

COMMUNICATIONS AND WOMEN'S ISSUES



THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION

WRITING AND EDITING

Rules

- There are no rules to writing.
- Only suggestions.

Writing Techniques

- Keep it short.
- Keep it simple.
- Keep to the point.
- Write like you speak.
- Be specific, factual and quote people.

What To Write

- Pick an interesting subject.
- Make the topic relate to the membership.
- Pick topics that have appeal to specific sections or individual groups.
- Choose a topic that could have an affect on your audience or their families.

KITCHEN TABLE ECONOMICS

When we communicate, we usually report those issues that are pertinent to our specific workplaces and how such issues affect us. But most workers keep a wary eye on what is happening in their country and what will be the impact on their lives and their families.

When most Americans hear the State of the Union Address, they consider how the country looks ...

not from the White House ...

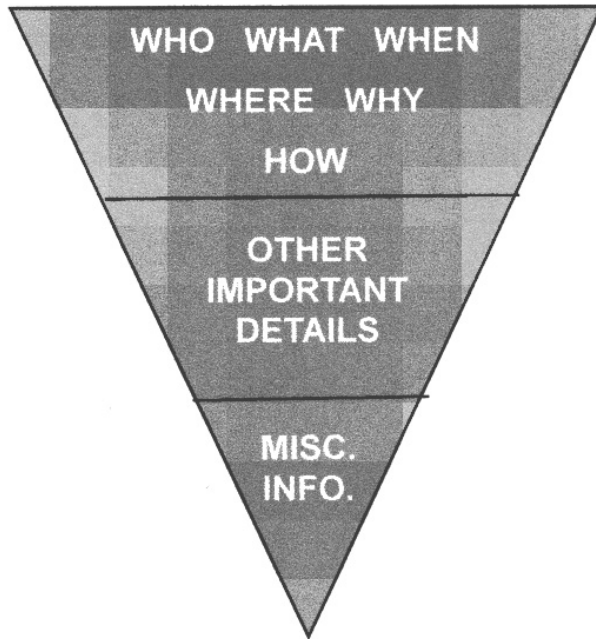
not from Wall Street ...

but from their kitchen tables.

Jobs
Wages
Healthcare
Safe Workplaces
Retirement Security
Education
Education Costs
Personal Debt
National Security

ARRANGING A STORY

When arranging a story, to help ourselves, we can use an inverted triangle.



What is the event, project or personal news you want to focus on? What is the highlight of the event? What is the particular significance about the event or project or personal news? What relevance does it have to your membership? What effect will it have on your membership?

Where and when did (or will) the event occur? The times, dates and location should be mentioned.

Why did it happen and what should members do about it?

Who is involved? Wherever possible, mention names of the people involved. If you write about a specific person, write about the event they participated in. If you are writing about an event, talk about who directed and prepared it. Mention guest speakers, use quotes and tell what they said. Tell who will be affected.

When writing your story, always start with the most important facts first. Then, use your supporting facts in order of importance. This will make the Editor's job easier if they have to cut your copy down. This will ensure that the most important facts are printed.

Writing A Good Lead

A Lead is your opening sentence. It can or should:

- Be interesting.
- Entice your reader to read on.
- Be reasonably short, no more than 30-40 words.
- Have an element of mystery.

"Since January, four Millwrights have been hospitalized with lung ailments."

- Ask a question.

"Why did the Local send three delegates to the USW convention?"

- Be dramatic.

"Contract negotiations have reached an impasse."

- Open with a quote.

"I promise you that we won't budge an inch," (Local Union) President (name) emphasized.

HEADLINES

*A **Headline** is much like a mini-lead.
Its purpose is to catch the reader's attention.
(Verbs are underlined)*

- Always use a verb.



Grievance Report

YES: Local Wins Arbitration Case



- Entice your reader to read on.



Company has new absentee policy

YES: Local Protests Company's New Absentee Policy



- Headline should compliment the lead.

NEWS STORIES

A news story is about an event such as a contract happening, which is affecting the lives of local union members.

NEWS STORY TIPS:

- Use a suitable headline.
- Open with an interesting lead.
- Tell the "Five Ws"
Who, what, when, where and why.
- Do not use personal pronouns.
Do not use "I" "We" "Ours" "Us."
- Use nouns instead:
USE "The Local" instead of "Our"
"Local 1234 President Jane Doe"
- A news story can vary in length.
- Length should suit your purpose.
From three to ten paragraphs.
- Save an interesting fact for your last paragraph.

WEBSITES OF INTEREST FOR WOMEN

Women of Steel – United Steelworkers

Women of Steel section of the USW web is dedicated to increasing working women's activism through the sharing of information and networking to impact issues affecting all working women and their families. Our union recognizes women's leadership development and involvement both inside and outside their place of work in shaping the labor force of the future.

http://www.uswa.org/uswa/program/content/overview_sub.php?modules2_ID=108&modules_ID=292

Women of Steel – United Steelworkers – Canada

Simply put: unions need women and women need unions. The United Steelworkers is a stronger union when our policies and collective agreements reflect the needs of our sisters and brothers. Women's committees help to build solidarity and mutual respect among our membership and potential membership. Providing support to women organizers, officers of the union, stewards, executive members and negotiating team members is an essential part of any women's committee mandate. Building solidarity and a stronger union - that's what Steelworker women's committees are all about. *Canadian site.*

http://www.uswa.ca/program/content/overview_sub.php?modules2_ID=262&modules_ID=469

For Every Woman Who Wants to Make Changes on the Job – AFL-CIO

Whether your top concern is equal pay or flexible hours, child care or elder care, training for a new job or respect for the job you currently do, one thing is certain: Working women agree that it's more effective working together to make changes on the job than trying to go it alone.

That's why the AFL-CIO is working with women's, civil rights, community and religious organizations. We're ready to bring into focus what needs to be changed and make it happen.

<http://www.afl-cio.org/issues/jobseconomy/women/>

Women's Issues and the National Union - National Union of Public and General Employees

Welcome to the National Union's page on Women's issues, which focuses on general issues related to women who are members of our union and to all women across the country. This page also contains issues directly related to our Advisory Committee on Women's Issues. *Canadian site.*

<http://www.nupge.ca/women.html>

WEBSITES OF INTEREST FOR WOMEN

Women's Rights - Ontario Federation of Labour

We have prepared a major policy document, "It's Time for Change! Demands to the federal government of Canada", which has been circulated throughout the country. We have hired a national co-ordinator, set up an office and a website; we have produced and distributed thousands of posters and postcards, as part of the international women's campaign demanding action from the United Nations. *Canadian site.*

<http://www.ofl.ca/>

Online Frontline for Working Women - Coalition of Labor Union Women

Our members are on the frontline, empowering working women to become leaders in their unions and encouraging them to make a difference on the job and, most importantly, in their own lives. Our values are simple: solidarity, involvement, dignity and justice.

<http://www.cluw.org/>

About the NOW Foundation - National Organization for Women Foundation

The National Organization for Women Foundation (NOW) is an organization devoted to furthering women's rights through education and litigation. The NOW Foundation is affiliated with the National Organization for Women, the largest women's rights organization in the United States, with a membership of over 500,000 contributing women and men in more than 550 chapters in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

<http://www.now.org/index.html>

The Union for Working Women - American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees

AFSCME members are women who work as secretaries, librarians, cafeteria workers, caseworkers, lab technicians, researchers, RNs and LPNs, bus drivers, heavy equipment operators, correctional officers, child care workers and many more. They know how important it is to stand up for their rights.

<http://www.afscme.org/about/wom.htm>

The New Online Home of NCWO - National Council of Women's Organizations

The National Council of Women's Organizations is a nonpartisan, nonprofit umbrella organization of almost 200 groups that collectively represent over ten million women across the United States. The only national coalition of its kind, NCWO has over twenty years' experience uniting American women's groups.

<http://www.womensorganizations.org/>

WEBSITES OF INTEREST FOR WOMEN

American Association of Working Women - AAUW

AAUW promotes education and equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. The Association—with more than 100,000 members, 1,300 branches, and 550 college/university institution partners nationwide—advocates education and equity. Since its founding in 1881, members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day—educational, social, economic, and political. Our commitment to our mission is reflected in all aspects of our work.

<http://www.aauw.org/>

National Women's Committee – Communication Workers of America

The primary mission of the CWA's National Women's Committee is to raise issues of special concern to women and to develop programs and strategies to make these issues a priority in the workplace, in the community and most importantly, in the union.

<http://www.cwa-union.org/issues/women/index.asp>

The Source on Women's Issues in Congress – Women's Policy Inc.

WPI is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization whose sole focus is to help ensure that the most informed decisions on key women's issues are made by policymakers at the federal, state, and local levels. Audiences include elected officials, regulators, women's groups, labor groups, academia, the business community, the media, and the general public.

<http://www.womenspolicy.org/thesource/issue.cfm?IssueID=173>

Women's Vote Center – Democratic National Committee

Founded in 2001 under the leadership of Democratic National Committee Chairman Terry McAuliffe, and led by National Chair Ann Lewis, the DNC Women's Vote Center is dedicated to educating, engaging, and mobilizing women voters across the nation to help elect more Democrats to office at all levels of government.

<http://www.democrats.org/a/states/women/>

National Women's Law Center - NWLC

The Center uses the law in all its forms: getting new laws on the books and enforced; litigating ground-breaking cases in state and federal courts all the way to the Supreme Court; and educating the public about ways to make the law and public policies work for women and their families. An experienced staff of nearly 50 takes on the issues that cut to the core of women's and girls' lives in education, employment, family economic security, and health -- with special attention given to the needs of low-income women and their families.

<http://www.nwlc.org/>

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- ◆ Writing can be fun and challenging.
- ◆ It takes time and practice to get better at writing.
- ◆ Most writers start writing as a “labor of love.”
- ◆ Use the internet to search for topics that are today’s news. eg. Google/news
- ◆ Editors are friends who polish your article and make it better.
- ◆ Take time to enjoy writing. Don’t write when you are stressed out.
- ◆ Try to read articles done by well-known writers.
- ◆ Don’t be afraid to look for help or assistance.
- ◆ Keep copies of all your articles. In time, you will see how you have matured.