

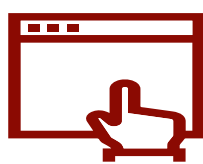
BE PITCH PERFECT FOR THE CONVERSATION

The Conversation is an independent educational website, helping the academic and research community share their expertise with a broad, mainstream audience. The Conversation only publishes content written by academics, which is edited by journalists.

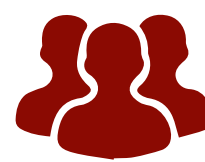
To write for The Conversation, you must be a current researcher or academic.



10.6M
users on site
per month



35M
views per
month



82%
of readers are
non-academic

BEFORE YOU PITCH A STORY

- **Have a read.** Have you visited [The Conversation](#) website? What kinds of stories does The Conversation cover? Have you signed up for The Conversation [newsletter](#)?
- **Do your research.** Have you done a keyword search to read what has previously been published on your topic on The Conversation?
- **Pay attention to the news.** What are people talking about? Is your topic timely?
- **Think ahead.** Submit your pitch before any relevant upcoming journal articles are published. The Conversation requires at least a two-week turn-around from the brief stage to the final publication of the article.

THE PROCESS



THE PITCH

When you pitch, you need to sum up what you want to write about in one sentence, and then flesh out your idea into an outline of no more than 200 words.

THINK ABOUT:

- Why is this interesting or significant for non-academics?
- What are you taking for granted that those outside of academia would love to know about?

WHEN YOU PITCH:

- Prioritise research that has been completed and has something tangible attached, rather than pure ideas.
- Mention if you have photos, videos, audio, graphs to support your article.
- Tell The Conversation why this story matters to a wider audience - and why now? Is there a relevant news event coming up that could connect with your topic?
- Include that you are an academic or researcher with relevant expertise in this area and want to write the article.

THE BRIEF

If your pitch is accepted, you will be contacted by an editor at The Conversation to further discuss your article. You will then receive an agreed brief, which outlines the direction of the article, the word limit and deadline.

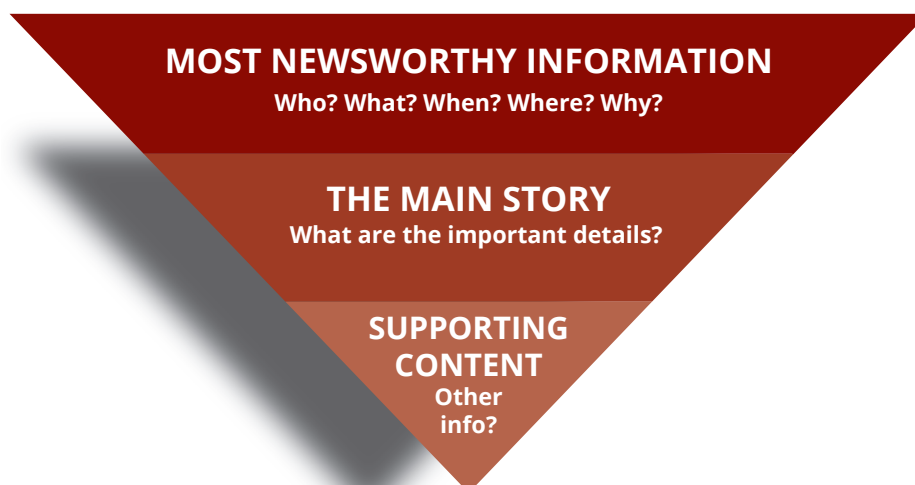
The brief is a vital early step to ensure your first draft is news driven, relevant and simple to read. It is important to get this mutually agreed brief right before you start writing - if the submitted article is different to what was agreed, you may be asked to revise the piece.

Flag any disclosure requirements at the Brief stage, such as financial or political relationships (e.g. funding), for transparency.

THE ARTICLE

WRITING TIPS:

- Focus on your introduction. Make it a short, sharp statement of essential facts (i.e. two sentences) that will grab the reader's attention.
- Use the journalism's industry 'inverted pyramid' structure and answer 'The 5Ws' (Who, What, Why, When Where) to prioritise your information.
- Get to the point, then fill in detail.



THE ARTICLE

READABILITY:

- Think about the language for the everyday reader. You don't need to simplify your ideas, but you must simplify your language.
- Explain complex ideas. Don't get too technical. Avoid jargon ("A man stepped out of the car." not "A male person disembarked from the vehicle.")
- Your article will be reviewed with a language readability index, which is set to the level of an educated 16 year old.

REFERENCING:

- If you make contentious statements, back them up with research, facts and figures
- You must reference with online links that readers can click on, preferably to full research papers, or abstracts or news stories if the full paper isn't available.
- The Conversation does not use footnotes or end notes.

EXAMPLE OF A GOOD PITCH TO THE CONVERSATION:

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recently recommended that all people with HIV should start antiretroviral treatment (ART), making millions of new patients eligible to start treatment as soon as possible. One obstacle to achieving this goal is that starting ART in many countries is a lengthy and burdensome process, imposing long waits and multiple clinic visits on patients.

We recently did a study in South Africa, the country with the world's largest HIV treatment program, to find out if 'same-day initiation' of ART would increase the number of patients starting treatment and improve overall health outcomes. This article would look at our study, which showed that it is possible to initiate nearly all eligible patients on HIV therapy, and to do so in a much shorter time interval than previously required.

Submitted by a professor of global health leading research into HIV/AIDS care and treatment.

ASK FOR HELP

Talk to your ACES Communications team. We can help you answer the question "So what? Why does this really matter?" Why not pitch a story idea to us for the ACES website as practice?

Lauren Hood - lhood@uow.edu.au
Sam Findlay - sfindlay@uow.edu.au