

“How to Change the World - Seven Steps to Successful Environmental Training Programs”
by Clare Feeney (2013) Published by Global Professional Publishing UK
A free tool from the online resource page for the book

How to write a case study of your environmental training program

If you are reporting on your program, presenting conference papers or otherwise spreading the word, it can be helpful to set the information out in the form of a case study. Here are a few tips that will help you tell people everything they need to know.

Use the journalist’s narrative arc: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How. Depending on the topic, some people add in ‘What with’ (resources) and ‘What then’ (what resulted).

Go to the Wikipedia article on this at <http://bit.ly/xLcgev> – it’s fascinating! The concept is that by answering these questions, none of which can be answered by a simple yes or no, you will gather the basic information with which to write a full story.

Here they are again:

- who is it about?
- what happened?
- where did it take place?
- when did it take place?
- why did it happen?
- how did it happen?
- and.... for useful case studies that help other people):
 - what with? (resources)
 - what then? (what resulted).

You could use those headings, or key elements identified in my book, *How to Change the World: Seven Steps to Successful Environmental Training Programs*:

1. Partnership
2. Research
3. Monitoring and review
4. Policy and regulation
5. Technical guidelines
6. Training and capacity-building
7. Program resourcing

If you want to write in a more popular voice, use the key words from my blogs on the topic:

1. Problem (what made the training necessary?)
2. Partnership (who did you work with?)
3. Policy (what laws, plans and regulations inform the training?)
4. Personas (who are your trainees?)
5. Performance (what do they have to learn to do?)
6. Process (how do you deliver your training? -classroom, onsite etc)
7. Proof (how do you assess your trainees’ learning or performance, and/or how do your clients know they are making a difference?)



Get more tools and resources from www.clarefeeney.com7Steps/ActionPlanner
Find out more about the book at <http://7stepstosuccessfultraining.blogspot.com/>

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How many pages?

It's over to you! A 1-page summary can be very clear. Some of the case studies in my book are a page or less. Aim to make your case study detailed enough to be useful to others, but not so long that you put off doing it!

Style tips

If you work for a large organization, you may already have a writing guide. If not, search the Internet for “plain English” or “good writing” – or follow George Orwell's tips for good writing, set out in his 1946 essay, *Politics and the English Language*.

I am indebted to journalist Jim Mahoney for this list, which he gave out in a presentation for TCANZ (Technical Communicators Association, <http://www.tcanz.org.nz/>) called “Shock, Horror, Scoop, Probe: how to write like a tabloid” – it was great. Jim is an editor for Fairfax newspapers, and here are Orwell's tips:

1. Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print
2. Never use a long word where a short one will do
3. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out
4. Never use the passive sense where you can use the active
5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent
6. Break any of these rules sooner than saying anything outright barbarous.

Rule 4 is easier to keep if you write in the first person – I or We. Thus, “So we set up a program” rather than “A program was therefore set up”. Spot the difference?

Find out more at <http://bit.ly/zOdbcX>. Also look at the very useful articles on Howard Warner's great website at <http://www.plainenglishpeople.co.nz/>.

Why not send me your case study?

If you have already gone to the trouble of writing up a case study, why not send it to me to put on the resources page for people using my book, *How to Change the World: Seven Steps to Successful Environmental Training Programs*? That way, we can help each other learn about successful environmental training!

Please be assured that I will make this material available to others for free and with full acknowledgement of your work. Remember to include the following information in your material, so I can do this:

- your name
- position title
- organisation
- state/country
- email address (if you are happy for people to contact you about your work)
- maps, photos, tables and diagrams
- how to find out more about the specific program or the general topic
- full reference or citation if you are sending an existing conference paper
- anything else you think will help others create successful environmental training programs!

Thank you!



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