

LifeOmic Blogging Standards

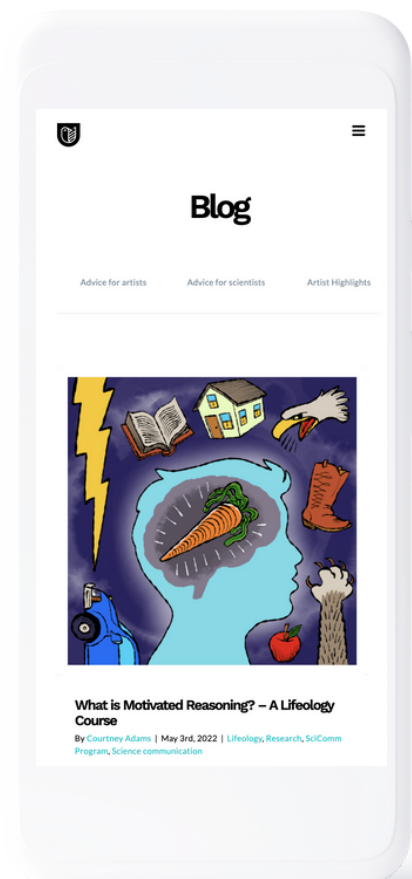
It is important that all content on LifeOmic-owned blogs is **evidence-based** or **based on your personal or professional experience**, generally **understandable** by most people, **accessible** and **inclusive**.

We've included guidelines for Lifeology blogging to help you below. The Lifeology blog covers science and health communication and art topics for a diverse audience.



Standards for Lifeology blog posts

- Evidence-based
- Conversational, friendly voice
- Differentiate facts from opinions
- If leaning on your expertise, it should be relevant or related to the topic at hand
- Explain jargon
- Acknowledge and link to sources
- Accessible: Use alt-text for images whenever possible. Consider access issues.
- Inclusive: Consider how to include people with different living conditions, with different abilities, with health conditions, in other countries, etc.
- Transparent and not overly promotional





At Lifeology, we value innovative communication, evidence, accessibility, empathy, health, health literacy, diversity and inclusion. While Lifeology blog posts generally have an audience of other science and health communicators, scientists and artists, we seek to uphold these values in both Lifeology courses and blog posts.

How we put our values into action

<p>Share your expertise in an honest and authentic way. Be transparent about what you know and don't know, your expertise and your background related to the topic. But also share your passion!</p>	<p>Evidence-based communication. When sharing science or health info, source the bulk of your info from primary literature you've read fully, or credible official sources. Cite sources.</p>	<p>Help people understand the process and context around knowledge creation and sharing. Provide context, history, process and "why" information as well as explainer information.</p>
<p>Help people evaluate information on their own. Promote information and media literacy. Consider guiding people on what further questions to ask or how to seek or develop their own answers on the topic.</p>	<p>Audience-centered creation. Consider your target audience questions, concerns, barriers and struggles. When needed, engage audience reviewers and consider their lived experiences in your storytelling.</p>	<p>Empathy, diversity and inclusion. Make sure information is inclusive and reflects diverse lived experiences. Educate with empathy, never using blame, guilt or condescension. Use simple, plain language, to expand the reach of your content.</p>
<p>Consider aspects of trust. Consider: Are you the right person to be writing about this, and if not, who is? What inequalities or injustices are involved in this area/topic that might affect people's trust. Are you acknowledging or addressing these?</p>		<p>Provide actionable, useful information. Help people make informed, evidence-based decisions by providing information that is useful to <i>them</i> (not your agenda) and relevant to their daily lives in language and examples they can understand. This is especially important for health-related information.</p>

Other Guidance



- **Differentiate facts from opinions.** If author(s) are expressing an opinion in the post, it should be called out as such.
- **Relevant expertise:** The author(s) should have expertise that is directly related to the topic, OR have interviewed or leaned heavily on publications from such direct experts.
- **Controversies:** Seek input from an admin (e.g. Paige) if the topic is potentially publicly controversial or based on info that is debated within the scientific community.
- **Sources:** Acknowledge your sources of information and never violate copyrights of written word or visuals. Provide hyperlinks or a source list pointing to primary scientific sources for any claims made. Open-access sources are preferred. Credit the original creators or sources of information are credited. Make sure that no included Information, tips, advice, knowledge or quotes are appropriated from indigenous or other cultures or underserved communities without permission and credit.
- **Transparency and ethics.** Make sure that you are being ethical in the communication of science and health information - do not hype or cherry-pick results or findings. Be transparent about funding or conflicts of interest.
- **Expert or audience reviews are recommended**, especially if you are writing about science and health outside of your background or expertise, or you are commenting on the lived experience of underserved communities or minorities. Consider having colleagues or community members review and give feedback to your draft posts.



Other Guidance



Inclusive Language. Inclusive language avoids the use of certain expressions or words that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people. Use language that avoids implicit biases and that acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equitable opportunities. Consider if any language used might alienate some groups of people or if there are words, story elements or recommendations in the text that might leave out certain individuals, communities or groups of people.

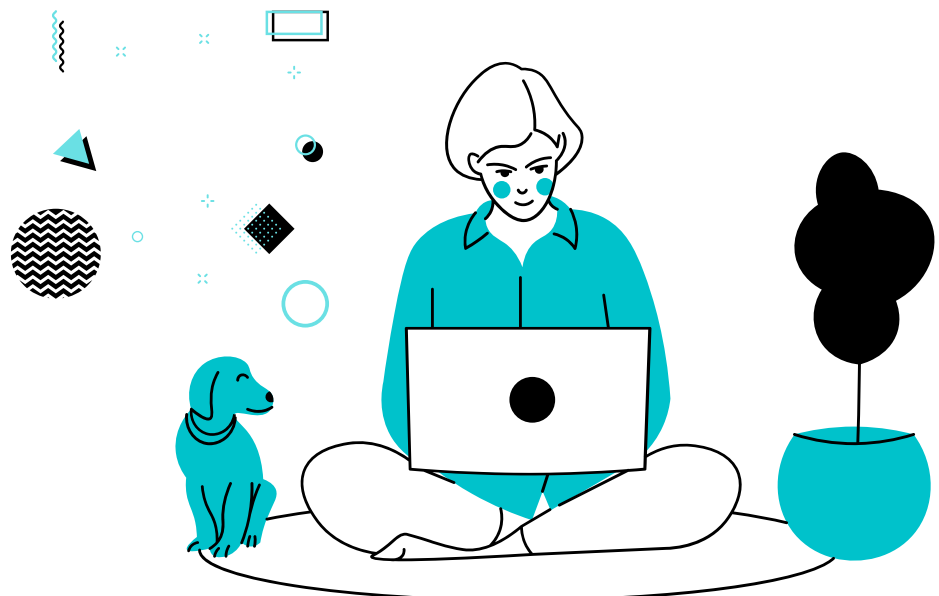
By using inclusive language in our content, we're communicating to our audience that we are conscious of and willing to address all applicable audiences with respect and acknowledgement of diversity.

- **He/She/They:** In many cases, you may need to talk about a generalized, non-gender-specific individual. The most effective way to remove gender in these cases is to use the pronoun "they" instead of "he" or "she."
 - *Anyone* can improve their health by following the 5 Pillars of Health.
 - A good medical provider listens to *their* patients.
- **Avoid gendered stereotypes**, e.g. referring to a doctor by default as a "he" or nurse practitioner by default as a "she".
- **Use inclusive language when talking about medical conditions**, e.g. not all breast cancer patients are women and not everyone with jaundice have yellowing skin. Take into account the experiences/needs of transgender men and women, nonbinary people, and intersex people.
- **Consider and raise awareness of gender disparities and racial/ethnic disparities in medicine and healthcare**, e.g. consider different disease symptoms in women vs. men, barriers to care, etc.
- **Put the person before the disability or disease/condition.** For example, a person with a disability, not a disabled person.
- **Learn more [here](#).**



Writing Style Guide

- **AP style:** In general, we follow AP style guidelines.
- **Citation style:** You can cite sources in any way that makes sense as long as you credit your courses and link back to primary literature where appropriate. **American Psychological Association (APA)** citation style is recommended for tutorials, Lifeology blog posts and science communication resources.
- **Clear writing tips:**
 - Choose the simplest words that work to convey your meaning.
 - Cut sentences in half if you find yourself using complex sentence structure (multiple commas, dashes, run-on sentences).
 - Use active voice: "*The scientists discovered XYZ*" versus "*XYZ was discovered*".
 - Tell stories with relatable human characters.
 - Include a summary or actionable takeaways.
 - Use a tool like Grammarly to help with word choice and sentences structure.
 - No oxford commas unless necessary to avoid confusion.





Visuals are great additions to content and can make content more interesting, engaging and memorable.

Follow the guidelines below for best results.



Don't violate copyright. We value artists and their work! Never use images that are copyrighted (this includes images you find on Google!) without permission.

Don't know if an image is copyrighted? Ask Paige or Courtney.



Images that are public domain (Wiki images, .gov site images) and Creative Commons images may be used with attribution.



Use visuals to complement. Visuals are best used as complements to written info rather than as visual equivalents. Consider how visuals you use can complement the writing to improve understanding, convey emotion, tell a story, make a concept more concrete or vivid, etc.



Collaboration is best. If there is time, collaboration with an expert artist or designer is best! It can also help us form relationships with new Lifeology community creatives.



Get input on branded content. Using one of our logos on this content? Using this content for official website, marketing, client or prospecting purposes? Make sure Doryan or a member of the design team has eyes on it!



Diversity and inclusion. Visuals have the power to include or exclude. Opt for visuals featuring diverse characters in empowering settings. Avoid visuals that reinforce stereotypes or biases (e.g. white male scientist in lab coat).