



## The Stylish Strategist—a quick guide to our blogging style

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Welcome to *The Strategist*! Now that you've stepped into the club, there are a few dress codes to follow, so here's a brief list of small demands that would help reduce our stress levels and make the editorial process easier for all concerned.

### How long is a piece of ~~string~~ blog?

Around 800 words, actually. If you'd like to write more, let us know and we'll decide on a case-by-case basis, and will often say no. We sometimes publish longer pieces but would prefer not to.

### Title/headline

If you have any ideas or suggestions for a title, send them along! Authors often have a clearer picture of the main ideas in their posts. But we reserve the right to come up with our own. We like clever headlines, but not puns.

### Disclosures

Give us a heads up about any relevant affiliations you might have, especially those that have funding or a pecuniary interest involved. Let's not find out the hard way.

### What kind of style?

Language should be more conversational than academic—we're reaching out to a wide audience. Write as if you're speaking (carefully) and use plain, straightforward English. Don't try to tell us you will lose nuance that way, or we'll ask Hemmingway's ghost to haunt you (or at the very least suggest you read *The Old Man and the Sea*).

Shorter paragraphs are easier for readers to take in. But please, construct proper paragraphs rather than an op-ed style with strung together dot points.

Lists are boring. If we see 'fifthly...', we'll say 'nay'.

Use the first person—it's your opinion so own it; replace 'it can be argued that...' with 'I argue that...'

No polemics! If you can't sway the reader through the sheer elegance of your prose and lucid arguments, you won't do it by thumping the table.

To keep it casual, we prefer you to use contractions:

It is → it's  
You are → you're  
We will → we'll etc.

We aren't Latin speakers here at *The Strategist*, but we do like Star Trek. When clarity is at stake, feel free to boldly [split infinitives](#).

### **I just need space!**

Actually, we don't. Single spaces after a full stop, and left justified text please.

### **What about links?**

If you make an unqualified assertion, we'll probably ask you for a source so it's easier if you link it first! Please embed hyperlinks into the text. See how [here](#). (See what we did there?)

If you are linking to something that isn't a webpage, add the type of link in brackets—e.g. (PDF) or (video) after the hyperlinked text so readers have a heads up on what they're clicking.

### **Punctuation ...**

Single quotation marks please. As they say, 'less is more'. Full stops and question marks should appear outside the end quotation mark—like 'this'.

Longer quotes should be indented and unitalicised:

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a government in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a military arm. However little known the feelings or views of such a body be on his first surveying a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding commentators, that the force structure is considered as the rightful intellectual property of someone or other of their grad students.

We choose the unspaced em dash, like this one—for use as a punctuating dash. In Microsoft Word, just type two short dashes immediately after a word and then follow with the next word without a space. Eg hyphenated--phrase. When you hit the space after 'phrase', magic will happen. Trust us.

Numbers ten or larger should be numerals with a comma separator if required: 10,000 rather than 10 000. Single digit numbers should be written out: one to nine, but 10, 11, 12 and so on.

Thanks again for blogging with us and happy writing!

Editors