

## ***Becoming a Blogger Tips, Tools & Tactics*** ***Amplify Your Voice through Blogging***

### ***Who Can Be a Blogger?***

Anyone or everyone. The hurdles confronting contributors to traditional media outlets do not exist in the blogging world.

JustUS Voices Storytelling for Change strives to recruit people affected by mass incarceration. We want a point of view painted by passion and perspective. The blogspace is intended to unite a digital community of formerly incarcerated people and their families, social justice advocates, policy experts or anyone who cares enough to speak on our page. The goal is to enlighten, encourage and educate others.

### ***Drawing the Audience In...***

We all know that some titles draw eyeballs. Like going fishing, a pithy headline is like click bait. The goal is to invite the reader in from the opening words until the closing. There's endless competition for eyeballs online and ever shorter attention spans. Keep your blog title under 10 words, three to five is best if you can manage it. Try to always let your readers know what the blog will be about upfront: How to Lose 10 Pounds in a Week, How to Pay for College, How to Live Your Best Life—on a Budget, etc.

### ***Fifteen Fast Facts***

1. Know your audience.
2. Focus on a subject you care about.
3. Maintain a conversational tone.
4. Pick headlines to attract readers.
5. Make your opening inviting.
6. Be authentic.
7. Use humor and anecdotes to emphasize a point.
8. Keep paragraphs short.
9. Begin how-to blogs by telling readers what they will learn and end by reminding them.
10. Use memorable quotes.
11. Reference current events or trends.
12. Use hyperlinks for relevant background information.
13. Include key words to attract visitors surfing for related topics.
14. Include social media tags and handles in your signature.
15. Repost and hyperlink your blog to other platforms.

# NO WRONG ANSWERS

*JustUs Voices Blog*

## Types of Blogs

### The Q&A

The Q and A blog (Question and Answer) is an easy format that can feature an expert or advocate who highlights an issue, experience, or case. The interview can showcase or reveal a vision or voice in a straightforward and readable dialogue.

[Q&A: 'The New Jim Crow' author](#)

### The Niche

Every single blog for JustUS Voices is a niche blog, regardless of the format because they are all focused on the needs of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and their communities. Niche blogs rally around a topic, or group of topics, that an audience cares about.

[Care Not Cages](#)

### The Photo Essay

Oftentimes, it is easier to tell a story visually than it is to read it. Photo essay blogs are composed mostly of photos with sentences or short paragraphs explaining the photos significance to the wider story.

[TIME Magazine: Ten best photo essays](#)

### The Listicle

Listicles are blogs that list information, such as: the ten best cities to live in, six myths about criminal justice reform, and eight facts about being a woman in prison. For best impact choose a number between three and ten. Listicles with three, five, seven or ten data points appeal to readers and make for compelling headlines.

[Six myths about criminal justice reform](#)

### The How-To & Self-Help

How-to and DIY (Do It Yourself) blogs are among some of the most popular. You don't have to be an expert to pen a how to blog. But you should stake out a topic you know something about. Your opening should immediately explain what readers will take away. Here's an example: I'm the last person I ever thought would be writing a home repair blog, but after moving into an older house on a very limited income, it was do it yourself or live with a leaky sink.

[How to Live on a Tight Budget](#)

For more examples, [take a look at our blog!](#)