

Guidelines for successful medical writing

By [Charles Mburugu](#)

30 Sep 2014

In this day and age, health issues have become a major concern for many individuals all over the world. People are always looking for all kinds of information from both medical and non-medical publications. Due to the huge demand for health-related content, medical writing has become a very lucrative venture. Anyone with good writing skills can succeed in this field, even with little or no medical training.

Here are some guidelines for getting started in medical writing:

1. Choose a niche

Medicine is a very broad field, comprising categories such as pharmacy, surgery, dentistry, pathology and psychiatry. Though it is possible to write on all these areas, it would be advisable to focus on a particular field. Specializing in one area will enable you to [build a reputation as an authority](#) in that niche.

2. Identify your audience

Before embarking on medical writing, you need to identify your target audience. This will help you figure out what kind of language would convey your message most effectively. For instance, if you are writing for a lifestyle magazine, the audience is mainly people that have no medical training. Be sure to use simple language with minimal medical jargon. If you are writing for a trade publication, your audience will be comprised of pharmacists, surgeons and other medical professionals. In this case, you will need to adopt a more academic approach.

3. Keep it simple

In many cases, medical writing works best with a conversational tone. This makes it easier to send the message across to your readers. Remember to keep your sentences short and sweet. Avoid using difficult English words which will only end up confusing your readers. For instance, instead of using the word 'superfluous', you could simply say 'excessive' or 'extra'. Any time you use medical terms, be sure to offer a clear definition. Don't assume that everyone understands what propulsive peristalsis means, unless you are writing for a trade publication.

4. Cross-check your facts

People are likely to make crucial decisions about their health based on what they read in medical articles. Therefore, your content needs to be properly researched and based on facts. Make sure you get information only from credible sources. Some of the medical sites which offer verified data and studies include Mayo Clinic and National Institutes of Health. Remember to include links to your resource materials at the footnote of the article or within the content.

5. Structure the article properly

The most important part of your article is the headline. Your headline should not only be catchy but should also give readers a clear idea of what your article is about. Consider the following titles:

'High blood pressure explained'

vs.

'5 Leading causes of high blood pressure'

The first headline is vague and does not really tell the reader what to expect in the article. However, the second title is more precise and straight forward.

After choosing a proper headline, you can structure your article as follows:

- What is high blood pressure?
- Why is it important to know the causes?
- What are the main causes of high blood pressure?
- How can these causes be mitigated?

Use subheadings and bullet points so as to make your content easier to scan.

The content and structure of your article should be ultimately determined by the publication where it is due to be published. Therefore, before submitting the article, re-read the publication guidelines to be sure that everything is in order.

ABOUT CHARLES MBURUGU

HubSpot-certified content writer/marketer for B2B, B2C and SaaS companies. He has worked with brands such as GetResponse, Neil Patel, Shopify, 99 Designs, Norton, Salesforce and Condor. Portfolio: <https://charlesmburugu.contently.com/> LinkedIn: <https://ke.linkedin.com/in/charlesmburugu>

▪ E-cigarettes: The benefits and risks - 18 Nov 2014

▪ Guidelines for successful medical writing - 30 Sep 2014

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>