

Communication Committee Article Guidance & Tips

What we need from the author(s):

- 1) Bio (3 to 6 sentences)... about their experience, insight into their career and brief education, what they value most from or have learned from CSMFO, and, if they are comfortable, something to let readers get to know them (kids, pets, favorite destination)
- 2) Headshot (high quality, separate file). Do not paste into article
- 3) Their preferred article byline (name, title, and employer)

Article Tips:

- 1) Target 500 – 750 words for general content. For sponsored or special features, allow up to 1,500 words.

NOTE: Top 10 style lists are popular with our readers and sometimes easier to pull together as possible article framework (a few opening paragraphs, list, and closing recap paragraph).

- 2) Pictures. If you have a great picture, please send it as a separate image files (Do not paste into the article). Graphs are not advisable unless they are very simple and easy to understand. They generally don't translate well. Note that we may not use your picture but appreciate your suggestions.
- 3) Quotes. When possible, capture quotes from attendees or peers.
- 4) Target a "modest" subject matter knowledge level. Most CSFMO readers will have some exposure to most topics and generally have 5 or more years of experience. But, avoid complex abbreviations and overly complex scenarios as many of our newer readers are at the entry level of their professional development.

Construct an outline of your article

- 1) Start with an intro or 1 to 2 sentences as to why readers should continue reading (what's in it for them). A large intro will likely push readers away. Keep it interesting. You can make it fun, you can impart how critical this is, or dangerous if not understood, or you can simply focus on how their life will improve.
- 2) Set the stage in the next paragraph. Provide the body of your discussion (typically think of 3 to 5 thoughts to support your concept). These sections are most effective with 4 to 6 sentences each. Try to avoid lengthy of a discussion or argument. Short paragraphs are tantalizing.

When possible, provide a story or example. We learn best through stories we can connect with or that prove the concept.

Email completed article to:

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Consider using an “illustrate, explain, & understand” format. In other words, use an example to “show” the reader, then tell the reader, then help the reader understand it.

Re-read your individual arguments and/or supporting statements. Ask yourself “is it clear “why” the reader must understand this (i.e., what is the main point)?

Give readers something that strategically uses each sentence to convey your point, not just article filler. Think about your role in teaching the reader by making sure you convey your message and that it is easily understood.

- 3) Conclude with an impact statement.
- 4) The fewer words the better and keep it simple.

CSMFO Retains ownership of articles

Except for sponsored articles, all articles are property of CSMFO and authors must request permission to republish.

Our Committee or CSMFO reserves the right to edit any content but will, if time permits, review changes with the author. See the CSMFO Communications & Magazine Editorial Policies and Guidelines for more details.0

Tips for writing about an event:

Pick just a few highlights from the event. Think of the event as a whole and pick the best resources or information from the day. What three things did you learn? What three points surprised you? What would someone who attended the event go back and tell her co-workers around the water cooler?

What points would you highlight to your supervisor, to emphasize that the registration fee was money well spent? If you feel strongly that you need to mention every speaker, pick the single most important or memorable point from each presentation and focus only on that point.

Helpful guidance links:

<https://www.nonprofitmarketingguide.com/blog/2007/04/20/how-to-write-an-event-summary-for-your-newsletter/>

CSMFO Resources

- [CSMFO Style Guide](#) (Board Approved 2/20/18)
- CSMFO Communications & Magazine Editorial Policies and Guidelines (12/01/17)