

WRITING YOUR  
COMMAND COLLEGE  
ARTICLE V2.0

BY  
BOB HARRISON

## **Writing Your Command College Article V2.0**

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# Writing Your Command College Article

## Preface

The final step in your journey through the Command College is to author a scholarly article from the completed futures research of your chosen topic, then submit that article to a magazine or periodical in general circulation. If you are not a seasoned writer, this can seem to be a daunting task. Rather than tossing you into the canal and asking you to swim, however, this guidebook was created to assist you through the process. Even if you are an accomplished writer, the review should be beneficial as you work to publish your work.

This guidebook is written to logically present the skills in a sequence that will help you work from one step to another with a minimum of redundant work. It is constructed as a workbook with included resources and references. Using it and your Futures Project, you will be able to construct the components of your article, then link them together to form your finished work. The guidebook may be read in no particular order, and should be a source of reference as you construct each section of your article.


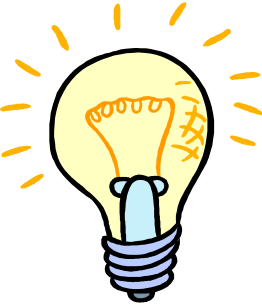
Beyond this guidebook, there is a multitude of resource and reference information on the Internet. Many of the more prominent sources will be discussed herein; there are as many others out there that would be equally as helpful. Good luck as you enter this final phase of the Command College; graduation lies just on the other side.



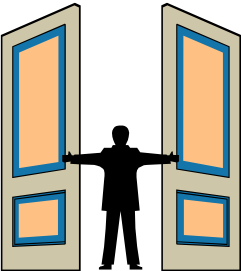
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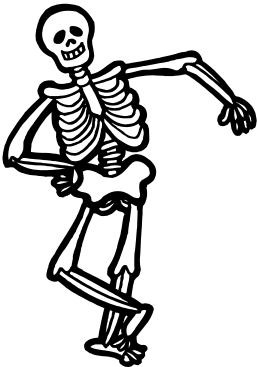

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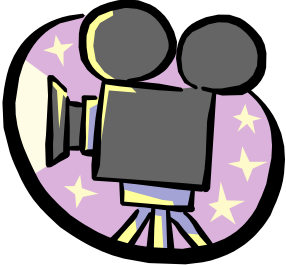
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# THE ARTICLE WRITING PROCESS STEP-BY-STEP

THE STEPS	WHAT YOU'LL DO
<p data-bbox="293 674 516 716">The Prewrite</p> 	<p data-bbox="599 636 862 667">You use prewriting to:</p> <ul data-bbox="664 674 1162 810" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think more clearly</li> <li>• See a start to your article</li> <li>• Keep track of your ideas</li> <li>• Practice expressing yourself in writing</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="599 846 1393 1045">One of the best places to start is to write uncritically about the themes of your article. Some of the best ways to do this are to start jotting a list, doing a “freewrite” where you just write out words that come to mind, and brainstorming, which is often best done as a small group activity to put words up, then associate other words or concepts with them.</p> <p data-bbox="599 1081 1393 1245">Next, start organizing your thoughts into a preliminary order. Many writers use one of three methods; outlining topics, which helps to start “chunking” out the work, clustering thoughts, phrases or words, and diagramming, which is similar to clustering but adds the organization of outlining.</p>
<p data-bbox="326 1362 483 1404">The Title</p> 	<p data-bbox="599 1325 1365 1394">Ten styles of titles (Using the topic of “The Future of Patrol Cars” as an example):</p> <ul data-bbox="649 1400 1386 1854" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Descriptive: “The Patrol Car of the Future”</li> <li>• Rhyming: “Cars for the Stars to patrol our Bars”</li> <li>• Alliteration: “The perfect patrol platform – the future of mobile patrol”</li> <li>• Challenge: “Do you know where your next patrol vehicle will come from?”</li> <li>• Statement: “Mobile patrol - Where we’re going from here”</li> <li>• Shocker: “Your next patrol vehicle may not have wheels!”</li> <li>• Drama: “Trapped in the past - no patrol in my future?”</li> <li>• Statistic: “Experts agree – 38% of cops prefer Fords”</li> <li>• Emotional appeal: “How do they expect us to do our job without the right car?”</li> <li>• Witty: “Black and White Fever - a cure in sight?”</li> </ul>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Subtitle</b></p> 	<p>Consider a subtitle to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight an interesting quote</li> <li>• Juxtapose conflict (e.g., with a title of “The Future of Patrol Cars” you might consider a subtitle from one of provocative title styles; if a provocative title, consider a descriptive subtitle)</li> <li>• Ask a compelling question</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Lead</b></p> 	<p>Use one of eight styles of leads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The factual summary lead (Who, what, where, when, why &amp; how)</li> <li>• Descriptive leads (The great fish moved silently...)</li> <li>• The shocker – grab, frighten or compel further reading</li> <li>• The quick fragment – staccato leads (It was the best of times...)</li> <li>• Parodies on familiar topics or subjects</li> <li>• Direct quotes – “Read my lips. No new taxes.”</li> <li>• Pose a question – “Is random patrol outdated?”</li> </ul> <p>Contrast leads – “Despite our leadership in education, today’s youth know less than ever before.”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Opening Paragraph</b></p> 	<p>Continuation of the lead sentence. Most readers stop here unless you have induced them to read further. Make it fun, interesting, provocative or compelling through your prose.</p> <p>If your reader lacks the background to understand the paper, try one of these strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define terms</li> <li>• Present a brief history</li> <li>• Explain the different sides to a controversy</li> <li>• Set the scene in detail</li> </ul> <p>If they know something of your subject, stimulate by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise a provocative question</li> <li>• Tell an anecdote that relates to the topic</li> <li>• Ask your reader to imagine</li> <li>• Refute a commonly-held idea or concept</li> <li>• Relate seemingly unrelated facts &amp; bring them together for the reader</li> </ul>

	Remember, you can mix strategies together...
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Meat of the Matter – The Body</b></p> 	<p>This is a logical and ordered presentation of your topic; where you move from the macro to the micro level, organize the reader’s understanding of the subject and present your argument, perspectives or other related information</p> <p>Remember:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use your outline to build 3-4 major “chunks” of work; these will become your chapters</li> <li>• Transition from one paragraph to the next and from one sub-heading to the next</li> <li>• Sub-head titles help to emphasize topic points and enhance flow</li> <li>• Think about having an objective for each chapter or sub-head; gather information, outline and follow a logical pace</li> <li>• Be concise yet informative. Use appropriate grammar</li> </ul> <p>Use proper citations when you refer to the work of others, including those you uncovered in your literature review</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Your Conclusion</b></p> 	<p>Use one of seven types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full circle endings that tie into the lead</li> <li>• Summary endings; pull out the most relevant points and restate them</li> <li>• Quotation endings, whether from the article research or an expert source that adds a perspective and challenges the reader to think further</li> <li>• Finish your story; don’t leave the reader hanging – not the full-circle ending; offers hope or new insight at the end</li> <li>• Direct endings – reiterate and reinforce the point of the article; consider it as a short editorial on the body and its meaning</li> <li>• Give advice – allows you to give advice or insight; similar to the direct ending</li> </ul> <p>The shocker – ends the story in a manner not anticipated by the reader; disquiets the reader, alerts the reader to dangers ahead</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Editing &amp; Proofreading</b></p>	<p>Follow Turabian, APA or MLA<sup>1</sup> style guides; be certain to cite references appropriately and credit the work of others.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Visual Support – Speak to Them in Pictures</b></p> 	<p>Visual images can tell the reader volumes you would never have room to present in text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think of charts, graphs, pictures or other visual representations that would support your text and enrich the reading experience</li> <li>• Use visual language to integrate words, images and shapes into a coherent whole</li> <li>• Most periodicals will want visuals; even scholarly publications desire charts, graphs or displays that reinforce the learning experience.</li> </ul> <p>Experiment with clip art, images in your topic area and other mediums to convey your message</p>

These notes are adapted from:

*A Writer's Guide to Getting Published in Magazines* by JJ DeSpain, Aletheia Publications, Putnam Valley NY 2000

*The Complete Idiots Guide to Publishing Magazine Articles* by Sheree Bykofsky, Jennifer Basye Sander & Lynne Rominger, Alpha Books, Penguin Group USA 2000

The University of Wisconsin On-Line Writing Center <http://www.wisc.edu/writing>

The Kansas University On-Line Writing Center, [www.writing.ku.edu](http://www.writing.ku.edu)

The Bowling Green University On-Line Writing Lab, [www.bgsu.edu/departments/writing-lab/](http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/writing-lab/)

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<sup>1</sup> The specifics of each style guide are discussed in a following section



# CREATIVE WRITING, AUTHORIZING ARTICLES AND & SUBMITTING THEM FOR PUBLICATION TO PROFESSIONAL PERIODICALS

Or

## HOW TO HAVE FUN WITH YOUR NGT WITHOUT REALLY TRYING

By Bob Harrison

So, you're still not sure why you signed up for Command College a couple years ago? Even with all the great food and good company in beautiful downtown Folsom, you're still not sure if the struggle is worth it? Rest assured, things are looking up...

When Command College was first presented, POST envisioned a learning experience that not only prepared each of you to lead policing into the future, but also as an educational experience that would enrich the profession. The concept of the Independent Study Project (ISP) was to craft it as original research that would be suitable for publication in research journals, academic texts and in professional periodicals throughout the nation. The cost was worth it, they thought, if what you learned was shared with all. The problem was that, unless you were a college professor or PhD who enjoyed reading arcane data non-stop for days on end, the ISP's weren't especially suited for consumption by the masses. In a word, they were boring. Granted, they were chock full of great information, but they were, nonetheless, boring.

### **How We Got Here**

In the early 1990s, POST set about to fix the ISP boredom issue as a way to make the work of Command College students more exciting. Since 1991, students have been required to complete the ISP or one of its successor efforts (now entitled your Futures Project) and also to author a 12-15 page article covering the findings of this research. Write it and they will come...won't they? Unfortunately, the answer was...no.

When the article concept was first floated to classes (who met the idea with several rounds of cheers), a number of those hardy souls actually submitted their articles to one or more of the various police publications. Four graduates saw their names in lights (or at least in print), still a paltry 7.5 percent of the total number who hung the POST Command College plaque on their wall. From that time, the number of published projects continued to dwindle to the point where only one of the last forty graduates has had their article printed in general circulation. This is in spite of the fact that classes had mentors assigned to students for the purpose of shepherding them through the project and article process. Well, even the most stubborn amongst us saw the current state of affairs couldn't last.

### **Where We're Going**

POST still envisions Command College as a vital link in the development of our leaders, and that their knowledge should be shared with others to enrich the profession. The best way to fulfill that goal is for each student to continue to undertake significant original futures research on a topic of their choosing, then to craft an article suitable for

submission for publication to a professional periodical. The problem to date has been the curriculum of the course has never included training on how to do just that, and that no structure is in place to support the effort. That has changed.

Command College Class 36 piloted the effort to significantly enhance the quality of the article, and for requiring each student to submit their article to one or more government or public safety periodical for publication. Oh, \$#@\*#, you're thinking, I'm not a novelist. I can write a police report, I can even construct a futures scenario for my project, but how in the world am I going to get this thing done? Worry not, my eager researcher. Help is on the way.

### **How We'll Get There**

Starting in January 2005, Command College classes included instruction on how best to satisfy the requirement to write and submit an article based on your research. The block of training includes creative writing techniques, the construction of quality articles and how to submit them to editors and publishers. It is also a starting point for your work to develop a working title, options for outlining your content and the creation of winning leads and closings.

During the time you are putting the finishing touches on your research, you will work with an instructor one-on-one electronically to submit articles and receive coaching and mentoring sufficient to get you across the finish line. The goal for Command College classes is to have 100 percent of all students submit an article, and to see 25 percent of those submitted be approved for publication. We'll work on specific ways to get you across the finish line with an article prepared and appropriately prewritten, constructed according to best-practice guidelines and laced together in a manner that will be accepted by the editor whose job it is to put the most interesting things into his or her magazine.

### **Some Nuts and Bolts**

Prior to entering your class on developing quality research articles, there are a few things that are important for you to know (beyond where the instructor wants to go for lunch...). As you have time, please venture onto the Internet to see what resources there may be for you in your quest to write that article. As you wander through the electronic forest, think about:

Prewriting – You'll be asked to choose from one of three dominant ways to organize your thoughts prior to writing the text of the article. They are the outline, bubble clusters and spider diagrams. You have already done the research, so consider ways to group data, compile expert interview statements and form ways to discuss your conclusions and recommendations.

Transitions – This is something you may be doing without much thought, but in an article, it is important to transition from one paragraph to the next, and from one section to that which follows it. The next time you read an interesting article, note the flow. That sense of seamless movement is created by effective transitions. There are tools and tips to

help you develop yours, so don't worry if this seems intimidating (or you can just circle the transitions you see in this article as a starting point).

Article format – Articles generally follow an accepted format. This will help you “chunk out” the sections of your prose, and also help fit it into the length and pace of articles generally seen in professional journals. Think about your working title, your lead or introduction, the 3-4 (usually four) subsections of the body of your work and your conclusion. We will get into much greater depth in this area during class.

Style and Submission Guidelines – there are on-line tutorials and resources for the major style and editing guides in publishing. The American Psychological Association (APA) style is used in most, if not all, academic and research publications. The Chicago Manual of Style is used for most books in publication, and Kate Turabian's Style Guide is an offshoot of the Chicago style used for the writing of theses, dissertations and other scholarly writing. Most periodicals readily accept either style; however, most popular articles tend to use Turabian as their guide.

## **Conclusion**

For those who work as instructors, you are already aware that the best way to learn a subject is to teach it to others. In much the same way, the best way to learn your topic is to write about it persuasively so others begin to know what you know. Submitting an article to a magazine can be a daunting task, one that exposes the budding author to critical review and the possibility of rejection. This article should have already served to allay some of these fears by providing a glimpse of the tools and techniques successful writers use to move their ideas from thought to publication. If you have published before, you know the intrinsic reward of seeing your name on a byline, and knowing that others will be impacted by your considered words. For those of you who have not yet enjoyed this experience, you'll soon see it is an effort worth the expense. Let the writing begin...

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Author:	Bob Harrison, bobharrison@cox.net
Working Title:	How To Enjoy Your NGT Without Really Trying
Length:	1,313 words
Photos:	None
Attachments:	None

# How to learn to write

- 1. Read the writing of others – Read a lot**
  - Share the books of others
  - Focus on non-fiction
  - You will not be a proficient writer if you are not a reader
- 2. Revising the work of others**
  - This includes the rewriting of all or part.
  - Look at it as if it were your own draft; what is it trying to say?
  - Look at paragraphing; splits between paragraphs are like turns in the road (not a fall off a cliff). Where are they, and how do they connect?
- 3. Write a lot**
  - Write every day, especially if you are writing for purpose
  - Primary problem of students is they don't write enough, producing a lack of applied skill in the craft
- 4. Revise your own writing**
  - Edit two ways – on screen and with a hard copy
  - Check spelling from the bottom up
  - Start in the middle
  - Read your writing naively; what might it mean to the reader?

When you write, you are a team with your reader. What you don't do, they will have to do. They, of course, always have the choice to merely put your half of the conversation down and disengage.

Write in your own voice; think of being conversational, not stiff and formal

## Personal reflection

Considering the ways in which one becomes a better writer, how much time do I devote to reading, writing and revision in general?

How much time am I spending in relation to the Command College process?

What am I noticing about my comprehension of writing as a result?

# Pre-Writing Strategies

**Pre-writing** is a way of organizing your thoughts and beginning to put the information you have on paper. It is best to do a pre-writing activity before you actually begin writing your paper or essay.

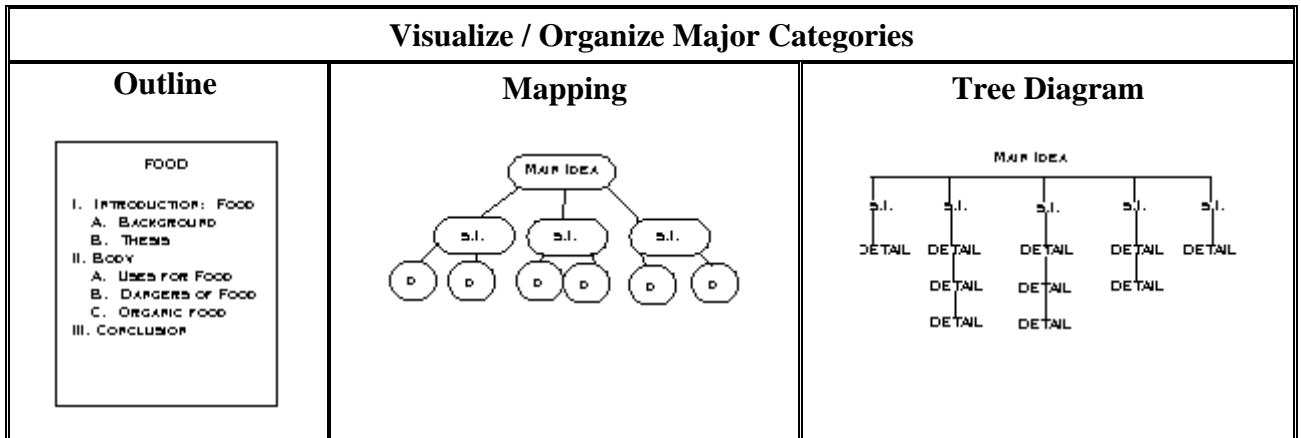
<b>You should use prewriting to . . .</b>	think more clearly
	See a start of your paper
	Keep track of your ideas
	practice expressing yourself in writing



**Quite often**, writers will start with a basic form of prewriting once the topic focus begins to emerge. The advantage of starting with a jot list, brainstorming or freewriting as a first step is that each of these strategies may be done in a non-judgmental manner. The act of listing various thoughts in no particular order can often generate new ideas, connect words or phrases and begin the process of sorting and grouping concepts in a logical and interesting order.

## BASIC PREWRITING STRATEGIES

Develop Questions		
What do I know? What do I need to find out? What is the point of the paper?		
<p><b>Jot List</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p>FOOD DELICIOUS HEALTHY HAMBURGERS DIET CALORIES FAT PIZZA NOODLES COOKING</p> </div>	<p><b>Brainstorm</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="text-align: center;">FOOD</p> <p>SALT DELICIOUS CALORIES HAMBURGERS DIET CHEESE COOKING</p> </div>	<p><b>Freewrite</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p>What I really mean is . . .</p> </div>



**Once beyond** this stage, the writer will begin the serious process of electing a course of storytelling by identifying segments of the future article through outlining, mapping or tree diagrams. This is an essential step in the process of creating the finished article, and a great way to “see” the flow of the words before pen goes to paper to write the actual text. Some writers prefer to use one of the mapping (bubble clusters or hierarchical bubbles) or diagramming (tree or spider), then move to outlining to the third or fourth level of detail.

(adapted from the University of Wisconsin Writing Center – [www.wisc.edu/writing](http://www.wisc.edu/writing))

## STEPS IN PREWRITING

### Brainstorming

Brainstorming and listing are quite similar as processes that generate a lot of information in a short time by building on the association of previous terms. The process is completed by:

1. Jot down all the possible terms that emerge from the general topic of your paper. This procedure works especially well if you work in a team. All team members can generate ideas, with one member acting as a scribe. Don't worry about editing or throwing out what might not be a good idea.
2. Group the items you have listed according to arrangements that make sense to you.
3. Give each group a label. Now you have a topic with possible points of development
4. Write a sentence about the label you have given to the group of ideas. Now you have a potential topic sentence or thesis statement.

### Clustering

Clustering is also called mind mapping or idea mapping. It allows you to explore the relationship between ideas. A bubble cluster circles ideas, while a spider or tree diagram underlines central ideas. The process is:

1. Put the subject in the center of the page. Circle or underline it.
2. As you think of other ideas, link the new ideas to the central circle with lines.
3. As you think of ideas that relate to the new ideas, add to those in the same way.
4. The result will look like a web on the page. Locate clusters of interest and use the terms you attached to the key ideas as departure points for your paper.

### Freewriting

Freewriting is a process of generating a lot of ideas by writing non-stop. It allows you to focus on a specific topic, but forces you to write so quickly you are unable to edit any of your ideas.

1. Freewrite on your general topic for 5-10 minutes non-stop. Force yourself to continue writing even if nothing specific comes to mind. This freewriting will include many ideas; at this point, generating ideas is what is important, not grammar or spelling.
2. After you've finished freewriting, look back over what you have written and highlight the most prominent and interesting ideas; then you can begin again with a tighter focus.
3. Looping is a freewriting technique that allows you to increasingly focus your ideas to discover a topic or sub-topic. Loop one freewriting effort after another so you have a sequence of freewrites; write quickly and do not edit.

As you complete the organizing process, be mindful of the 5W's and 1H of questions you want to ask of your topic, and for which your future readers will be seeking answers. The process of answering the Who, What, Where, When, Why and How may be a part of your outlining or a parallel process of creating topic areas for continued work. You will want to ask:

#### Journalist's (and cop's) Questions

**Who?** are the participants, the primary topics, the secondary topics?

**What?** is the significance of the topic, the basic problem, the issues?

**Where?** does it take place, is the source, the meeting of cause and effect?

**When?** is the issue most apparent, historical forces, etc.?

**Why?** is it a problem or issue, why did it develop as it did?

**How?** can it be addressed or resolved?

(adapted from the Kansas University Writing Center, [www.writing.ku.edu](http://www.writing.ku.edu))

# Freewriting/ Prewriting Exercise Page

Use this page for your “brain dump” to write freely without self-censure.

My topic is: \_\_\_\_\_

- Write non-stop for fifteen minutes.
- Write anywhere on the page, and at any angle.
- Clump words if you wish, but don't stop to think or hesitate
- Don't worry about spelling, grammar or punctuation
- Try not to lift your pen from the paper
- Concentrate on getting your ideas down originally



# Hook, Opening and Thesis Worksheet

What is the purpose of my article?

(I am going to prove...

Describe...

Tell a story about...

Explain why or how...)

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What should the reader know and be able to do when they finish reading it?

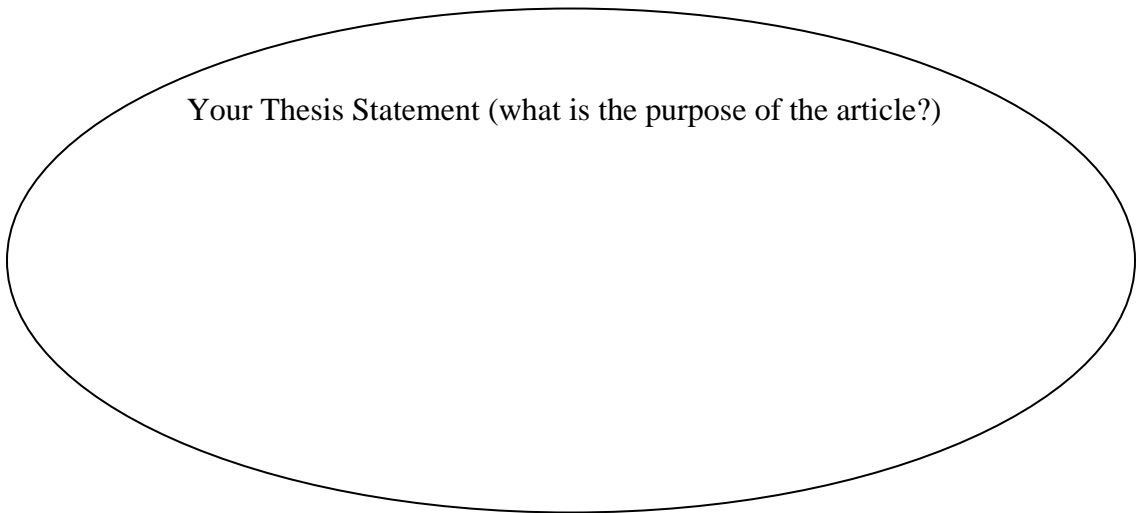
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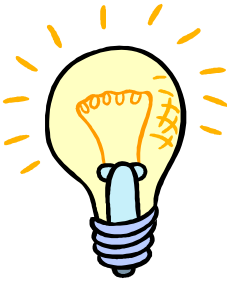
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Your Thesis Statement (what is the purpose of the article?)





## Your Title

OK, you now have a general idea of your article's topic, and a prewrite to help you structure the body of your text. The next step in the process is to think about a working title (you can always change it as the writing progresses; a working title helps fuel the creative juices, but don't fret too much- when you submit your work, it is about 50-50 whether the editor will keep your title or insert one of their own).

Titles should convey a little of the spirit and tone of the article to follow, and should not distract the reader from the opening paragraph or lead that follows. They should be catchy, simple and on point, and should "grab" the reader who may be casually scanning a magazine cover or table of contents. Titles generally are grouped in one of ten ways:

Descriptive: the title merely describes what will follow. An article about the future of patrol cars might be titled "The Future of Patrol Cars" which tells the reader what to expect, but doesn't excite them all that much. Using the patrol car theme, the alternatives are:

**Rhyming** "Cars for the Stars to patrol our Bars"

**Alliterative** "The perfect patrol platform – the future of mobile patrol"

**Challenging the Reader** "Do you know where your next patrol vehicle will come from?"

**The Statement of Fact** "Mobile patrol -- Where we're going from here"

**Shock the Audience** "Your next patrol vehicle may not have wheels!"

**The Dramatic** "Trapped in the past -- no patrolling in my future?"

**Statistics and Figures** "Experts agree -- 38 percent of cops would rather drive Fords"

**The Emotional Appeal** "How do they expect us to do our job without the right car?"

**Witty, Clever or Tongue-in-cheek** "Black and White Fever -- is there a cure in sight?"

(adapted from *A Writer's Guide to Getting Published in Magazines*, JJ DeSpain, Aletheia Pub, 2000)

# Working Title Workpage

Your general topic (as derived from your prewriting): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Develop at least three working titles from the ten styles presented on the preceding page:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss with your group; brainstorm other possibilities:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Don't get too hung up on the title; it is an important step in presenting your article to others, but not integral to writing the body of the article itself. Many authors realize after a few submissions that editors often change the title at publication. This isn't because they are smarter or more creative than you; many times, they change it to fit the flow of the issue, to link the content to other articles in this genre or for personal purposes and reasons. For our work, though, you should elect one working title, then move on to the lead paragraph of your narrative.

What's your elevator pitch? 30 words max

# The Lead and Introduction

Although every word in your article should have importance, meaning and an impact on readers, no words are more important than those that introduce you to the reader. You want to hook them, grab them and give them a reason to continue reading all the great things that follow. Without energizing their motivation to take moments of their life with you, they may just as likely toss the article aside, continue flipping pages and never know what you're trying to tell them. Think...

“It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.”  
*A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

“Dr. Weiss, at forty, knew that her life  
had been ruined by literature.”  
*The Debut*, by Anita Brookner

“The great fish moved silently through the night water,  
propelled by short sweeps of its crescent tail.”  
*Jaws* by Peter Benchley



You may not know what follows, nor might you be able to determine the plot, but these (and many other great leads) hook you and induce you to read further. In literature, whether books or articles, there are eight general types of leads:

**The Factual Summary** This is most often found in newspaper and news magazine articles; you give the reader the who, what, where, when, why and how of the body to follow. For your purposes, you have a story that transcends the 4W's & H, so you would think about using it to keep the reader going to find out what circumstances would produce the facts you give them at the outset.

**The Descriptive Lead** The lead of *Jaws* sends chills through the reader without bloodshed or graphic violence. The words cause the reader to visualize the shark, menacing and bold, cold and merciless, even without talking about his razor-sharp teeth or the way he rips the flesh from his victims. The descriptive lead helps the reader construct a mental picture of the setting, using any or all of the five senses in your writing (...”smell the bread; with memories of the fire burning as Mom walked in with her tray of home-baked treats, I could almost hear the crackling of the wood as she handed me a warm, soft chunk of the homemade prize...”).

**The Shocker** You may wish to amaze, astonish or shock your reader as a means of grabbing their interest. Diet ads and news headlines are perhaps the most prevalent uses of the shocker, e.g., “Lose ten

pounds this week!” or “New threat to your health in food you eat everyday. News at Eleven!” This lead compels the reader to go on at the risk of not knowing, not being able to act, or to alleviate their sense of dread or curiosity, which can only be done by reading your text.

**Staccato Openings** Dickens’ book is the classic staccato; “It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.” You may wish to play off of famous sharp openers in your work (The best has passed; the worst of times is upon us”).

**Parodies** A parody lead plays on the reader’s familiarity with any cultural item (song lyrics, books, poems, etc.) to create an imaginative lead. Recent troubles in the National Basketball Association with record profits and brawls in the stands have generated several articles that parody A Tale of Two Cities, e.g., “The Best and Worst of Times for the NBA” and “It was the best of times until the worst of fights between fans and players.”

**Direct Quotes** Especially in cases where you have a compelling quote from an expert or public figure, using their words to lead your article allows the reader to “get on the inside” of intimate details. “How vain it is to sit down to write when you have not stood up to live” said Thoreau (think about how that sentence made you feel; if your article is on the topic of armchair research without real-world application, this might make a great lead).

**The Question** This may be either a direct question to the reader (e.g., “Tired of reading useless papers?”) or a question posed to the topic to follow (such as “Where will the insanity of terrorism training take us?”) as a means of piquing their interest and compelling them to read on.

**The Contrast Lead** This contrasts extremes, posing opposite thoughts or concepts in the same sentence (“Despite the popular image of youth perpetrated by movies and television shows such as “The OC,” adolescent obesity is emerging as our number one health problem in America”).

Although the lead is a relatively small part of the overall article, it may be the most important sentence you will write. Your words fall short if not read; the lead hooks the reader and allows your thoughts to enter their consciousness. Give it your best effort, and the rest of the article may just flow from there.

## Lead and Introduction work page

Using page 15 of the Student Guidebook, choose at least two types of leads to use as format guides for your work.

**Write out your lead sentences** (three sentences max) in each of the two forms:

1. Type \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Type \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Group input process**

- Read your chosen lead sentences
- Each of your team members, in succession, states what the lead means to them in their own words what they might expect to know or be able to do at the end
- No crosstalk
- Cycle continued until all have read their lead and received input from all others

### **Team input from group discussion**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Keep at it; think about your first turn in the road – the transition into the body of your article...**

# The Body of the Article

Generally, feature articles range from 1,500 to 2,000 words in length. The opening and closing of the article should consume about 5-10 percent of that total, leaving 80-90 percent for the body of your text. The “classic” article will use subheadings to divide the article into sections. This helps focus the reader’s attention and allows you to change directions easily amongst the major areas of your research. The average number of subheadings is four for an article of the length we are constructing. Using that formula, your general word count would be:

Opening:	200 words
Subheading One:	400 words
Subheading Two:	400 words
Subheading Three:	400 words
Subheading Four:	400 words
Closing:	200 words
Total:	2,000 words

Certainly, this is a general guide only, and you can vary the lengths of particular sections to best fit the theme and pace of your article. However you construct your article, though, ensure you include a variety of information sources within each subheading (like an expert quote, information attributed to an expert or published source, an anecdote or a combination of these sources).<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of Command College, your article should be between 2,500-3,000 words, formatted in either Turabian, APA or MLA styles.

## Constructing the body text

Remember, the quality of your writing will be the result of appropriate attention having been given to the prewrite process and the momentum you have created with the completion of your lead and opening paragraph.

- Think about your subject; consider reviewing your futures research, pulling out themes, key words and topics to include in your article draft.
- Freewrite or cluster those themes and topics into and expanded prewrite; outline your results if you want to enhance the linkage amongst the parts.
- Your topic and research may generate ideas about a working title- the nature of the title may encourage you to write the article in a more scholarly tone, one that irritates or challenges the reader, or even one that is more humorous in nature.
- Think about “chunking out” the subheadings and the pace of your article

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from JJ DeSpain, “A Writer’s Guide to Getting Published,” Aletheia Publications, 2000

- Your pre-write probably also gave you at least a head start on chunking out the chapters (sub-headings) of your text. Please refer back to the article included with this guide. Notice the four sub-heads, and how they help transition the reader's move from one section to the next. You may merely start a new paragraph when transitioning to the next thought; however, a good sub-head title will help the reader change gears with you.

For your work as a Command College participant, the body may emerge from the work you have already completed. It is not as simple as synopsisizing the four sections of your futures research, but the findings may be a great platform from which to start. Absent other considerations, you may consider:

- A themed opening that includes your question regarding the future
- An opening sub-head that sets the stage, discusses the background and history of the issue, and why it is worth writing about
- A transition to a section that discusses constraints and opportunities, what focus groups may think and related concepts
- A section that might look at what would happen if action isn't taken (perhaps looping back to the literature review and adding quotes or objective evidence to support your view)
- A final section discussing how it would be done (strategic and transition planning)
- A conclusion of your choice; think about re-emphasizing the importance of the issue, the dangers of not planning ahead, or the dire circumstances we would face absent some affirmative action by the critical mass.

Some authors write out the subheadings (often from the grouping that emerged during the outlining phase), then seek to link them to following sections; others choose to write from front to back. In either case, the words will need to relate to one another as you move from one paragraph to the next, from one section to the next. That is done through the use of transitions.



# Your Conclusion

Just as the title, opening paragraph and body draw them in and keep them reading, the conclusion is where you use one of seven general styles of endings to leave them either satisfied & feeling rewarded or wanting to know more. An effective ending might offer a surprise; it might be a source for reflection; it might prod the reader to take action. No matter what style in which you elect to end your article, remember that people often remember the first and last things they are told (or read). Use your words precisely and strive to end strong. The seven general types of endings are:

**Full circle endings that tie into the lead** The ending answers the questions you posed at the outset and ties up the story in a satisfactory manner

**Summary endings** The summary ending is consistent with the philosophy of “tell them what you’re going to tell them, tell them, then tell them what you told them.” The summary restates the most relevant points of the article

**Quotes and Quotations** Sometimes, you have a great quote from your research (or from an expert source) that sums up your point neatly and with the emphasis you want to give the reader. Endings that use impactful quotes are often some of the most memorable

**Finish your story** You don’t want to leave the reader hanging. This is not a full circle ending; it offers new hope or insight at the end

**Direct endings** Reinforce the main point of your article; consider the ending as a short editorial on the body and its meaning

**Give advice to the reader** This allows you to give advice, insight or direction to the reader as they conclude your article

**The shocker** This is more common in fiction; ends the story in a manner not anticipated by the reader; disquiets them, possibly alerts them to the road ahead (if you have a shocker, you might consider it for your opening; if so, don’t shock them again at the end unless you feel strongly it is the best way to convey your message)



# FORMAT GUIDE FOR A QUALITY ARTICLE

**Purpose:** The purpose of your Command College Journal Article is to explore an important topic that will affect the future of law enforcement operations or service. This topic should be of interest you, relevant to law enforcement and offer solutions, ideas or recommendations of how this topic can be addressed to capitalize on emerging trends or mitigate potential adverse circumstances. This section is intended to provide a ready reference to issues you must consider as you embark on the writing process.

- I. **Your Research** – research should be thorough, substantial and diverse. Once you have outlined a topic, begin to think of the most probable places you can find information to provide the foundation and supportive arguments for it. Think of this paper on the same level as one you would present in a Master’s level course, and which is worthy for publication in *Police Chief*, the *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, *Law and Order* or other periodicals. The primary areas to consider for work are:
  - A. UC/CSU libraries - California has some of the finest academic institutions in the country; they will have both historical and current data on any subject on file; you may use their resources personally or via the Internet.
  - B. Newspapers – you can access most of them via the Internet.
  - C. FBI reports and publications – access either through Internet, e-mail or telephone.
  - D. Magazine and Special Publications – relevant to your topic or otherwise
  - E. California or U.S. Department of Justice Libraries – numerous reports issued on a variety of topics
  - F. CA P.O.S.T. – contact your friendly P.O.S.T. consultant or log onto their web site to find a report; data that may currently be under the review process or find a subject-matter-expert you can contact for further information. P.O.S.T. representatives are connected to numerous agencies, colleges, subject-matter experts and instructors that can offer a variety of information for a topic. The POST Library is also a great tool for your work.
  - G. In-person interviews – very effective, quick and insightful. Don’t be afraid to contact a UC Professor, an attorney that has expert knowledge of your topic area, a chief, sheriff or FBI official, private vendors or a business leader. These contacts may

also refer you to someone that would be important for your research that you may not have thought about.

- H. The Internet – The editor should not be able to find surprises or other relevant knowledge from a keyword search on Google; you should be the expert, and have collected the information and understanding necessary to write a worthy article.
  
- II. **Cite Research** – it is important to always reference information. You can draw conclusions from research or your findings, but will want to develop a foundation of expertise from which to state it. Note your references in all instances (whenever you might use “According to experts...” or “many say...” you will need to cite your source. In editing, you may find notations such as *cite ref* or similar as an indication of the need to provide a foundation for statements, conclusions or comments. Note- Wikipedia is not a vetted source for citations.
  
- III. **Use your Focus Group (NGT)** – you do not have to specifically state you held an NGT, etc.; however, you should use the perspectives, opinions and conclusions of the group and its members. When selecting your NGT panel, ensure you seek out folks on both sides of an issue so the basis of your research is balanced. NGT panelists also are a rich source of comments, follow-up interviews and resources for finishing your work.
  
- IV. **Repeating Same Content** – be careful to not repeat the same content from one page to another (e.g., page two to page five) if there is no discernible purpose. Make your points strongly, but only once except in closing when you tie it all together.
  
- V. **Grammar** – it may be necessary to brush up on the correct usage of commas, semicolons, colons and paragraph delineation. Your specific grammar will depend on the style within which you are writing (APA, Chicago, Turabian, MLA); however, many grammar errors are common to many Command College drafts. Use one of the guides; it is good for you and good practice when you edit the work of others as a manager.
  
- VI. **Paragraph Flow** – as you are writing and reviewing your first (or subsequent) draft, double check that your paragraphs flow appropriately – that a thought pattern is carefully connected from one paragraph to the next. It is important to watch out for an end sentence of a paragraph that “floats” by itself and isn’t attached to the rest of the thought/theme of the same paragraph or a suitable connector to the one forthcoming.
  
- VII. **Sentence Structure** – You are writing persuasively, so your sentences at times are shorter and more direct. One of the most common mistakes is long, wordy sentences that could be more succinct and still make the same point.

(provide example) Also be sure sentences connect to a central thought per paragraph.

- VIII. **Use a thesaurus and dictionary** – don't rely on the computer ("their" and "there" will both spell-check as correct, etc.). Both of these handy-dandy books are quite useful, even for the most skilled writer.
- IX. **Paper Style: Opening & Closing** – The opening should definitely hook the reader. Think of an interesting story or scenario that ties into your topic that would want the reader to stay interested and intrigued. If you are creative and provocative, more than likely you will be more persuasive, but most of all, have great fun and learn more than you thought possible. Your closing should also hook them to keep thinking about what they just read. Be memorable.
- X. **Commit to Getting Published** – Write this paper with the idea that you will get it published in a relevant magazine – Police Chief, Western City etc. This will aid you with all the above components, and motivate you to go the extra mile for a final outstanding article. Take a look at articles in your target publication to get a better sense of the flow of their articles.
- XI. **Don't Procrastinate** – You will be given the same level of attention as all others, even if you submit late. Generally, expect 3-4 edits, which can involve greater research and writing, and perhaps a major re-write. It behooves you to consider early your topic, write an outline and start the research immediately.
- XII. **The Structure of an Article** – Your article will generally follow a format of; opening sentence (or paragraph) followed by your thesis paragraph. Body paragraphs will follow to expand, provide pros and cons, add depth, and to introduce and resolve any sub-issues. You will conclude with a conclusion section, usually 2-3 paragraphs at maximum. The challenges many writers face is to establish a clear thesis (why are you writing the article) and then staying focused on the thesis while avoiding the temptation to add filler, interesting but irrelevant information or to "off-road" into unrelated territory. We're not looking for raw length of text, nor is it a "popular" article like an editorial. The article is the culmination of your research, and should reflect the effort put forth in Command College.

## **Hints for Writers**

### **Pre-writing**

Please take the time to outline, prewrite or think through what you might want to say. You have your topic statement from Command College that prompted your research. This is different, and now displays your knowledge and understanding of the subject. Use the back of a business card; write what your article is about in 20 words or less on the

back- when you can clearly write what your article's topic and position is in those few words, you are ready to begin.

Your prewriting can take any form you may choose. It often starts with your topic in the center of a page, with 3-4 areas around the central theme for your sub-themes. Use this template as a starting point and you will save hours of writing time (and perhaps starting over) when you do write.

### **The thesis paragraph**

Once you have your stunning opening, and have grabbed the reader, you will want to do a thesis paragraph. The opening can be the first part of that paragraph, or stand apart from it. Classically, a thesis paragraph has three parts:

- A sentence or two to relay background information that is clearly related to the topic, and which “sets the stage” for the thesis.
- Sentences (no more than 3-4 max) to explain your motive for writing the article and showing how it might relate to the discourse on the theme
- The thesis statement, which makes your novel claim or statement to the subject. This is the core of “why” you are writing, and is the central point to all that follows.

### **Body paragraphs**

Body paragraphs develop your argument (thesis) further, providing the data, evidence, statements, conclusions of others and anything else relevant to the support of your thesis. They should generally be formatted as follows:

- They start with a topic sentence. Each paragraph should be concerned with one topic (thought), and not meander from one thought to another (don't cross the streams). The topic sentence develops your thesis, introducing new information that may either confirm, add depth or complicate your argument (like opposing opinions, etc.)
- Next come the analysis sentences. These clarify, add specifics, quote experts, and provide data and statistics. They should explain why the topic sentence supports your argument and flow in a logical order
- The last sentence in a paragraph concludes the thought and provides a transition point to the next thought (the next paragraph). It might give the reader a greater understanding of the significance of that thought. In any case, it is your segue to the next paragraph, and seeks to avoid any “sudden stops” to disrupt the flow of the article.

### **Concluding paragraphs**

Your conclusion should:

- Not introduce anything new to the content of the article
- Focus on motivating the reader to consider your thesis
- Encourage the reader to continue the discussion on your topic
- Be in one of the styles noted in the student guidebook
- Not be more than 2-3 paragraphs maximum

### **General Grammar tips**

- Don't start sentences or paragraphs with the word "however"
- Avoid using "that" in almost all instances – it is a demonstrative adjective specifying a noun (thought you'd like to know) such as "that chair" or similar. Remove it where you are tempted to use it unless the deletion changes the meaning of the phrase
- Do not use the phrase "in order..." and start the sentence with the inevitable next word of "To..."
- Vary your use of the term "law enforcement." Consider using "policing," "public safety," "officers and deputies" or similar language. It helps the reader avoid fatigue from seeing the same term countless times. Also, "law enforcement" is not capitalized (nor is policing)
- Use commas intelligently; avoid sprinkling them in. The comma is to create a conversation; use it for small pauses and slight changes in sentence parts. Don't use it before the last item in a series in most instances (before that last "and")
- Use semi-colons to join independent clauses without using a conjunction (*and, if, or, and but*). You also use a semi-colon before *however, though, etc.*, if the part before the semi colon could have stood without support as a complete sentence.
- Do not use the "%" symbol. Spell out "percent" in all instances
- Spell out all numbers under eleven
- Use active tense- when you spell check, and it tells you a phrase is passive tense, please take notice. Active tense is clearer, uses less words and assigns ownership to actions (you want all your police reports to be active tense, also)
- An average sentence is about seven words; the average paragraph is about 5-7 sentences. Try to avoid running on in either instance

### **Format**

Many who embark on this phase of the course do not necessarily share in the wealth of expertise regarding the use of automated programs to create text (e.g., it's just a big, fast typewrite with a nice screen). Since adults dislike disclosing things they don't know, I sometimes receive drafts with very interesting formatting. To help avoid some of the more common errors, please do your best to follow these guidelines:

- Please write your text in Times New Roman font (normal text). You'll see the font type and style on the toolbar near the top of the screen
- Please use 12 point font for normal text with normal spacing and indentations- I count the words written as a general guide, and not the number of pages
- Please "align left" the text (on MS Word, the far left icon for the 4 options)
- Double-spaced text is best for editing and clarity. If you are uncertain how to double-space, you may either send the first draft single spaced and I'll do it for you, or use the commands in the "format" toolbar command to format double spacing
- For footnotes and endnotes (in Turabian or Chicago styles), you may do that automatically under the "Insert" toolbar category (scroll down to "reference" and you will see a drop down box for "footnote." You will click on that and it will create one for you, and then automatically number and renumber the footnotes as

you move along). If you are unsure how to do this, just place succeeding numbers in parentheses in the text and construct the endnotes manually. If you have any questions, ask

- Follow APA, Turabian or Chicago guidelines for headings and subheadings. Identify your style and stick with it; please work not to mix styles

### **Length of article**

The article will be about 2,500 words in length in its final form. It will be no shorter than 2,000 words, and no longer than 3,000 words. Please use your “tools” function to check words (excluding titles and references). It is easier to cut text than to add it, though, so err on the side of putting things in, and then trimming them out, rather than focusing solely on the mark.

### **Sparkcharts**

If you want to pick up a great quickguide for writing, grammar and composition, go to Barnes and Noble (in person or on-line) and look for “Sparkcharts.” They are ready reference guides for almost anything, and the ones for English Grammar, English Composition and Essays and Term Papers are excellent resources. If you go in person, they are usually in a rack near the books on writing and reference sections. You can quickly see what you might want to do re: creating a paragraph, using punctuation, etc., and also use them for your real work back at the job. They are about five dollars each, and well worth the expense.

### **Conclusion**

You are in a conversation with your reader, and want to carry your end of the bargain to the best of your ability. Please use friends, spouses or peers to read your drafts and listen to their thoughts. Make what you write memorable, and be clear about what you mean and what you want the reader to consider. The skills you will exercise in this process can be readily transferred to any form of persuasive writing you might do at work (staff reports, budget requests, grant applications, editorials, speeches, even internal memos where you want to engage the reader and not just provide information).

# Tips for Good Organization

1. **Spend time on a good lead** – This is how you hook your reader; you get about three seconds to do it
2. **Have a center** – Like the hub of a wheel, this is your focus. Your support ideas revolve around it like the spokes of a wheel
3. **Gather information in chunks** – Put things together that go together. Get rid of filler – anything you don't need, or which does not relate to the thesis and center of your topic.
4. **Try to see patterns and designs** – Find a good match between the kind of writing you are doing and the way you structure your information.
5. **Make connections clear** – Every time you write a sentence-every single time-you need to ask yourself, “What does this have to do with the main point I am making or the story I am telling?” It is OK to surprise your reader with new or unexpected information-but make each connection clear to them.
6. **End with flair** – Weak ending disappoint the reader. Good endings raise questions, show new insight, leave the reader with a startling imagination or surprise or suggest a new story to come. End strong to reinforce your thesis and purpose.

My Command College Class graduates the week of: \_\_\_\_\_

My journal article must be in the editing process by: \_\_\_\_\_

I must have my article completed & approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

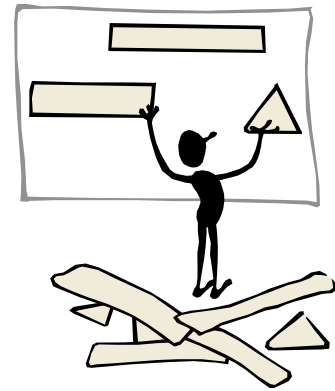
“One rule of the road not stated elsewhere in this book: ‘The editor is always right.’ The corollary is that no writer will take all of his or her editor’s advice; for all have sinned and fallen short of editorial perfection.”

Stephen King, “On Writing”



# Transitions

Transitional words and phrases can create powerful links between ideas in your article and can help the reader understand the logic of your prose. It is sometimes difficult to ensure the reader has a clear meaning of specific words. Since many words have different meanings, nuances and connotations, the best way to ensure clarity in your writing is to effectively transition from one paragraph to the next, and from a subheading to the one that follows.



Repetition of key words and phrases links sentences and paragraphs. Further, the structure of sentences can enhance the relationship between and amongst sentences in your article (even the pattern of your writing and specific usage of grammar will help the reader gain insight into your meaning). They bridge the parts of your article, and help the reader interpret what you want them to know.

As you build your article, remain mindful of writing sentences that take the reader from familiar or old knowledge to new things, then link sentences in a coherent fashion into your paragraph. Your paragraphs then link with strong transitional words and phrases.

As you construct your paragraphs, remember that each paragraph should concern itself with a single overarching thought or focus. Don't let your paragraph move from one thought to another (good sign it's time to start a new one) or fuzz out midway through the thought. Think of the paragraph as a series of sentences building on that one topic, and ensure you have the appropriate singularity of thought, good coherence from one sentence to the next, a primary topic sentence (usually near the start of the paragraph, but not always), and that you flesh out the thought fully before moving on. If you have two or three short paragraphs, see if they are actually part of one larger thought heading and join them together

While constructing your sentences, then linking together your paragraphs, common words used as transitions are:

Type of transition	Examples
<b>Addition</b>	furthermore      moreover      too
	also      in the second place      again
	in addition      even more      next
	further      last, lastly      finally
	besides      and, or, nor
	first      second, secondly, etc.

<b>Time</b>	while after when meanwhile during next then so far	immediately later, earlier soon sometimes afterwards following at length this time	never always whenever in the meantime now, until now once simultaneously subsequently
<b>Place</b>	here there nearby	beyond wherever opposite to	adjacent to neighboring on above, below
<b>Exemplification or Illustration</b>	to illustrate to demonstrate specifically for instance		as an illustration e.g., (for example) for example
<b>Comparison</b>	in the same way by the same token similarly		in like manner likewise in similar fashion
<b>Contrast</b>	yet and yet nevertheless nonetheless after all	on the contrary in contrast notwithstanding on the other hand at the same time	but however though otherwise
<b>Clarification</b>	that is to say in other words to explain i.e., (that is)	to clarify to rephrase it to put it another way	
<b>Cause</b>	because since	on account of for that reason	
<b>Effect</b>	therefore consequently accordingly	thus hence as a result	
<b>Purpose</b>	in order that so that	to that end, to this end for this purpose	
<b>Qualification</b>	almost nearly probably	perhaps maybe although	never always frequently

<b>Intensification</b>	indeed to repeat by all means of course	undoubtedly in fact surely in fact	doubtedly certainly without doubt yes, no
<b>Concession</b>	to be sure	granted	of course, it is true
<b>Summary</b>	to summarize in sum	in short in summary	in brief to sum up
<b>Conclusion</b>	in conclusion	to conclude	finally
<b>Demonstratives acting as transitions</b>	this those	these that	
<b>Pronouns serving as links to clearly refer to a specific word or phrase</b>	his its theirs	her they our	it their your

(reprinted with permission from University of Wisconsin Writing Center)

# Clear, Concise and Direct Sentences

OK, it's time for your English lesson. As compelling as your topic is, you want the reader to gain a clear understanding of it without being distracted by poor grammar, confusing words or sentences that may obfuscate understanding through inflated and conflated prose (translated: sentences that may cloud their understanding).

One of the better sites to enhance your writing skills is from the University of Wisconsin ([www.wisc.edu/writing](http://www.wisc.edu/writing)). Their site includes a full writer's handbook, several sections of which are reprinted in this guide with their permission. The style guide is replete with tips and examples to help you:

- Move from passive to active voice
- Trim your prose
- Improve the clarity of your words, and
- Construct sentences that are direct yet interesting to read.

Please refer to this site (and others you may find, such as Kansas University's Writing Center at [www.writing.ku.org](http://www.writing.ku.org)) and the Online Writing Lab at Purdue University (<http://owl.englishpurdue.edu>) for a broad spectrum of learning aids to assist in any phase of your article development. The tips listed in this section are by no means comprehensive; however, they will help you avoid the more glaring errors in your draft text and allow you to start burnishing the sentences into your finished product.

## Use the Active Voice

At the heart of every good sentence is a strong, precise verb; the converse is true as well – at the core of most confusing, awkward, wordy sentences lies a weak verb. Try to use the active voice whenever possible.

- Active Voice: Subject of the sentence does the action
- Passive Voice: Subject receives the action

Active Voice	Passive Voice
The candidate <i>believes</i> that Congress <i>must</i> place a ceiling on the budget	<i>It is believed</i> by the candidate that a ceiling <i>must be placed</i> on the budget by Congress
Researchers earlier <i>showed</i> that high stress <i>can</i> cause heart attacks	<i>It was</i> earlier <i>demonstrated</i> that heart attacks <i>can be caused</i> by high stress
The dog <i>bit</i> the man	The man <i>was bitten</i> by the dog

### Converting sentences to the active voice

- Look for “by” phrases (e.g., “by the dog” in the last example above). If you find one, the sentence may be in the passive voice. Rewrite the sentence so the subject buried in the “by” clause is closer to the beginning of the sentence.
- If the subject of the sentence is somewhat anonymous, see if you can use a general term such as “researchers” or “the study” or “experts in this field.”

### When to Use the Passive Voice

There are sometimes good reasons to use the passive voice

Use the passive voice...	Example
<b>To emphasize the action rather than the actor</b>	After a long debate, the proposal was endorsed by the long-range planning committee.
<b>To keep the subject and focus consistent throughout a passage</b>	The data processing department recently presented what proved to be a controversial proposal to expand its staff. After a long debate, the proposal was endorsed by...
<b>To be tactful in not naming the actor</b>	The procedures were somehow misinterpreted.
<b>To describe a condition in which the actor is unknown or unimportant</b>	Every year, thousands of people are diagnosed as having cancer.
<b>To create an authoritative tone</b>	Visitors are not allowed after 9:00 p.m.

### Put Action Into the Verb

Put all the action of a sentence into the verb. Don't bury the action in a noun or blur it across the entire sentence.

Good: The committee has to approach it differently.

Bad: The establishment of a different approach on the part of the committee has become a necessity.

### Beware of nominalizations

Watch out especially for nominalizations (verbs that have been made into nouns by the addition of -tion).

<b>Nominalization</b>	<b>How to fix it</b>
An <i>evaluation</i> of the procedures <i>needs to be done</i> .	We <i>need to evaluate</i> the procedures.
The procedures <i>need to be evaluated</i> .	We <i>need to evaluate</i> the procedures.
The stability and quality of our financial performance <i>will be developed</i> through the profitable <i>execution</i> of our existing business, as well as the <i>acquisition</i> or development of the new business.	We <i>will improve</i> our financial performance by not only <i>executing</i> our existing business more profitably but by acquiring or developing new businesses.

### Reduce Wordy Phrases

Make sentences concise by eliminating wordy phrases

<b>Wordy sentence</b>	<b>Concise sentence</b>
In a situation in which a class is overenrolled, you may request that the instructor force-add you.	When a class is overenrolled, you may ask the instructor to force-add you.
I will now make a few observations concerning the matter of contingency funds	I will now make a few observations about contingency funds
There is a need for more careful inspection of all welds.	You must inspect all welds more carefully. (or) Inspect all welds more carefully.

Here are some words you can use to trim the fat off of wordy phrases

Prior to In anticipation of Subsequent to Following on At the same time as Simultaneously with	Before, after, as
For the reason that Due to the fact that The reason for Owing to the fact that In light of the fact that Considering the fact that On the grounds that	Because, since, why

Despite the fact that Regardless of the fact that Notwithstanding the fact that	Although, even, though
In the event that If it should transpire/happen that Under circumstances in which	If
On the occasion of In a situation in which Under circumstances in which	When
As regards In reference to With regard to Concerning the matter of Where...is concerned	About
It is crucial that It is necessary that There is a need/necessity for It is important that It is incumbent upon Cannot be avoided	Must, should
Is able to Has the opportunity to Is in a position to Has the capacity for Has the ability to	Can
It is possible that There is a chance that It could happen that The possibility exists for	May, might, can, could

### Reduce Wordy Verbs

Try to keep the action of a sentence clear by using concise, direct verbs.

- Instead of “is aware of” or “has knowledge of,” use **knows**.
- Instead of “is taking,” use **takes**.
- Instead of “are indications of,” use **indicates**.
- Instead of “are suggestive of,” use **suggest**.

### **Reduce Unnecessary Prepositional Phrases**

Sometimes prepositional phrases aren't really necessary, especially when you use them (instead of apostrophe + s) to denote possession of an object.

Also, try to avoid using too many prepositional phrases in a single sentence, since they can obscure the main subject and action of a sentence.

<b>Unnecessary prepositional phrases</b>	<b>How to fix them</b>
The opinion of the manager	The manager's opinion
The obvious effect of such a range of reference is to assure the audience of the author's range of learning and intellect.	The wide-ranging references in this talk assure the audience that the author is intelligent and well-read.
It is a matter of the gravest possible importance to the health of anyone with a history of a problem with disease of the heart that he or she should avoid the sort of foods with a high percentage of saturated fats.	Anyone with a history of heart disease should avoid saturated fat.

### **Reduce Expletive Constructions**

Expletive constructions are phrases such as:

- It is
- There is
- There are

Try to avoid using them, since these constructions merely obscure the main subject and action of a sentence.

Examples...

<b>Expletive constructions</b>	<b>How to fix them</b>
It was her last argument that finally persuaded me.	Her last argument finally persuaded me.
There are likely to be many researchers raising questions about this methodological approach	Many researchers are likely to raise questions about this methodological approach.
It is inevitable that oil prices will rise.	Oil prices will inevitably rise.



### **Avoid Using Vague Nouns**

Try to avoid using the following all-purpose nouns, which sometimes lead to wordiness, especially when used in prepositional phrases:

- Factor
- Aspect
- Area
- Situation
- Consideration
- Degree
- Case

Examples...

<b>Vague nouns</b>	<b>How to fix them</b>
Consumer demand is rising in the area of service.	Consumers are demanding more service.
Strong reading skills are an important factor in students' success in college.	Students' success in college depends on their reading skills.
Photography took on new aspects during the Civil War.	The Civil War saw the advent of graphic battlefield photography.

### **Avoid Unnecessarily Inflated Words**

While a large vocabulary is useful and often impressive, you should try to avoid using inflated diction if a simpler phrase works equally well.

Examples...

<b>Instead of...</b>	<b>Use...</b>
Cognizant of	Aware of, knows
Facilitate	Help
Impact on	Affect
Implement	Start, create, carry out, begin
Subsequent to	After
Utilize	Use

## **Avoid Noun Strings**

Unless readers are familiar with your terminology or jargon, avoid using phrases with many consecutive nouns (noun strings).

Examples...

<b>Noun strings</b>	<b>How to fix them</b>
MHS has a hospital employee relations improvement program	MHS has a program to improve relations among employees.
NASA continues to work on the International Space Station astronaut living-quarters module development project.	NASA is still developing the module that will provide living quarters for astronauts aboard the International Space Station.

# Writing clearly – what do the following mean?

## Example One

When it comes to learning the sport of golf, it is good to keep in mind that there are simply no shortcuts and that therefore some amount of practice with golf equipment of varying uses is essential to lower your score and handicap.

## Example Two

Public entity funding, considered as an aspect of the modern general economy, is subject to a myriad of influences. Fortunately, beyond their context, many of these elements are moderated in the totality of municipal or county budgets and never rise to the level of suggesting meaningful impact to the behavior of public agencies

## Example Three

The mechanism of adjusting assessed value at time of ownership change also impacts the manner in which market fluctuations are reflected in available tax revenue. Increases or decreases are not manifested until enough properties have changed owners for the collective assessed value of property to reflect the market change. This shifting in assessment is enhanced by the conveyance of properties with high levels of equity that have not experienced an adjustment for a prolonged period of time.

## Example Four

It may be in your objective interests to know that we are in the process of developing a conjoint analysis/evaluation comprising the process by which the police department will develop its budget during a period of stagnation or impending decline. Conjoint analysis is best understood through analogy to the critical techniques employed by marketing firms to develop products whose salient characteristics are in compliance with the primary market member's needs. Key to this process is the assembly of a voluntary committee whose expertise can be counted upon to facilitate development of a viable decision-making model. We would like you to consider some level of participation in an active sense.

# **Punctuation**

Punctuate the following letter so that it makes sense:

Dear John

I want a man who knows what love is all about you are  
generous kind thoughtful people who are not like you admit  
to being useless and inferior you have ruined me for other  
men I yearn for you I have no feelings whatsoever when we  
are apart I can be forever happy will you let me be yours

Gloria

For a full guide to the rules of grammar, go to:

## **OWL's**

Purdue University's On-Line Writing Lab:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/>

UC Berkeley Library style guide:

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Citations.html>

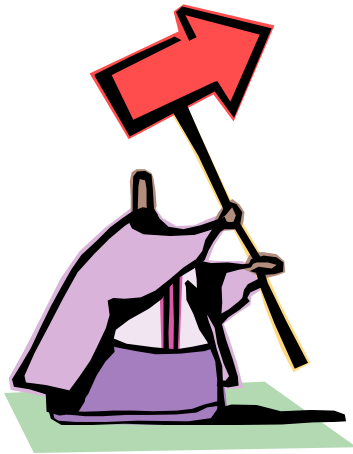
Kansas University's Writing Center

<http://www.writing.ku.edu/students/guides.shtml>

University of Wisconsin-Madison Writing Center

<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/index.html>

# Style Guide & Citing Reference Sources



OK, let's take a few moments to talk about style (not yours; I'll take for granted you have style...). Your article will be written according to the style guideline you choose, or which is chosen for you by the editor of the publication to which you will submit your draft. Each major style has its advantages and disadvantages; as you will see, there are specific preferences by certain industries. Remember, the words are what are important. Focus on crisp, concise and interesting prose, then worry about the nuances of style and citing reference sources.

Take a look at the brief description of each style. You may recognize one or more from previous work in school or other articles you have written. If you wish, scan a magazine you are considering to get a feel for the style of writing (content and grammar) as well as the style guide they are following. Don't get too hung up on liking one versus another. If you are having difficulty choosing, try one on for size, then change if you find it clunky or difficult when dealing with your subject matter. The choices you have are:

**Turabian** Kate Turabian developed the Turabian guide as a job aid for students writing theses and dissertations. She derived her guide from the larger (and much more precise) Chicago Manual of Style, which is used primarily for writers of books. The Turabian style is less academic and a bit more conversational, which lends itself well to popular articles and for writing to a broader audience. You can readily see Turabian style in use for any piece where you see footnotes or endnotes. The flow is not interrupted as much, and information is available for those who want to see the referred source and other relevant information.

If you are planning to submit to an academic publication, or a journal that is research-oriented, you may not want to use this style. On the other hand, if you are writing for one of the many popular professional magazines or other periodicals with a wide readership, this style may be for you.

**APA** The American Psychological Association (APA) style guide is used as the primary style and cite reference guide for scholarly papers, articles in university publications, research papers and other peer-reviewed publications. You can quickly discern the use

of APA if the cite reference is parenthetically in the body of the narrative, e.g., “According to Harrison (1993)...” or, “Studies show Command College students experience significant duress when considering writing a 3,000 word article (Harrison, 1993).”

If you are writing an article that will rely heavily on your objective data, results of the NGT, etc., or are submitting it to a periodical published by a university (such as those from the various criminal justice programs) or government institution, this may be your preferred style.

**MLA** The Modern Language Association style is a blend of Chicago/Turabian and APA. It emphasizes parenthetical annotation in the body of your narrative, but allows for and encourages footnoting when desired and appropriate. The MLA style is used primarily in academic settings, and is an acceptable alternate to APA for theses and dissertations.

**CBE** The CBE style guide is used in the scientific community for published research. It would be a rare Command College article that would be eligible for publication in a hard science journal; however, you should be aware of the style in case you see it as an alternative reference for style.

There are a number of excellent web sites (many of which have been previously cited in this guide) that will provide assistance with the specifics of grammar, punctuation, style and citing references (in text and in your bibliography/works cited page); therefore, we will not spend time here showing examples. Three texts can assist you with this endeavor;

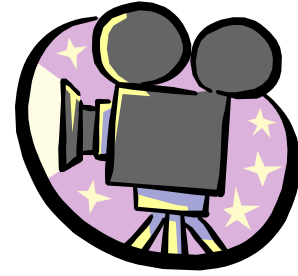
- *A Turabian Style Guide*; or,
- *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (current version; and,
- *Strunk & White’s Elements of Style*

Turabian is a good fall-back for you to become more familiar with style, punctuation and grammar, and would be appropriate for an article submitted to many of the more popular public safety periodicals. *The Elements of Style* is a short and readable style guide that will help polish your prose and create a narrative that is both interesting and concise.

All right, now. Back to business...

# Visual Support to Your Article

Your article's prospects of being published go up (sometimes dramatically) when you include appropriate photos, charts, graphs or other similar visuals for inclusion with the article text. Pictures truly are worth a thousand words, with the caveat that poor visuals are just as boring or problematic as a thousand words on an irrelevant topic.



Consider taking photos yourself (or soliciting the help of a friend, co-worker or loved one) to enhance the article's appeal. Your best format would be to capture the image digitally and submit it as is. If you have a photo taken the old fashioned way (with film), that can still be scanned, saved and transmitted. Graphs, charts and other tables should be included in the text of the submission unless you wish to save them in separate files and note your suggestions for placement (editors invariably place them where they best fit with the final format of the article in print).

Absent access to a camera, you may wish to scan the Internet (Google images has countless photo samples<sup>3</sup>) for visuals that would fit well with your article.

## Submission Guidelines

Every periodical has its own submission guidelines. Many place a box in each edition advising prospective authors of their guidelines (along with a submission schedule); others rely on you to know the style, length and other requirements when you submit. If you are considering a magazine that does not publish their submission guidelines, you should:

- Locate the editor's name, or general e-mail address to the editorial department
- Send an e-mail asking for the guidelines
- If you cannot locate the e-mail address, contact them telephonically if an Internet search fails to uncover the information

Some magazines and other periodicals require you to submit a "pitch" letter prior to sending the full article draft. If you wish to pursue a periodical that requires this, the letter should convey the topic, why it would be of interest to their readers, and any other information you think would be relevant to their consideration. Remember, just as you are trying to "sell" your intended audience once the article is published, you first need to

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<sup>3</sup> Many images on Google are copyrighted; get permission or use your own images

sell the person who will decide to put it there in the first place. Don't be reluctant to tell them how great the article is, and how much their readers will enjoy it and learn from it.



# Submitting your article

The listed periodicals are those found in the CA POST Library. They represent a broad cross-section of magazines and other publications possibly suited for article submissions. The prospective author should review a copy of any considered possibilities for submission; ensuring the article conforms to the topic, length and writing style required by the periodical. Many will be found on the web; others may be perused at POST or local libraries.

## **Periodicals to consider**

911 magazine	Employee relations law journal
American journal of police	Ethics roll call
Aslet journal	FBI law enforcement bulletin
Backup	Field training quarterly
Big ideas for smaller departments	Futures research quarterly
Calea update	Futurist
Ca journal of le	Gazette
Ca law enforcement	Governing
Ca management review	Government executive
Ca peace officer	Government technology
Ca police recorder	Growth strategies
Ca sheriff	Harvard business journal
Callbox	Homeland defense journal
Campus law enforcement journal	Homeland first response
Campus safety journal	Homeland protection professional
Campus safety magazine	Hospital school university campus safety
Chief of police	HR focus
Community college journal	HR magazine
Community policing exchange	IACP concepts and issues paper
Counterterrorism homeland security report	IACP training keys
Counterterrorism security	IADLEST newsletter
Cpoa training bulletin	Innovation exchange
Crime and delinquency	International journal of selection and assessment
Crime justice international	Johns Hopkins center for gun policy and research
Crime mapping news	Journal of ca law enforcement
Criminology	Journal of contemporary criminal justice
Defensive tactics newsletter	Journal of criminal justice
Dispatch monthly magazine	Journal of criminal justice education
Drug intelligence brief	Journal of criminal law and criminology
Educational researcher	Journal of educational measurement
Educational technology	Journal of interactive instruction development
Educational technology research and development	Journal of physical security
Emergency medical services	

Journal of police and criminal psychology  
 Journal of police science and administration  
 Journal of strength and conditioning research  
 Justice and public safety  
 Justice quarterly  
 Justice research and police  
 Juvenile justice  
 Law and order  
 Law enforcement legal defense manual  
 Law enforcement quarterly  
 Law enforcement technology  
 Law enforcement tomorrow  
 Law enforcement trainer  
 Law officer magazine  
 Law officer's bulletin  
 Leader to leader  
 Management review  
 Mobile government  
 Nafto news  
 National institute of justice journal, et al  
 OJJDP juvenile justice bulletins, et al  
 Organizational dynamics  
 Peace officer law report  
 Performance improvement  
 Performance improvement quarterly  
 Personnel  
 Personnel administrator  
 Personnel journal  
 Police  
 Police chief  
 Police journal  
 Police magazine  
 Police marksman  
 Police practice and research  
 Police product news  
 Police quarterly  
 Police studies  
 Police technology and management  
 Police the law enforcement magazine  
 Police the law officer's magazine  
 Policing, an international journal of police  
 Policy review  
 PORAC news  
 Public administration review  
 Public personnel management  
 Reading research quarterly  
 Research and teaching in developmental education  
 Search and seizure law report  
 Security  
 Security management  
 Sheriff  
 Strength and conditioning  
 Studies in conflict and terrorism  
 Supervision  
 Training  
 Training and development  
 Training and development journal  
 Training research journal  
 Western city  
 Western criminology review  
 Women police  
 Workforce  
 Workforce management  
 World futures society bulletin  
 The Futurist

# Conclusion

By the time you complete the training block in Command College, you should have a general idea of what it takes to write an interesting and informative article for publication. By the time you sit down to write it, you will have inevitably lost a little of the learning during the lapse in time. This guidebook is intended to provide you with “just in time” help.

If you are an experienced writer, this guidebook can serve as a refresher or validating tool to measure the structure of your prose with that of established best practice. If you are a novice author, the steps herein will take the worry away about “what should I do next...” and refocus it on creating words, sentences and paragraphs that flow well and will be read with interest. Feel free to refer to this guidebook as often or as little as you are comfortable; re-reading a particular section or moving back and forth amongst the topics as the need arises is perfectly OK.

Nothing in this guidebook will replace the need for you to conduct sound research and use your creativity to write an article that will add to the body of knowledge in our profession. At the same time, even the best thoughts go unheeded if not in a form that is either acceptable or accessible to others with common interests. The challenge is yours; the goal, once achieved, will be worth it.

Good luck!

# Grading Rubric for Authoring the Command College Article

Components	Unacceptable	Good	Excellent
Prewriting of the article was completed using one of three learned styles	Little or no prewriting; unrelated to topic or subsequent text	Used at least one method; generally adequate but incomplete or inadequate to write narrative	Used one or more styles; prewrite related to and transferred to the article in a smooth and seamless fashion
A working title was developed using one of ten learned styles	No title or one that is unrelated to the topic	Title using one of ten approved styles; not as compelling as needed, adequate relationship to body of text	Title intrigues and encourages the reader to read further; uses one of ten approved styles; excellent relationship with opening and body of text
A lead paragraph concisely presents the topic in an interesting manner	No or inadequate lead; poor nexus to body of article; uninteresting to the reader	Adequate opening paragraph; relates to the title and body of the article; poses question or posits position adequately	Compelling opening paragraph; grabs reader's interest & encourages further reading; compels further reading
Body of article, including effective transitions, sub-headings and narrative flow	Poor transitions amongst paragraphs; poor or missing sub-headings; flow choppy, illogical or out of sequence	Adequate transition from lead to body text; formed at least three subheadings with good flow from one to another	Clear transitions from lead to body; clear and interesting transitions; used at least four sub-headings with interesting titling and clear separation
The conclusion of the article answers questions posed or posits possible futures	Conclusion unclear, inadequate or missing; no or little effort to conclude thoughts of text	Adequate conclusion; reader can discern the author's intent; adequate emphasis to provoke further thought or reading on the general topic	Strong conclusion; reaffirms body text, poses appropriate questions, compels the reader to think further once finished reading

References were cited according to either APA or Turabian guides	Little or no reference citing in text; poor, missing or inaccurate cite references in endnotes or bibliography	Most references cited appropriate and in the correct format	All references cited correctly and clearly in text, references cited according to guide in endnotes or bibliography
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## *The Author*

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**Bob Harrison** is a consultant working primarily in leadership development, communications skills and instructor development training and mentoring. His primary contract at this time is to serve as the Course Manager for the CA POST Command College. He has taught at every level of police training from the basic academy to current work with the CA POST Command College. Bob served more than 30 years as a peace officer, completing his career in 2004 as a Chief of Police.



Bob holds a Master of Science Degree in management from the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and a second Master of Science Degree in human resource management and development from Chapman College. He has also completed significant coursework toward his Educational Doctorate Degree from the University of San Diego. He was the 1993 Fulbright Fellow in Police Studies to the United Kingdom. From 2004-2006, Bob was a Management Fellow with CA POST, managing the development and delivery of training for academy instructors in their transition to active, learner-focused adult learning models of delivery.

Bob has been a speaker at local, state and national conferences, and is extensively published in police periodicals. He is the author of *Writing your Command College Article* and the primary author of POST's *Instructor's Guide to Learning Activities*, both published in 2005. He was also a contributor to POST's *Becoming an Exemplary Peace Officer* published by the Josephson Institute of Ethics. Most recently, his work appeared in the October 2007 issue of Police Chief Magazine in the article *Gamers, Millennials and Generation Next: Implications for Policing*. In February 2008, he was a featured speaker at the California Police Chief's Annual Conference on the topic of game technology and its influence on the emerging workforce. In 2009, his article dealing with the way the brain's processes influence a peace officer's perception and reactions in life-and-death situations will be published in the National Tactical Officer's Association *Tactical Edge* magazine.

Bob graduated with Class 15 of the Command College, and remained involved as a program mentor for several years. He was also the keynote speaker at the graduation ceremonies of two classes in 2001 and 2002. Since Class 37, he has been the course trainer for written skills and managing the completion of the journal article by students. He has served as the Course Manager since Class 42 in 2008. Bob is a member of the Command College Alumni Association, the Society of Police Futurists International and the World Futures Society.

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