed at whoever you want to influence. There might be several different groups of people or organisations or government departments or universities who are connected in some way to your issue – they might be the people you work with, or the people who are responsible for your issues at work, or those who have the power to change your situation, or the people who can be negatively affected by any problem you experience. These are your stakeholders.

To identify your target audience, first list all your stakeholders. You can divide them into three groups: those who support what you do, those who are not affected and might not be aware of any issues, and those who might be opposed to what you are trying to achieve. You can even list these stakeholders under “allies, neutrals and adversaries”.¹

Each stakeholder is a specific target audience that will need different media. Focusing on a specific target audience makes your media more effective because you can develop messaging that they can really relate to.

For example, you may have noticed that an economic programme implemented by your government resulted in fees being imposed for adult education, which meant that adults could no longer afford to come to classes. In writing an article targeting your government, you might like to focus on how the lifelong adult education and learning policy of the government is disrupted by fees. In writing for neutral people or allies, you would probably rather choose to highlight the human interest stories of those adult learners who were forced to drop out of learning programmes because they could no longer afford to attend.

Determining your target audience		
Who are your stakeholders? <i>(make a list in each space)</i>		
Who supports what I do? (Ally)	Who is not affected and/or unaware of my issue? (Neutral)	Who is opposed to what I am trying to achieve? (Adversary)
What would make someone who is already an ally support me even more?	What would inform someone who does not know anything about my issue, including people who believe my issue does not affect them?	What could convince someone who opposes me/us to change their mind about our issue?
Final message for the ally target audience:	Final campaign message for the neutral target audience:	Final message for the adversary target audience:

1. <https://howto.informationactivism.org/content/who-are-you-talking-know-your-audience.html>

How do you write a campaign message?

[Watch the video](#)

To work out what message you can use to reach your target audience, try to connect your issue to a belief that someone already holds. That way, you are likely to convince them that your cause is just.

You can do this by making a list. For example:

- What do the public see as important about adult education? For example, it offers older people who were excluded from education the chance to get the education they always wanted and that they deserve.
- What about your issue is far-reaching, and affects many people? For example, if adult education lecturers continue to be underpaid, many might leave the profession and it won't be so easy for adult learners to access education.
- How can you as Adult Learning and Education practitioners explain to the public that adult education could benefit so many more people than it currently does? Quality of education? Ease of accessing adult education at more centres and at more times of day?
- For each of these points, if you have examples, write them down because they will make your story more compelling.

PROBLEM	HOW TO DESCRIBE IT
What do you want?	This includes a brief statement about what you are protesting against or what you want to change. It must be positive and inspiring. If it is a complicated issue that the public is not familiar with, you should also describe the problem – i.e. what is standardisation?
Why do you want it?	Explain why your issue is a problem and why something has to change? Explain why the employer/government's approach is wrong.
What is at stake?	Explain why people should care about your issue. (Here you can include some of the issues brainstormed above).
Action to be taken	What do you want the target audience to do to support your campaign?

A short guide to framing your campaign writing:

- Repeat and reinforce your key campaign message.
- Make sure that your campaign writing represents you and your colleagues as people who are taking steps to create positive change.
- Represent yourselves as everyday heroes. Create media that celebrates the work of Adult Learning and Education practitioners. The public, or your readers, are more likely to support your campaign if they value the work you do. For example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stVqNUCER5A>
- Explain clearly what readers can do to become involved in your campaign.

Build links/connections/bridges with other groups, such as community-based organisations, unions and others.

EXAMPLE:

Task:

Create a campaign message about how food producers and community farmers can work towards eradicating post-harvest food losses.

Aim of the campaign message:

To encourage food producers and community farmers to participate in adult education programmes aimed at reducing post-harvest food losses.

Information available for you to create your campaign message:

“When post-harvest losses disrupt food security efforts”, by Dyson Mthawanji of DVV International. Article available at: <https://www.mojaafrica.net/en/magazine/when-post-harvest-losses-disrupt-food-security-efforts>

“Why small-scale farmers are hit hardest by post-harvest losses”, by Manoshi Mothapo, researcher at the Agricultural Research Council. Article available at: <https://www.farmersweekly.co.za/agri-technology/farming-for-tomorrow/why-small-scale-farmers-are-hit-hardest-by-post-harvest-losses/>

Key facts from this article to use in your campaign message:

- Millions of people in Southern Africa struggle to access adequate food resources, and post-harvest losses make this situation worse.
- About one-third (1,3 billion tons) of what is produced around the world for human consumption is lost or wasted every year.
- A post-harvest loss is when food that has already been harvested does not ever reach a consumer because it has gone bad before it can be eaten.
- It is a huge problem affecting small-scale farmers and bigger farmers: in Malawi, about 20-30% of maize production is lost after the harvest every year. Zambia, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe also experience significant post-harvest losses because of inadequate storage facilities, a lack of food processing facilities, limited infrastructure, and poor post-harvest handling practices.
- A post-harvest food loss means the land, water, seeds, fertilizers, as well as the labour that was invested in farming, is wasted.
- Adult education practitioners could play a key role in creating awareness about improved sorting methods, better storage practices and packaging, and enhanced pest and disease control and transporting methods. These will help reduce post-harvest losses.
- This does not necessarily require a lot of money: harvesting fruit and vegetables in the morning when it is cooler helps the produce to retain moisture and firmness. Vegetables should be kept cool and at a higher humidity during storage and transport. Farmers can make their own field warehouses from available wood to help with this.
- Farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchange programmes are also key.

Crafting your campaign message:

- Describe the problem.
- Explain clearly what your target audience (the community farmers) needs to do to become involved in this campaign.
- Position and represent the community farmers as empowered actors who have the capacity to solve the problem. You can use an 'everyday heroes' representation if you like – this celebrates the work of the farmers and links their everyday work to the bigger picture, which is food security and availability for millions of people.
- Your target audience (the community farmers) is more likely to support your campaign if they can see that you understand and value their work.
- Create an informative visual or a poster or a simple infographic that can stand alone to represent your campaign. The purpose of this is to convey information about the campaign to target audience members who may not have the time or willingness to read a whole campaign pamphlet. The visual should be one that you can print out as a poster or pamphlet/flyer, and adapt to post on social media or send via WhatsApp.

Some examples of visuals for a campaign around post-harvest losses:



THEY FEED THE NATION

Support farmers to end post-harvest food losses

JOIN OUR 6 WEEK ADULT LEARNING PROGRAMME

Improved food storage and transport can prevent millions of tons of food from going bad after harvest

DATE | TIME
123 Anywhere St., Any City

ALL WELCOME!



END POST-HARVEST FOOD LOSSES

- Millions of people in Africa struggle to access food.
- Many harvested crops go bad before anyone can eat them.
- Up to 30% of Malawi's maize is lost after the harvest every year.
- Small-scale farmers are badly affected because they do not have expensive food storage and food processing facilities.
- Food harvested at the wrong time of day goes bad faster.
- Harvest in the morning when it is cooler to help the fresh produce to retain moisture and firmness.
- Farmers can use local materials to make their own storage warehouses.

SUPPORT OUR SMALL-SCALE FARMERS



Planning your media campaign



[Watch the video](#)



Now that you have your message and have worked out who your target audience is, you can decide what kind of media you need in order to communicate your campaign message. You will probably need photographs, audio, visuals, as well as text, even when you are writing an article for a website like MOJA because the more visual your article is, the more readers you will get.

You can spend some time conceptualising your visuals so that your campaign message appeals to your audience. For example, in a story about your poor working conditions, you could include photos of yourself teaching a class of adult learners, instead of a photo of a letter from the government about budget cuts.

You can also think about how to make your message look bigger or more impactful. Are there visuals from protests or meetings that you can use? Has your issue already been covered by the mainstream media and could you use a visual or a screenshot of that article.

You can also take this opportunity to practice writing headlines. If your story was in the media, what headline would you want it to have? Your headline should sum up your key problem and draw people into the story.

For some good examples of media that conveys a campaign message please see these videos:

Makana Citizens Front community campaign
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_ATk3rAkjY

LGE 2021 | Makana Citizens Front to contest municipal elections
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEpp9q_cbAk - from 1:56)

The first one was a simple campaign video shot on a cellphone and largely unedited, with a title and some introductory music added on the iMovie cellphone video editing app. The second is an SABC report which the public broadcaster in South Africa did after seeing the campaign video.

Think about where the first video was uploaded to and how it managed to get a wider audience. Think about what you liked and did not like about it. Do you think it was useful that the organisation chose members of the public to explain their issues? Do you feel that this made their message more believable?

Thinking through these points will help you work out what elements you want in the campaign videos you make or articles that you write.

E-Campaigning



E-Campaigning is an effective way of contacting, informing and mobilizing large numbers of people if they have smartphones or access to the internet.

E-campaigning involves using passive tools and active tools, often in a combination of ways. *Passive tools establish a one-way communication:* users receive information via e-mail or by consulting a web-site.

The internet can also be an active tool - for example, you could run a survey on SurveyMonkey or any other online survey site that allows you to create your own survey that people can fill in online. Then write about it. Or you could encourage people to send you voice notes in response to a story that you put online, and then make these into a podcast.

Campaign supporters and anyone who finds a message – or its design – appealing can relay it throughout their social networks by a few mouse clicks, generating a cascade of communication. The term **viral spread** has been used to describe items that spread quickly online like this.

Example:



The Isikhalo Womxn's Movement against Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) held e-campaigning and digital journalism in 2022. The training, for 70 women from three towns in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, aimed to produce a digital and print campaign for the 16 Days of Activism against GBVF. The participants first developed campaign messages and then brainstormed how to distribute the messages to supporters via new WhatsApp groups.

The participants also used their natural creativity and storytelling skills to think visually, using their mobile phones to film themselves discussing their experiences with GBVF. They then decided to combine these videos into a documentary and also shoot still photos for a photo exhibition.

After the photo exhibition was viewed, the participants in this training took the mounted photographs off the walls and used them as protest signs in a march on the local police station and court.

They also wrote up their experiences with GBVF and with making campaign media and released this information to newspapers and a TV station.



12.

**MOBILE
JOURNALISM**

12. MOBILE JOURNALISM

Mobile journalism, also known as MoJo, is a type of reporting in which multimedia content is captured, edited and shared using smartphones and mobile devices. This enables you to report the latest developments quickly and effectively. Smartphones allow you to take high-quality photos and videos, conduct interviews, edit content on the spot and share stories instantly.



Before heading out for a shoot

- Firstly, make sure your smartphone is fully charged and has enough storage space for recording your footage. Bringing extra batteries or portable chargers is recommended to avoid any power shortages.
- Check the condition of your equipment, including the camera lens, microphone and any accessories you intend to use.
- Pack essential items such as a tripod and external microphone. These are vital for achieving stable shots and high-quality audio.
- Familiarise yourself with the shooting location and conduct research on any possible restrictions.
- Prepare a shot list or outline to guide your storytelling and to ensure a clear vision of the story you want to tell.



Tips before You Shoot

1. Clean your smartphone's camera lens to maintain image clarity.
2. Use a tripod or stabilize yourself against a stable object for steady footage.
3. Consider lighting conditions while shooting, opt for natural light and avoid harsh backlighting.

Techniques for Mobile Journalism

1. **B-Roll Footage:** B-roll footage refers to visuals that supplement the main story. In other words, shoot additional shots of the environment details, or relevant actions.

Example: When reporting on a community event, capture shots of the participants interacting, the venue decorations or people engaging in activities related to the event.

2. **Time-Lapse:** Use your smartphone's time-lapse feature to compress longer videos. This method is great for capturing changes over time.

Example: Show a busy city street during rush hour.

3. **Slow Motion:** Slow-motion footage can add drama and highlight specific details or actions. Use this technique to emphasise critical moments.

Example: Slow down an action such as a student walking to a classroom

Shooting and Framing a Shot

1. **Rule of Thirds:** Use the rule of thirds for attractive compositions. Imagine dividing your frame into a grid of nine equal parts (two horizontal lines and two vertical lines). Balance your shot by placing key elements along these lines or at their intersections.

Example: Place the interviewee's eyes along one of the vertical lines to draw attention to their face.

2. **Leading Lines:** Lead the viewer's eye and create depth within your shot with leading lines. Roads, fences, and architectural features can lead the eye to the subject.

Example: Direct attention to your subject using a path in a park or a road leading into the distance.



Capturing Interviews

1. **Close-Ups:** To emphasise emotions and expressions, take close-up shots of interviewees. This helps viewers relate to the interviewee.

Example: Focus on the interviewee's face, capturing their reactions, gestures and eye contact.

2. **Over-the-Shoulder:** Film the interviewer from behind the interviewee's shoulder, showing both individuals in the frame. This shot gives the interview depth and perspective and provides a sense of the conversation dynamic.

Example: Film the interviewer asking questions while the interviewee responds.



Camera Angles

1. **High Angle:** To depict the subject as smaller or more vulnerable, shoot from an elevated position.

Example: Film a child from an elevated position which gives the viewer a sense of their vulnerability.

2. **Low Angle Shoot** from a lower position to emphasise the subject's power, dominance or significance.

Example: Capture a speaker at a podium from a low angle to portray their authority.



13.

**USING WHATSAPP TO
CREATE AND DISTRIBUTE
MEDIA CONTENT**



13. USING WHATSAPP TO CREATE & DISTRIBUTE MEDIA CONTENT



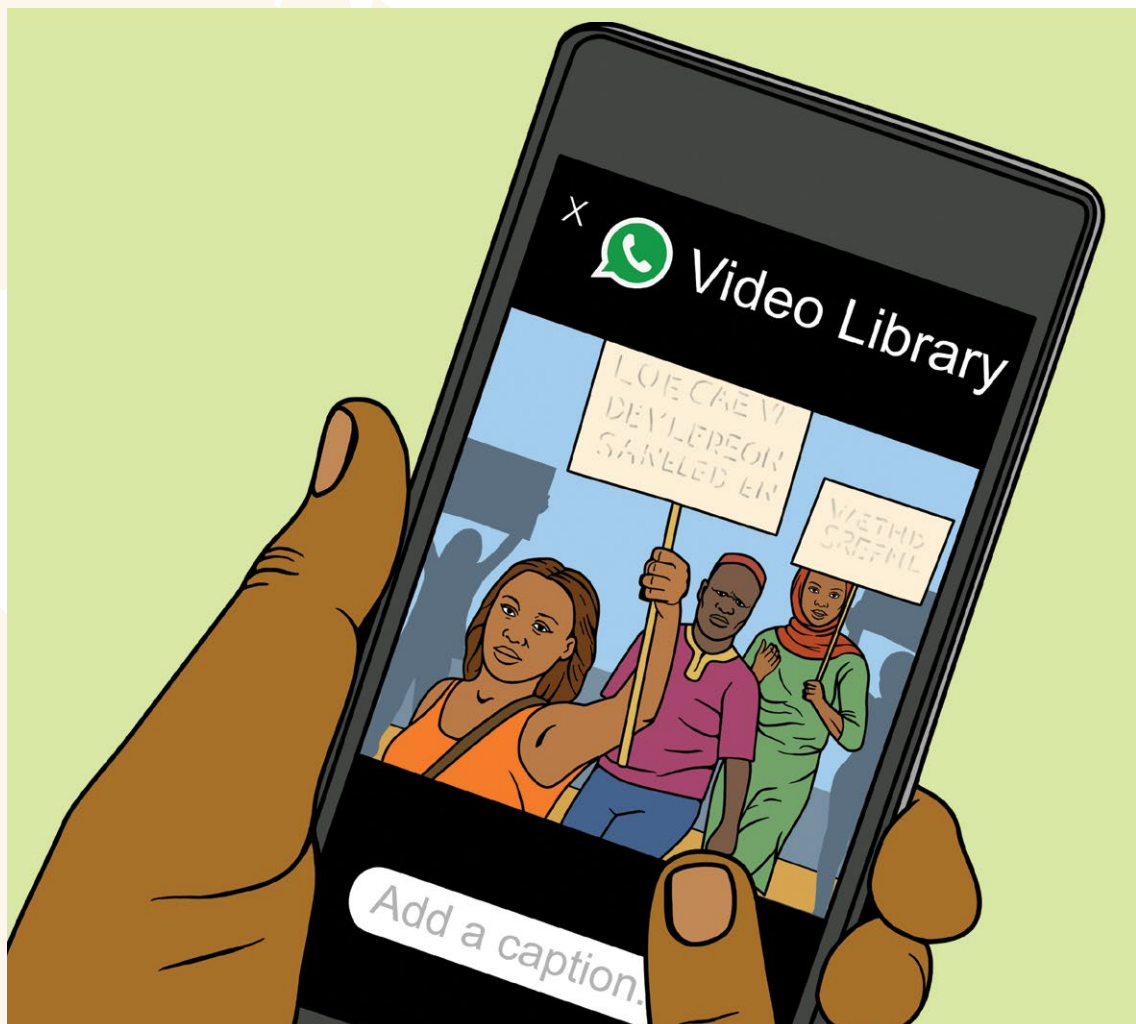
[Watch the video](#)

WhatsApp is a widely used messaging app around the world, which makes it possible for users to exchange text and voice messages, conduct voice or video calls, and share various forms of media such as pictures, videos, documents, and even their location.

To learn more about WhatsApp and its different features, visit <https://faq.whatsapp.com>

Creating Media Content on WhatsApp

You can use WhatsApp to send out your articles, voice notes and video clips to large groups of people. It is a tool that can be used to keep in touch with your audience and interact with them directly and regularly.



Relevant WhatsApp Features for Citizen Journalism

Voice notes

A WhatsApp voice note, also known as a voice message, is an audio recording that you can create and send directly within the WhatsApp application.

It can be used to for citizen journalism to highlight new issues and ideas.

Here's a simple guide on how to use WhatsApp voice notes:

1. **Open the Chat:** Open the WhatsApp application on your device and navigate to the chat where you want to send the voice note.
2. **Find the Microphone Icon:** Look for the microphone icon, usually found on the right side of the text box where you type messages.
3. **Press and Hold to Record:** To start recording your voice note, press and hold the microphone icon. As long as you're holding the icon, WhatsApp will continue to record your message. You will see a slide lock on top of the mic button while you are recording.
4. **Lock the Recording:** If your message is going to be long, you don't have to keep your finger on the microphone icon for the whole time. You can slide your finger up to the lock icon that appears, and the recording will continue without you needing to hold it down.
5. **Listen Before Sending:** If you wish to listen to your voice note before sending, just release the microphone button before you slide it up to the lock. Then you can press the play button to listen to your message.
6. **Delete if Needed:** If you're not happy with the recording, you can press the 'Cancel' button, usually represented by a trash bin icon, to delete the voice note.

Send the Voice Note: If you're satisfied with your recording, simply release the microphone icon (if you haven't locked it), and your voice note will be sent immediately. If you've locked the recording, you can press the send button (a paper plane icon) to send your voice note. (WhatsApp FAQ, 2023)

Voice Notes for Citizen Journalism

Here are some guidelines to help you record a radio-ready voice note:

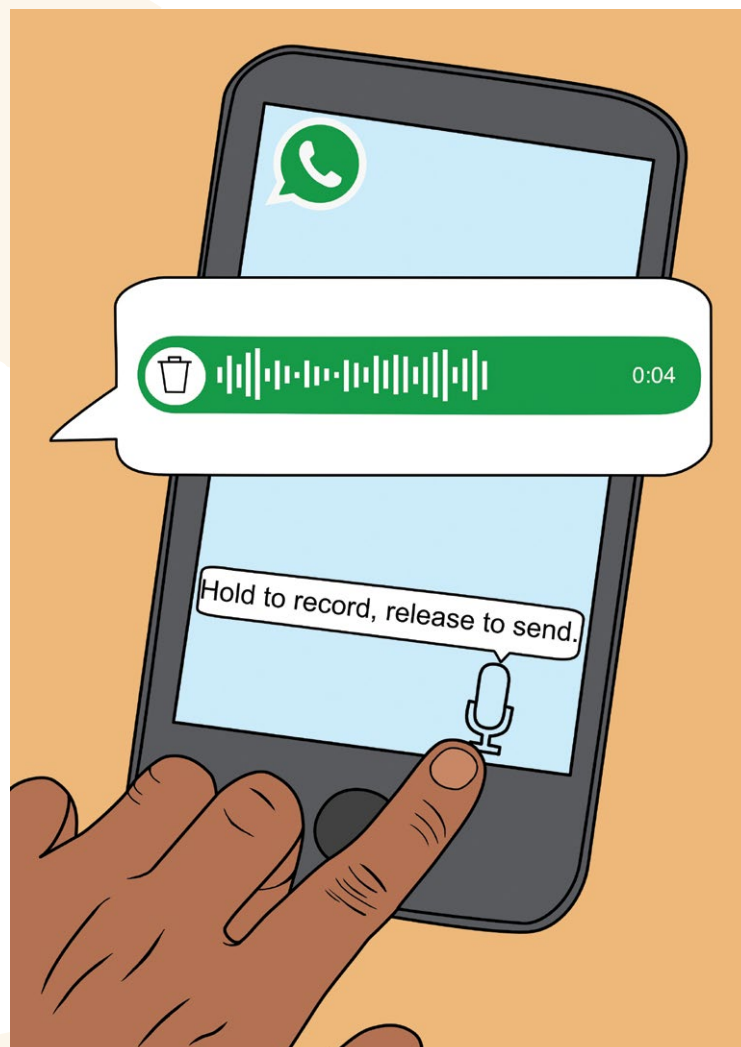
- Choose a quiet room and switch off fans and TVs.
- Hold your phone near your mouth.
- Jump straight into the shared topic, don't worry about long greetings.
- Be precise and consider what message you're conveying.
- Prepare your thoughts before recording. Write them down if needed, but don't sound like you're reading.
- Don't say the same thing more than once.
- Stick to a set time for your recording (under 40 seconds).

Producing audio recordings using WhatsApp

There are different types of audio recordings that you can produce. They include, live shows and podcasts which are best produced with an audio recorder. Standalone elements such as interviews, audio commentaries and audio profiles among others can be recorded using WhatsApp voice notes, including vox pops. Vox pops,” short for “voice of the people,” are quick, spontaneous street interviews done by journalists to gather public opinions on specific issues, often seen in news and documentaries. In addition, these types of audio recordings can be reproduced as a piece of writing such as a blog post.

Preparation & Producing an audio recording

- Ensure you know your equipment.
- If you are using WhatsApp voice notes on your mobile phone, make sure your phone is fully charged and notifications turned off.
- Make sure you are recording in a quiet environment unless ambient sound (natural background sound) enhances the recording. For example, if you are recording an educator in his/her teaching setting it will enhance the recording if you have the sounds of the working environment (the classroom).
- Make sure the phone is an adequate distance from the person you are interviewing.



Audio profiles (2 minutes)

Focus on capturing a person's self-narration accompanied by natural sounds, that is background noise. This approach allows listeners to discover interesting individuals within their community and learn about their roles and experiences. When creating an audio profile, ask the person to introduce themselves by name and their role followed by them talking about their role. Consider posing questions that encourage the profiled person to reflect and provide insightful answers.

Vox pops (1 minute)

Involve asking a single, short question to multiple people to gather their thoughts on topical or controversial issues. The goal is to gauge public opinions quickly. To ensure a smooth recording process, gather 5-6 individuals in one location and have each person respond individually to the same question.

Public service announcements (30 seconds)

PSAs deliver messages about social issues and their goal is to promote specific behaviours or causes. PSAs serve as concise advertisements that advocate for social change or lifestyle change. For instance, you could create a PSA highlighting the advantages of education outside of formal schooling.

Audio commentaries (2 minutes)

Involve recording individuals expressing their opinions or perspectives on a chosen topic. These commentaries allow for personal storytelling and the sharing of experiences, providing listeners with diverse viewpoints. They can be written beforehand and read aloud or discussed based on a few key points. For example, you could interview a youth leader on the importance of knowing one's HIV status and getting tested.

Remember, the audio commentary format can also be adapted into a written piece if desired.

- Martin and Middleton, 2011

WhatsApp Status

A WhatsApp status is a feature that allows you to share text, photos, videos, and GIFs with your contacts in a format that disappears after 24 hours, similar to features like Instagram Stories or Snapchat Stories.

Here's a simple guide on how to create a WhatsApp status:

- 1. Open the App and Select Status:** Open WhatsApp on your device. At the bottom of the screen, you will see several tabs. Tap on the "Status" tab.
- 2. Create a Status:** You'll see a plus sign or a camera icon on the top right or bottom right of the screen, depending on your device. Tap on it to create a new status. You'll see options to capture a new photo, record a video, or choose an existing one from your gallery.

3. **Add Text or Drawing:** After you've selected or captured your photo or video, you can add text, doodles, or stickers to it. There are options at the top of the screen for text and drawing tools. For example, you could take a photo of a beautiful sunset and write "Loving this view!" or you could draw a heart on it.
4. **Choose Who Can See Your Status:** Before you post your status, you can select who will be able to see it. This can be done in the "Status Privacy" settings. You can choose for all your contacts to see your status, exclude specific contacts, or share with only selected contacts.

Post Your Status: Once you're happy with your status, you can tap the send button (usually a paper plane icon or a green arrow). Your status will now be visible to the contacts you've chosen for the next 24 hours. (WhatsApp FAQ, 2023)

How you can use a WhatsApp status

- Update your status to promote the latest news and information.
- Announce competitions or polls to drive interaction.



Writing a status follows the same principles as writing a news headline.

For example, writing a news headline requires capturing the heart of your news story in a concise and engaging way. Firstly, pinpoint the most vital part of the news story. This is what your headline should communicate. Aim for a length of six to ten words, ensuring it's punchy and to the point. Use active language and action words to convey energy. Steer clear of complicated terms and abbreviations which might confuse your audience. Double-check your headline for grammar and sense, and most importantly, it should grab the reader's attention and not mislead the reader.

For example, if your story is about a local activist successfully advocating policy change, your status could be:

“Local Activist Triumphs in Advocating Policy Change”

Underneath this headline you could then guide the reader to read the full story on the website.

In other words, the status could read as follows:

“Local Activist Triumphs in Advocating Policy Change”

Read the full story here (add the website address)

Remember to add a picture!

You can also use the status feature to conduct a poll about an issue.

A poll is used to gather public opinion or perceptions on a specific matter. You can use a poll to find out about what a local community feels about an issue.

Let's say there's an ongoing debate in a community about whether to allocate funds for a new community centre or to renovate the existing one. The poll is a way to gather residents' opinions on the matter.

For example, the poll might include questions like:

“Do you believe the community should allocate funds for a new community centre?”

“Do you think the current community centre should be renovated instead of building a new one?”

Send us your answers to the comments section on the website (add website address)

WhatsApp Broadcast list

A WhatsApp broadcast list allows you to send a single message to multiple contacts simultaneously, similar to BCC in an email, maintaining recipient privacy. To use it, open WhatsApp, click the three-dot menu in the top-right, and select “New broadcast.” Choose your desired contacts from your list and confirm with the green checkmark. After creating your list, compose your message or attach a file, then send. Each contact receives the message individually, making it seem like a personal message. However, only those who have your number saved will receive your broadcast messages. (WhatsApp FAQ, 2023)

WhatsApp broadcast

Benefit: Create a community of listeners around a topic or an event if you want them to interact and share ideas and content.

Potential Issues:

- Privacy is the main issue in WhatsApp groups as all participants can see the details of the others.
- The group can be taken over by the participants and its focus can shift without the administrator being able to control it. The thread can get overcrowded and provoke participants to leave.
- However, the “Admins Only” send function can address this.

Benefit: Send the same information to many listeners, such as a community newsletter or a poll, without getting feedback or having interaction

Potential Issues:

- The administrator has no control over participants joining the list and no way to check when they leave.
- Data collation can be cumbersome with the messages coming in separate chat threads, discouraging any level of feedback or interaction.

You can use a WhatsApp Broadcast List to:

- Share community announcements, information, and other content.
- Send weekly newsletters to share content and advertise opportunities.

A community announcement is a public message about various subjects like upcoming events, changes in public services, emergency warnings, or other relevant community news. For example, “From July 1 to August 31, the Public Library will be under renovation and closed to the public. Patrons can visit our temporary site at the school hall (add name and street address) during our usual hours. We regret any inconvenience caused”.

A newsletter is a regular communication which provides detailed updates and information to an audience. Newsletters often include news stories, upcoming events, interviews, or any other content that is relevant to the community it serves.

Example:

Header: June 2023 Community Newsletter: Events and Local Updates

Hello!

Welcome to your June community newsletter, filled with exciting news, upcoming events, and important updates about our community.

Online news writing series returns

Our annual writing series, starts June 20th. For more details, visit the website!

Spotlight: Interview with Local Activist, Janet Smith

We sat down with Janet Smith, tireless education advocate in our community. Read her inspiring story on our blog on the website!

Local Library Undergoing Renovations

The local Library will be closed from July 1 to August 31 for renovations. Visit the temporary location at [Name and Address]

High School seeks tutors

Get involved in helping our youth. The after-school programme is seeking new volunteers. Sign up on the website today!

Looking Ahead

Stay tuned for more updates and event announcements in next month's newsletter. Thank you for being a part of our vibrant community.



14.

**WRITING FOR
SOCIAL MEDIA**

14. WRITING FOR SOCIAL MEDIA



[Watch the video](#)

Writing for social media is different to writing a blog or an article for the MOJA or another website, in that your social media posts need to be short and sharp and contain a link back to your original article. Writing for social media uses the same principles as campaign communication. You are communicating a problem or an issue that you want your readers to understand and identify and empathise with - to the point where they are willing to click on a link to find out more.

Write your teaser!

The goal of writing for social media is to create a 'teaser', which is something that persuades the reader to click on the link to read your full article or watch your full video.

Useful points to remember when writing a teaser are:

- A teaser is usually two sentences long. Keep these two sentences short.
- In your teaser, make a strong statement summarizing the issue or ask readers a question.
- Don't include long and confusing instructions in your teaser – such as “watch the video, then share it with friends, then come back to the post and add your comment”. Focus instead on making your teaser so interesting and powerful that readers want to read more.

Here are some examples:

Greenpeace Africa:

We're supporting communities to reforest coastal mangroves. If the authorities won't protect our oceans, then our communities will. Support them here <https://act.gp/3MSMnAa>

Groundwork:

#ArcellorMittalAGM Protesting communities are demanding that #AMSA protects people's lives and health by reducing pollution and move towards a Just Transition. And show accountability through ensuring access to information for affected communities. #Life After Coal

Say it from the heart

Don't be shy to put your personality and emotion into your social media messages – it is important to tell your story and readers are more likely to read personal or real life stories than they are dozens of articles that all sound like the same pamphlet.

As with campaign communication, remember to keep your voice and style of engagement consistent. This will help readers connect with you and develop trust in you.

If you can, make greater use of images or infographics than text. Visuals can often relay the whole issue to readers in a much more engaging way than text. Videos where you, yourself, talk about your working conditions (for example) or your daily life as an educator can be very compelling and will help your audience connect with you and build a relationship of trust with you.

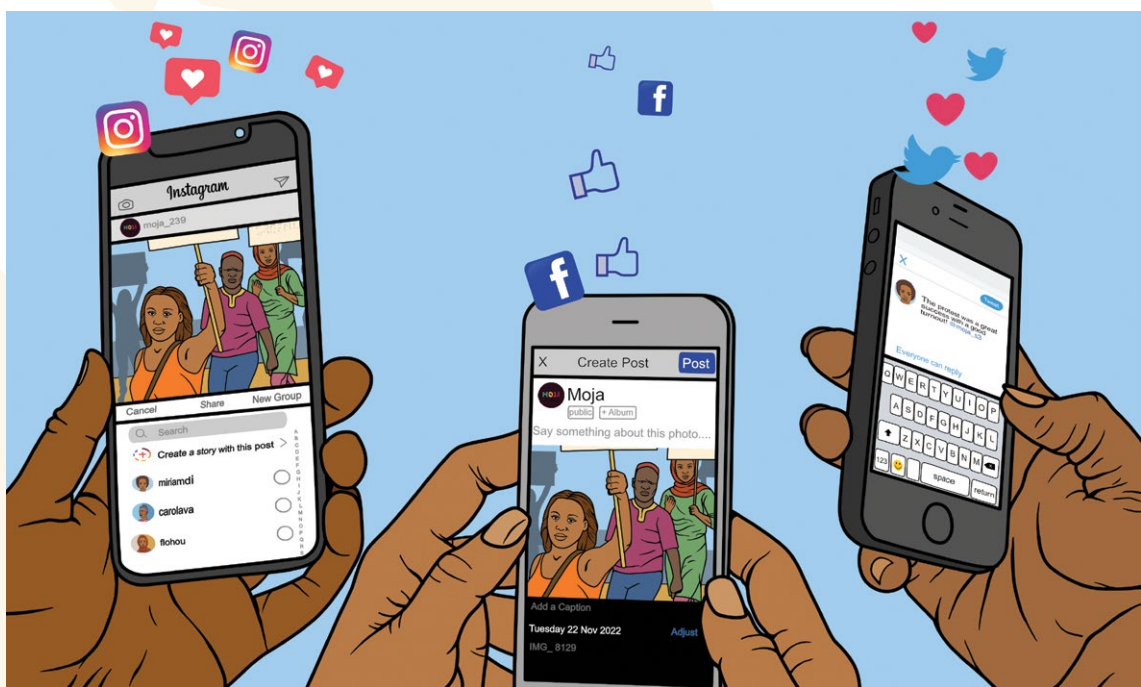
Make use of live video if you can. This will avoid you having to edit your video footage later. When you are speaking on live video, which is unedited, it is important to look serious, prepared and professional.

The main social media platforms that you will use are:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter

Facebook

Link posts tend to perform best on Facebook, followed by image and text. You should aim to keep your Facebook posts very short, no longer than two short sentences. The aim of this two-sentence teaser is to bring people back to your website via a link.



Because some cellphone providers make Facebook text only free to read, you might want to also paste your whole story below your teaser. This means that people who don't have data and cannot click on your link, can still read your articles.

Anyone can set up a public or private group on Facebook. All over the world, activists, educators and workers are using Facebook groups to organise, communicate and build support. When posting on your group, again use an image such as a photo and a two-line teaser to spark the reader's interest.

Bear in mind that when you post a link on Facebook as well as an article, if the link contains an image, only the first four lines of your article will show up on the news feed. So instead of cutting and pasting your article onto Facebook, always write a two sentence teaser and paste this above your article. The teaser will leave your reader wanting to know more and they will either click on the link or they will click on "... See more"

If you don't have a link or an image, then the first eight lines of your article will appear. This still might not be enough to grab the reader's interest. If you do not craft a teaser, the reader might continue to scroll past.

Example 1 :

This union press statement has been pasted onto Facebook. There is no link or teaser. One line is wasted on repeating the date. Another line is wasted on leaving a line space below the words 'for immediate release'. The reader will have to click "...See more" in order to find out what happened in the Central Committee because none of this information is contained in the first eight lines.

NUMSA
December 31, 2021 at 3:32 PM · 🌐

NUMSA CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT
31 December 2021
For Immediate Release

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) Central Committee (CC) met from the 6th to the 10th of December 2021. The meeting was a virtual one and was held on MS Teams due to the covid-19 pandemic restrictions. The CC was attended by National Office Bearers (NOB's), Regional Office Bearers (ROB's) and elected Central Committee member worker delegates from all nine NUMSA regions. The CC r... **See more**

👍❤️ Thokozani Mkhize, Lungisani Mkhize and 18 others 8 Comments 6 Shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

Most relevant ▾

Write a comment...

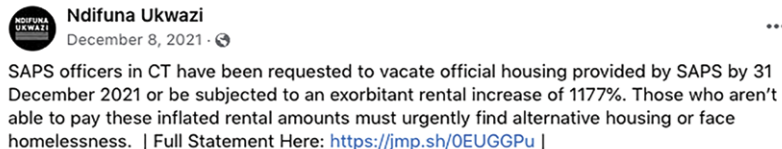
Lungisani Mkhize
Aluta continua 👍 1

Like · Reply · 2w

View 5 more comments

Example 2:

The Ndifuna Ukwazi (Dare to Know) non-profit organisation has provided a link, an eye-catching image and a teaser summarising the issue (that police have been told they will be evicted unless they pay a rent increase of more than 1000%). Even if readers choose not to click on the link, they will still be well informed about the issue. This informative post uses all the space available – no empty lines. With the great graphic, this post is more likely to be shared.



Instagram



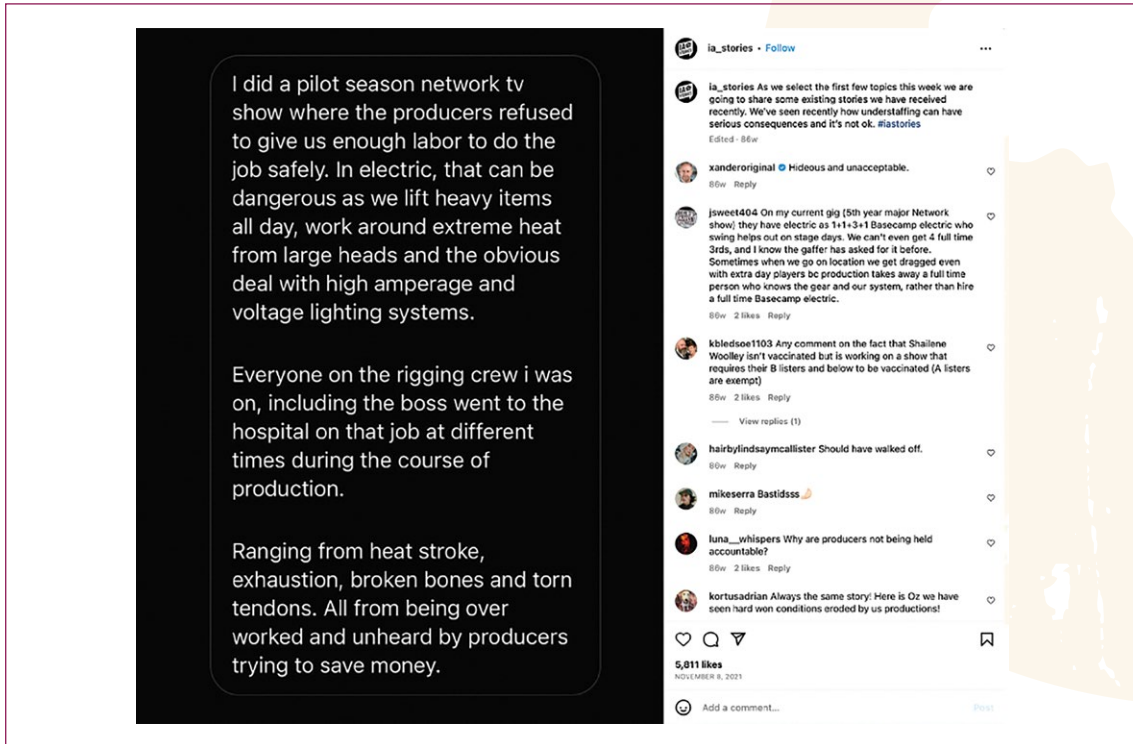
[Watch the video](#)

Research shows that the best Instagram posts are images, followed by video. You should always write a post to go along with the images and you can include up to five hashtags (#). Research has found that Instagram thrives on emojis, so use these as much as possible. Instagram posts with two hashtags perform well, and posts with only one hashtag are alright.

Instagram is also very useful as a safe space for workers to tell their stories without revealing their identities. A great example of this is an Instagram page set up by the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) in the USA. The page was set up so that workers could talk about their poor working conditions during a strike in 2021.

In these safe space Instagram pages, people send their stories to the page owner via direct message. The page owner then removes their names before posting their stories on Instagram, often as infographics.

Here is an example of a real life story about poor working conditions posted on the IATSE stories Instagram page:



These Instagram pages tend to attract readers because they contain real-life stories, usually exposing internal information that is not widely known. For this reason, the mainstream media is also interested in such pages.

However, even anonymous social media platforms can be sued for defamation. It is important to stick to the same ethical and legal boundaries you would use when writing an article with your name on it. It is also important that the page owner has the time and capacity to fact check the individual stories before publishing so that there is no misrepresentation or exaggeration on the page.

The anonymous Instagram accounts are also mainly useful for contract workers who might not get any work again if they complain publicly about their working conditions. The constitutions of many countries guarantee the right to freedom of expression. It is important for employees to have a strong union that is willing to defend them if they are fired for writing about their working conditions.

Twitter

Twitter has helped many activists reach people beyond their own networks. Tweets can even win support from high profile people (retweets), which will direct more people to your cause.

Research has shown that the most read Tweets contain images and that the best Tweet length for engagement is 103 characters long with two hashtags. You can also use emojis in your tweet.

If you want to generate support, try to convey that your issue is urgent – social media moves fast and content is updated all the time. It is important that your tweet is able to convince people that it is urgent that they find out more about your issue (i.e. read your link).

You can also explore using Twitter’s Website Buttons, which make it possible for you to add photos and videos to Tweets. Twitter has found that these formats get 43% more engagements than tweeting links.

Try to keep your hashtags consistent. For example, if your main complaint at work is that you are short staffed, use the #ShortStaffing in all articles related to this. Hashtags enable you to start new conversations on Twitter that have the potential to attract people beyond those who follow you.

It is not advisable to use too many hashtags of generic words because they can distract the readers and also result in confusion.

Twitter is a casual platform where people have conversations so remember to reframe your key message or rewrite your Facebook teaser so that it becomes an exciting Tweet.

Live Tweeting can be useful if you are in a protest situation. Twitter describes live tweeting as “a sequence of focused tweets” which give constant updates on a situation. You can also tweet during the breaks in a long negotiation about wages or working conditions, or during conferences or debates or public meetings. Activists all over the world say that live tweeting increases the number of new followers and retweets.

Follow this abbreviated guide to live tweeting by the *Electronic Intifada* news website for more advice on live tweeting:

- Observe the event before you start tweeting and answer these questions: Is the information unique or important? Are you sure it isn’t obvious or redundant? Will it be interesting to anyone outside of the event? What do you expect your followers (or those following the hashtag) to find appealing about it?
- Speed is critical in live tweeting. By cutting down on irrelevant content, you’ll leave yourself with more time to convey the important things in the most compelling way possible.
- Don’t just type up everything you hear as a Tweet. Live tweeting is not a transcript of a meeting or an event but a summary of the most interesting and important parts.
- Remember to follow your journalist rules of attributing comments to the people who have said them. If the person you’re quoting is on Twitter, use their @ handle.
- Don’t promise your followers that you will Live Tweet or Facebook Live an event if you are going to come to an event with a phone that has a flat battery or one that will die just after the event starts. To increase the life of your battery, bring a charger if possible or close applications on your devices and dim your display to speed performance and increase battery life.
- As with ordinary Tweets, make your live tweeting visual – upload short videos or photos from the event. Or have some graphics prepared and ready on your phone to upload.



15.

**CREATING
INFOGRAPHICS**



15. CREATING INFOGRAPHICS



[Watch the video](#)

An infographic is a way of visually organising key information or data so that it is presented quickly and clearly. A good infographic simplifies complicated information into a story that is easy and quick for people to understand.

Because they are visual, infographics capture the attention and interest of readers very quickly. When done correctly, infographics help you understand the main idea presented with just a quick glance.

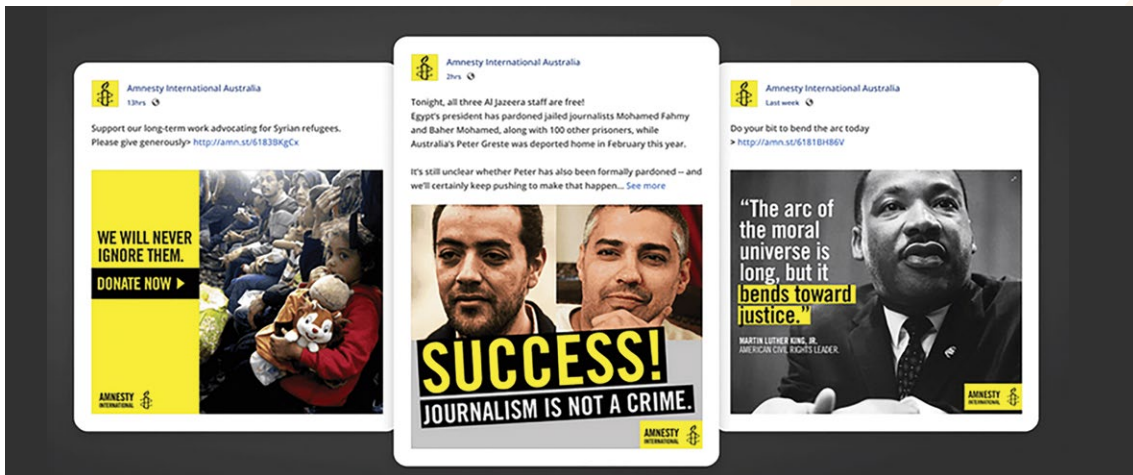
Many people prefer to read an infographic rather than a long text article. Because infographics are like mind maps, it is easier for many people to remember the information if it is presented in infographic form.

The purpose of an infographic is to tell a story. An infographic combines data, text, design, colours, fonts, charts and graphs to tell a story using accurate data.

There are a few apps that make it easy to develop infographics. You do not need a computer with professional design software. One such app is Canva. It is loaded with templates, and all you need to do is upload or add a photo from your phone and then type in the text that you need. Because you are working from a template, you can even choose the same template for all your messages. This makes your work more recognisable - when people see the template, they will get to know to expect a message from you.



For example, these Amnesty International infographics were made with Canva:



To make an infographic about an article you have written, all you will need is a photo or other picture and then a few lines reflecting the key message of your article, plus any data that you want to communicate.

Remember that an infographic is not meant to be a ‘cut and paste’ of your whole article with a fancy border. You will have to spend some time condensing all the information you have into a few key sentences, a headline and possibly some sub-headings and a short description of the data. If you look at the example below, you will see it is a very eye catching visual but it does not contain much text at all.

Your infographics can also contain the link to your blog or your Instagram account or a website such as MOJA where your article is published.

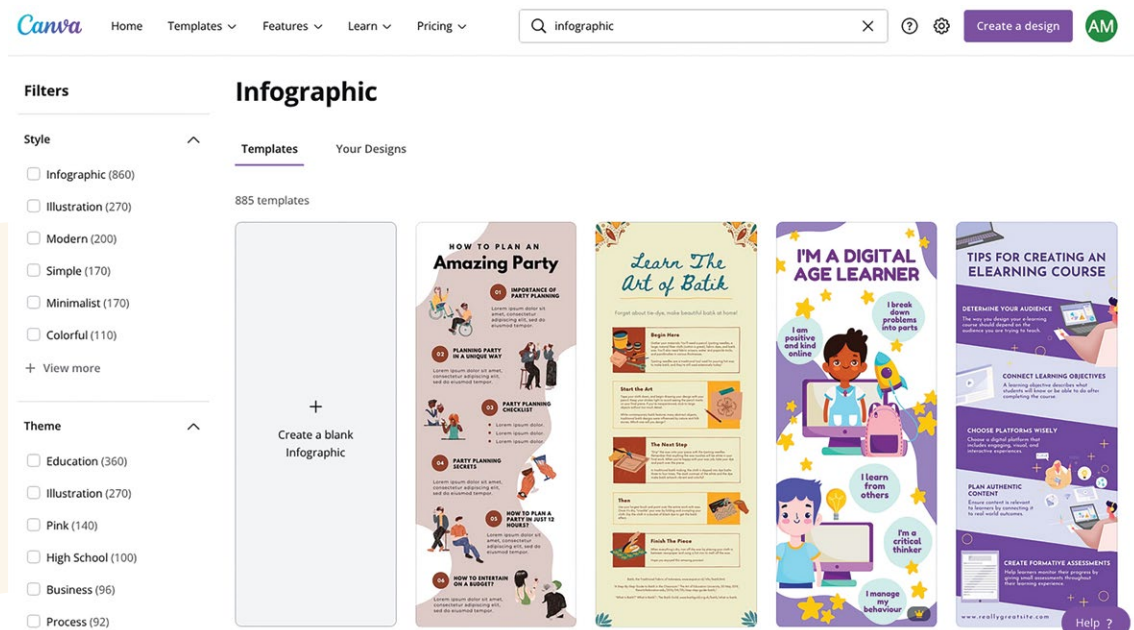
As you can see from this infographic, it is easy to include data and percentages in a visually appealing format:



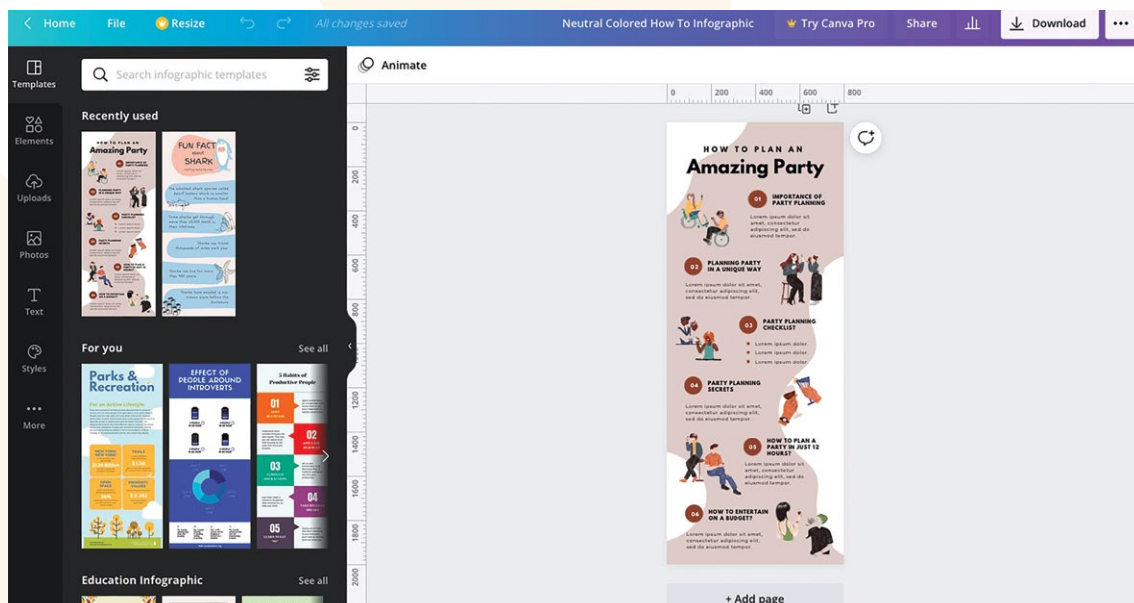
To make an infographic on Canva, follow these easy steps:

1. Install the Canva app or go to www.canva.com on any computer.
2. You will be offered templates for infographics, Instagram posts, presentations, posters and many more.
3. Click on the one you choose and your templates will appear.
4. Click on your preferred template to open it.
5. Double click on each text box and then retype your own text over the template text.
6. Upload your own photos that you can then drag and drop onto the template, replacing the template photos.
7. Canva also has graphics you can use.
8. Download your infographic once you are done.

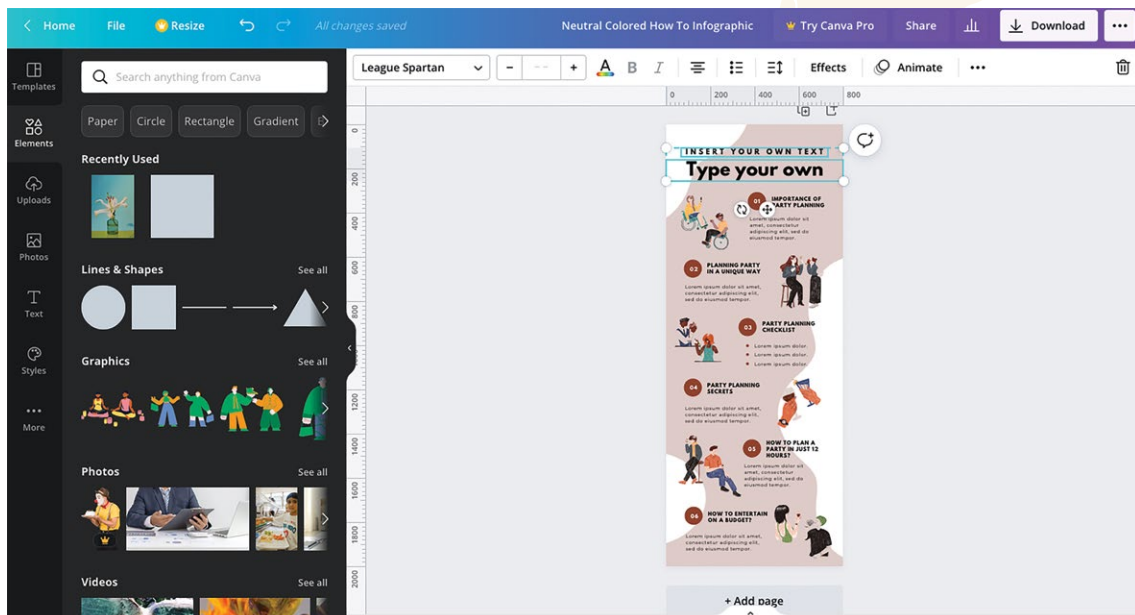
Choose a template:



Open it and double click on the text you wish to change:



Type your own text over it. The design will remain the same. You will not have to design the infographic yourself:



Once you have finished adding all your text to the Canva template, you can click the Download button in the top right hand corner. This will save your infographic as a JPG or PDF file. Once you have saved the file, you can upload it to social media, or attach your finished infographic to WhatsApp messages and emails!

The more you practice on Canva, the better your infographics will become. Don't give up hope if your first one is not what you hoped for. There are hundreds of designs on Canva and you will get better the more you practice!

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17. AFTERWORD

You have now completed training in the Communications Handbook for Adult Educators. Congratulations! The importance of the skills you've acquired during the training sessions can't be over-emphasised. Every day across Africa, adult educators are implementing interesting, creative and innovative projects, but too often we don't hear about your important work. We hope that the skills you've learned here will help you to publicise and share your work with others. At the MOJA digital platform (www.mojaafrica.net) we are always happy to share information about your work via articles, resources, *vox pops*, or any other format. Please join our community of adult education practitioners and let's learn and share together.

NOTES:

Lined writing area for notes, consisting of multiple horizontal lines.

