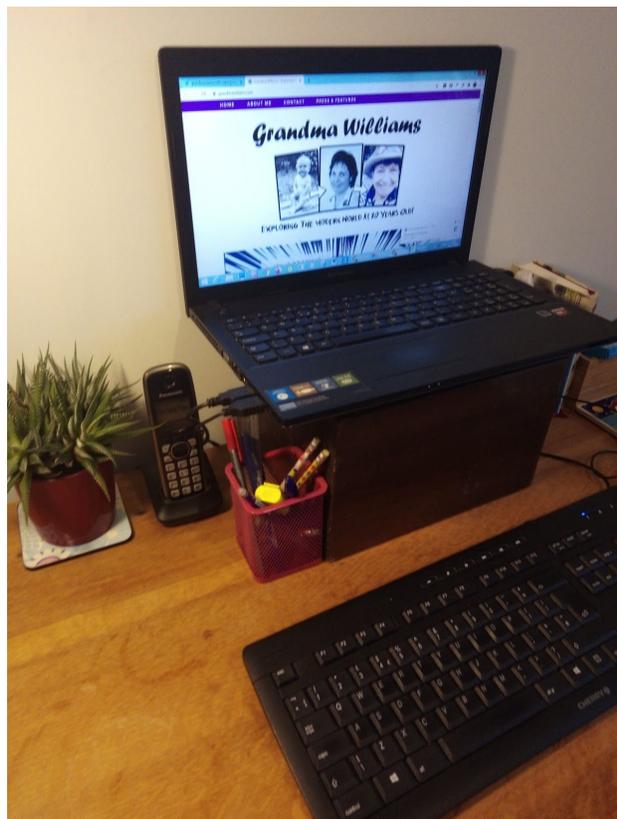


How to write a blog: tips and ideas

December 2020



Introduction:

This learning insight reflects a training session which was co-delivered by Rob from the Time to Shine programme team, and Joyce Williams, a blogger.

The session attracted a mixed group of attendees including people who had never written a blog before and those who had lots of experience but who were trying to reach a more diverse audience. It was informative and informal and allowed lots of time for reflection and questions, but didn't cover the technical aspects of starting a blog. Key elements of the discussions are outlined in this briefing and complements Rob's separate handout on 'how to write a blog'.

[Grandma Williams' blog](#)

Aged 80, Joyce saw an advertisement for a 'blogging for beginners' class and signed up, along people decades younger than herself. When the class was asked to identify the purpose of their blog and to find their unique voice on a topic that they want to write about, Joyce chose to focus on the joyous and positive aspects of ageing.

The following tips and ideas were mentioned during the session:

- You're talking to the world so share your own ideas, stories, experiences and opinions on a topic you feel connected to and passionate about.
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- Try to make sure your blog follows a similar theme each week. Try not to be boring or preachy and incorporate humour or fun (where appropriate).
 - Summarise your blog on twitter and invite twitter discussions. Follow people who have similar interests and passions so they can retweet the links to your blog.
 - Your blog needs structure, a conversational style and no jargon to sound authentic. Joyce recommends drafting a few articles before you start promoting your blog to others to reduce the pressure to turn out content.
 - Take readers on a journey with you as you blog, you could find a new angle on a familiar topic which gets people thinking differently, or ask questions in your blog and interact via social media, responding to positive and negative comments carefully.
 - Photos help to break up the text on your blog and help the reader to connect with you as an individual, but they need to be relevant and have a purpose in the text.
 - An interesting title draws people in, perhaps one that makes people smile or relate to the topic, and the first 50 words are crucial to capture a reader's attention.
 - There is the option to create group blogs where lots of people can write blogs on the same site. Editors can decide to publish the blog publicly, or privately.
 - Take a look at these blogs for inspiration: **Joyce at Grandma Williams** - [I have a death wish, have you?](#); **Rob at Time to Shine** - [No man is an isola](#); **Alan at The Performance Ensemble** - [Community Arts International](#)
 - Some blogs are 500 words, others are much longer. Set your own rules, it's your blog!

Next steps: Rob always welcomes ideas for the [Time to Shine blog](#), particularly innovative ideas to engage older people, thoughts on ageism or inspiring stories from older people. Please email rob@opforum.org.uk if you're interested in writing a blog for Time to Shine.

