

HOW TO GET PEOPLE TO READ WHAT YOU WRITE

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BRAND & MARKETING



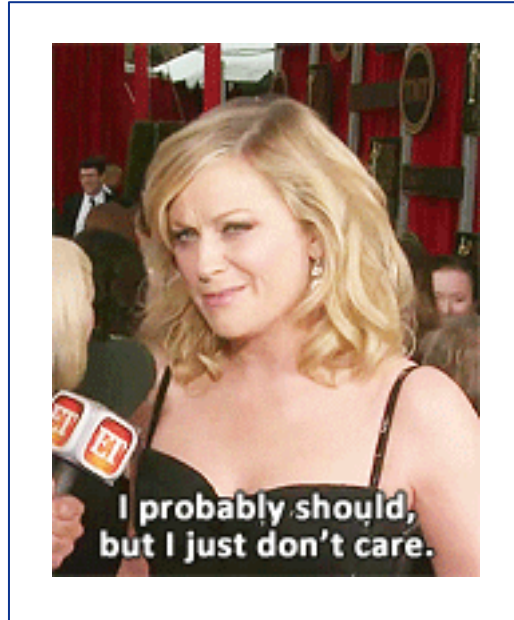
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

OUR FOCUS TODAY

- Writing effective headlines
- Leading with key messages
- Making your communications easier to digest



WHY DOES CONCISE WRITING MATTER?



DIGITAL BATTLE FOR ATTENTION



- 9 seconds goldfish vs. 8 seconds people
- People scan webpages; the first 10 seconds on page are critical to keeping people on the page longer
- The headline sells the story



WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE HEADLINE?



TWO TESTS

- Does the reader know what this story is about?
- Does it answer the question: “Why does this matter?” or “What’s in it for me?”



EFFECTIVE HEADLINE EXAMPLES



Six essential U of T initiatives students should know about this year

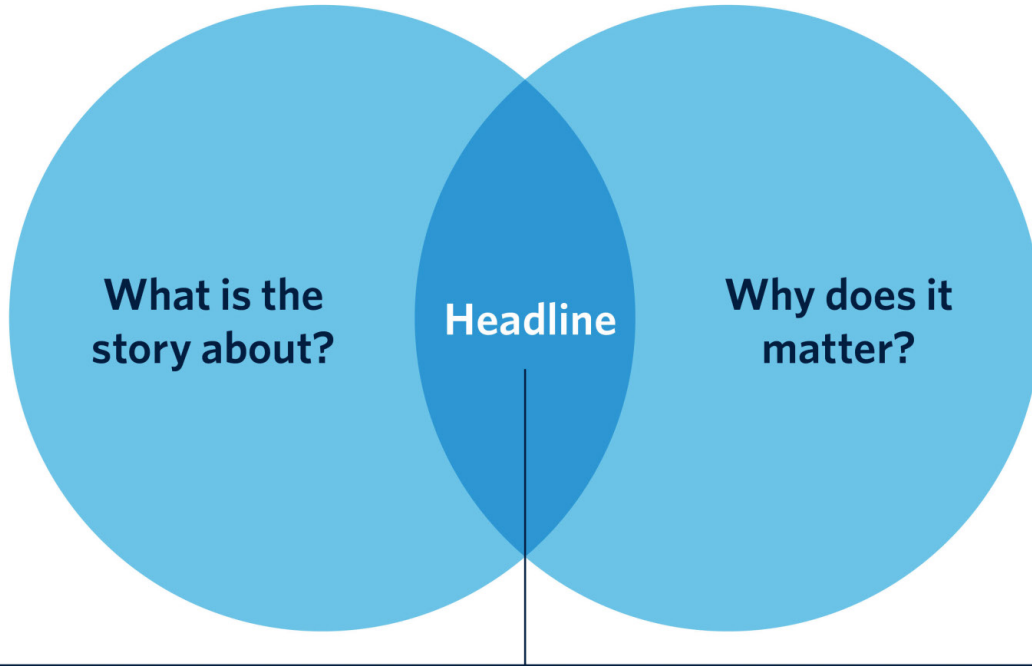
EFFECTIVE HEADLINE EXAMPLES



'A good last hurrah': U of T student and her father ride nearly 900 km to Toronto – on a tandem bike



HEADLINE LENGTH



- As short and snappy as possible
- Accurate

- On brand/right tone (no puns please)
- Simple words

MAXIMIZE HEADS AND SUBHEADS



PEOPLE

The Structurist celebrates major milestone

An internationally-renowned art journal published through the University of Saskatchewan (USask) is celebrating another major milestone.

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WHAT IS THIS STORY ABOUT?

- You need to know before you can write a good headline
- If you don't know what the story is about, your reader won't either
- Importance of a clear, engaging introduction



LEAD WITH KEY MESSAGES

- What do I need to communicate? Why does it matter to my audience?
- What is the most interesting thing about this piece?





LEAD WITH KEY MESSAGES

Aerial drones offer new perspective on resident killer whale behaviour

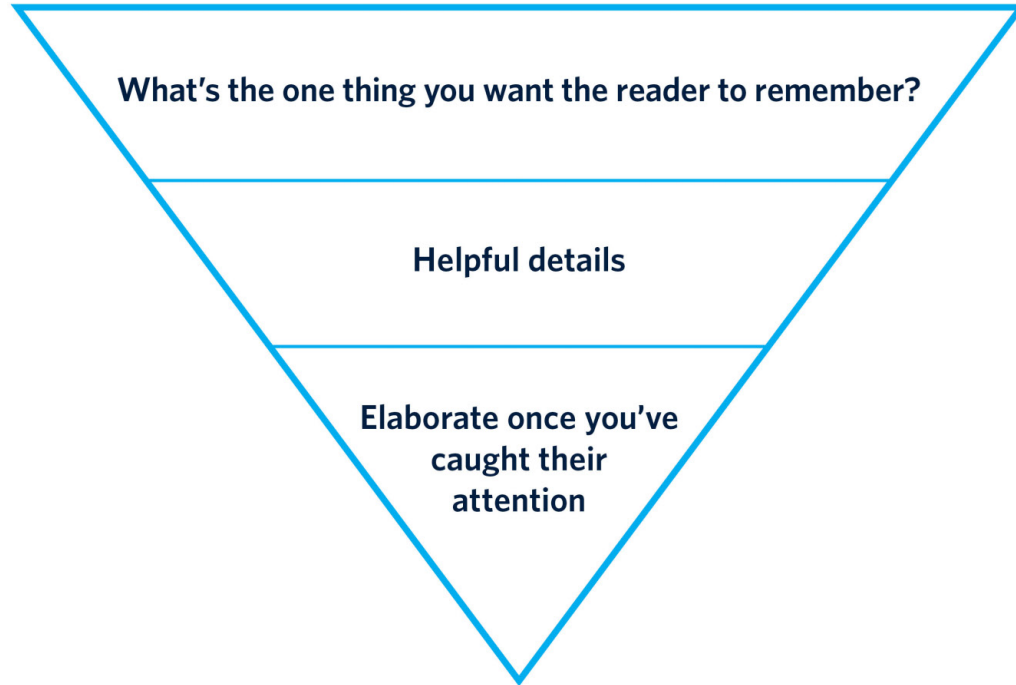
Scientists at the University of British Columbia are getting a rare glimpse into the underwater behaviour of northern and southern resident killer whales off the B.C. coast, with the help of aerial drones.

The unique footage, filmed in collaboration with the Hakai Institute, will help researchers determine if endangered southern residents are getting enough of their preferred prey, Chinook salmon, to meet their nutritional needs. The insights will inform conservation and recovery efforts for the population that has dwindled to under 75 individuals.

What it's about

Why it matters

LEAD WITH KEY MESSAGES





MAKE IT EASY TO DIGEST

Which would you rather read?

Essential UofT initiatives students should know about

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Six essential UofT initiatives students should know about

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2. In commodo dictum enim at vulputate. Nullam orci purus, sollicitudin viverra massa non, tristique sodales tortor.



5 TIPS TO REMEMBER



1. Give people a reason to read: What is the story about? Why does it matter?
2. Make the most of headlines/subheadlines
3. Lead with your key message
4. Make it digestible: break up text, use subheads, listicles
5. Less is more: cut words, cut length

WRITE LESS. GET READ MORE.





QUESTIONS?



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