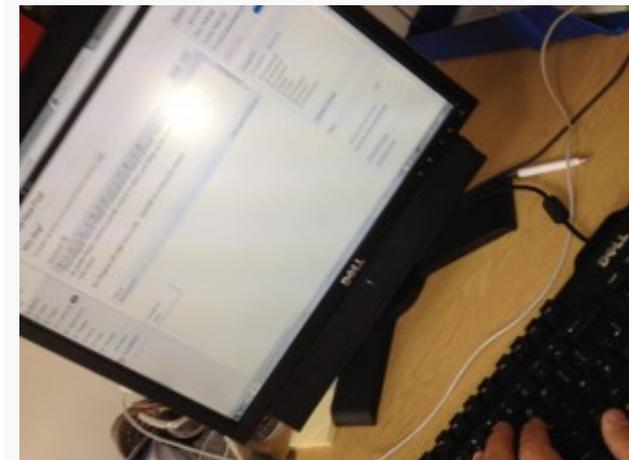


Polis – Why blog?

blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2012/08/07/why-blog/

2012-8-7



Who do this?

Blogging has been around for decades now. In some ways it has been superceded by 'micro-blogging' such as Twitter or social networks such as Facebook. Those allow you to do similar things: express yourself, connect to others, put things on the record, interact with others.

But blogging still might have a role – especially in a University context – but certainly as part of what public relations people will call 'your communications offering'.

Firstly, accept that you have to be online in some way to exist in contemporary society. Let's also assume you do want to exist in contemporary society.

For me [Twitter](#) is a much more effective networking tool, but my blog is now more important than my [website](#) and is still central to my work disseminating research, interacting with my

various networks and putting on the record the great work Polis does.

So here's some basic strategy thoughts for why and how to blog.

Blogging is no different to any other communication platform, but it's different.

Ask yourself:

- Why do I want to communicate?
- To whom do I want to communicate?
- Have I got the skills and time (the technology is easy)

Most of all, ask yourself:

| *'What have I got to say that someone else wants to read?'*

Then the how.

Ask yourself:

| *'will anyone want to read this?'*

All other style issues follow from that question but generally speaking blogs should be:

- Brief
- Make few points – ideally just one

- Have links to further information/sources
- Be either directly useful (or entertaining or challenging) to the reader
- Write in a simple, personal, direct way – it is more of a bus/pub/common room conversation than a Journal Abstract – let alone a dissertation. But by all means, link to those.

Finally – don't expect too much. Blogging is not magic. The Internet has many wondrous things in it (and lots of amusing cats) so think about your niche rather than challenging BBC Online.

This blog has probably broken half the rules I have set out.

That's blogging for you.

[This post was an exercise for a talk at LSE on why University staff should blog – it was written in about 10 minutes – further thoughts welcome!]

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