



GRABBING ATTENTION

- Headlines should attract people to read your article. For main articles it is a good idea for a headline to be a complete sentence containing a verb; to tell readers what the article is about and why it should interest them. Poor headline: *This year's pay claim*. Better headline: *Union demands substantial pay rise and shorter working hours*. Shorter pieces can have shorter, snappier headlines.
- In longer articles, use subheadings: they add visual interest; make articles easier to read by breaking long text into manageable chunks; and provide 'entry points' into your article.
- Consider whether a photo with a caption might do a better job than a longer article. A photo of a picket line with a caption summarising the issues behind the strike and the success of the action may have more impact than a longer piece with a verbal description of the picket.
- Consider running an article – or even a whole leaflet / newsletter issue – in a 'question & answer' format. Base it on actual questions that staff have asked you.
- With longer articles, consider using a box with the article, containing a quote; a key sentence extracted from the text; a summary of your main points; or a few relevant facts and figures.
- Once your text is written, edit and proofread it to improve the writing, ensure that it makes sense, and is free of typos and grammatical errors.
- Many newsletters are too wordy, with the result that fewer people read them all the way through. Cut out lots of words without cutting out any substance.
- Get rid of unnecessary words and repetition.
- If you notice that you have included a sentence that says the same as a previous sentence but in different words, delete it.
- Replace long words and multi-word phrases with smaller words where possible. Don't write *crucially important*; *crucial* means the same thing and is shorter.
- Cut out unnecessary phrases like *It is a fact that*, *The truth is that*, ...
- When you finish going through your newsletter cutting out text, go back and do it again. You will find more words you can cut out.
- Once you have edited and proofread your newsletter, ask someone else to look over them and suggest any further corrections, changes and cuts.