BetterEvaluation blogs should be…

Helpful
Above all else, BE blogs aim to inform and improve evaluation practice. Your post might:

- offer specific advice for dealing with M&E challenges (Make clear: What is the problem, and what are ways that you have dealt with this)
- reflect on lessons learned from your own practice
- explore a key issue in M&E (and offering a new insight or perspective on this, rather than simply giving a summary)
- advocate for contextually appropriate methods (rather than positing that there is one right way of doing something in all circumstances)

Original
We sometimes republish content that has been published elsewhere. Sometimes, we work with the author to repackage this original post into a format more suitable for BetterEvaluation. However, we prefer fresh, original content, and will prioritise new material.

Integrated / cross-linked with other parts of the BE website
We have over 300 pages on evaluation tasks and options, and over 3000 linked resources. These have been created in collaboration with users from all over the world, and we encourage you to link to BetterEvaluation pages rather than external sources wherever possible.

If your blog talks about a key resource, then we'd love to add this to our site with a resource recommendation.

Readable
BetterEvaluation members come from over 160 countries. English, though the dominant language used on the site, is not necessarily the first language of a large proportion of our community. Additionally, our members and site users have a number of different roles. Most are evaluators, some commission evaluations, or use evaluation results, while others may have limited experience with the field but are looking to learn more. We need the language in our blog to be considerate of this diversity and tone down the academic language and jargon. Ideally, your writing should:

- Have correct English grammar and spelling

- Be readable – Read the piece out loud to make sure it flows well, or have a friend read it
- Be understandable – Would someone unfamiliar with the topic be able to understand the writing? Ask a friend outside of your field to give you feedback
- Use active voice – "The agency conducted the evaluation" rather than "The evaluation was conducted by the agency"
- If talking about your own experiences, first person (I / we) is acceptable.
- Use dot points and subheadings to break up the text
- Contain images (please ensure you have permission to use - speak to us if in doubt)
- Have short sentences and paragraphs – these are easier to read on a screen
- Try to avoid writing clichés (e.g. "X is the latest 'buzzword'")
- **Medium length (unless otherwise discussed) - aim for 500-800 words.**

Example of BetterEvaluation's blog style:

Guest blog by Michael Quinn Patton: Impact Evaluation: Best Practices Aren't (MQP rumination #4) (http://betterevaluation.org/en/blog/best_practices_arent)

General points about this blog's style and why it works:
- Accessible language – avoids or explains technical language
- Illustrates points using metaphors (e.g. car engines)
- Friendly but knowledgeable tone and varied sentence length
- Breaks piece up into sub-headings, creating a clear, easy to follow structure:

  - **Introduction**
    Short – identifies issue and explains significance. Clear argument in the first sentence.

  - **Section 2 – Why there can't be a best practice**
    Expands on main argument with logical discussion and use of metaphor

  - **Section 3 – Example to illustrate argument**
    Draws on expert opinion / example from practice

  - **Section 4 – Example to illustrate argument**
    Draws on expert opinion / example from practice

  - **Section 5 – Advice / Call To Action**
    Numbered list (five ideas), short explanation of each point

  - **Conclusion – Why this matters**
    Powerful but concise summary

Visit www.betterevaluation.org/contribute_blog for more examples.
To submit a blog, visit: www.betterevaluation.org/en/contribute