

Guide for Authors

This style guide is intended to assist you in writing a paper for the *Loss Prevention Bulletin* (LPB). It provides example headings you can use to structure your paper and some guidance about what to include under each heading. It is a guide, not a mandatory template and there are other ways of writing a paper for LPB which may be better for you. However the guide should help you understand what the editorial panel are looking for, and making sure your paper covers the ideas in the guide will make it more useful for LPB's readers and easier to understand.

The aim and role of LPB

LPB is not an academic publication; its aim is to improve safety, especially process safety, by sharing good information in a form which is reasonably easy to understand and use. It is a place where people can share their experiences so that others can learn. This means that papers do not need lots of technical detail or rigorous proof. If your paper includes information that has helped you to improve the way you manage process safety it is very likely that other people will find it useful. However, for people to benefit they need to take the time to read your paper. One way of achieving this is to create an interesting and engaging story.

General guidance

LPB papers are intended to be relatively short. To achieve this they need to be focussed on a small number of key messages (preferably one or two). Content that is not critical to the story you are telling will be a distraction or a hindrance to the reader. That means they will be less likely to read your paper and so not able to learn from your experience.

Focus on the reader

To write a good paper you need to understand who is going to read it and what they need to understand and learn from your experience. The LPB readership is quite diverse. However, readers are primarily working in or for the process industries and many will be dealing with major accident hazards. This means they have at least some technical knowledge and will understand processes. A good 'model' reader to keep in mind is a recent Chemical Engineering graduate or an experienced Process Operator/Team Leader. If you write a paper they will understand and find interesting, you are likely to satisfy the requirements of most LPB readers.

Types of paper

LPB will consider papers on almost any topic related to process safety. However the focus is on papers with a clear practical application to people working in the process industries; and to others who provide advice, guidance and support to those

industries. The most common types accepted for publication are:

Case study – The author's experience gained from investigating and/or analysing an accident or near miss. In particular, what was learnt from this experience that could be applied by others to improve process safety in their workplace;

Good practice – The author's experience gained from developing a new way of managing process safety risks. This may have been from examining a problem, reviewing new legislation or guidance, or adopting a new or novel process.

Telling the story

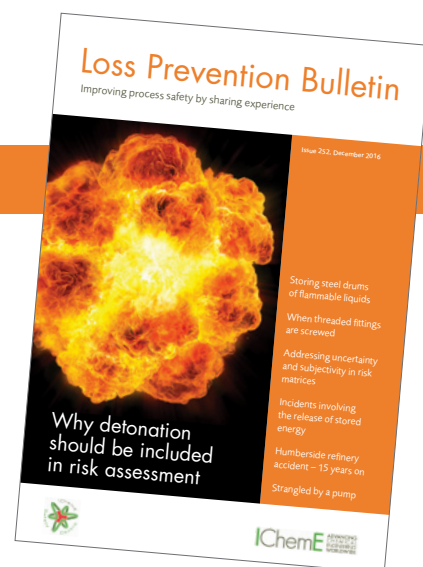
Stories typically have a clear beginning, middle and end that attract the reader's attention and keep it throughout. They illustrate key messages rather than providing lots of details; allowing the reader to use their imagination to develop a picture in their mind about what is being said. A good story provides enough detail for the reader to imagine and understand the situation and what happened. Too much detail makes the problem too specific, slows the reader down and makes the story hard to follow. This is relevant to LPB papers because our readers will not work in your company, or even your industry. If they are going to learn from your paper they need to understand your situation but then use their imagination to see how your experience and learning can be applied to their own workplace.

Writing style

A simple writing style will encourage people to understand your story and read your paper to the end. As a general guide:

- Keep your sentences short where possible (certainly less than 20 words).
- Try to deal with one issue or make one statement in each sentence rather than two or more.
- Avoid long words where short ones will do.
- Avoid jargon or industry specific technical terms. If they cannot be avoided make sure you use them consistently and provide a glossary
- Avoid use of acronyms or abbreviations, unless they are commonly used across industry. Provide a definition for any that are used.

Basic and simple advice and guidance on this is available free through <http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/>. Ask someone to proof read your paper before sending it to LPB, and ask them to think whether it could be simplified or made simpler in any way.



Suggested headings and content

The table below lists headings that you can use to structure your paper and the information you may provide for each. Specific guidance for the most common types of paper published in LPB (case study and good practice).

Suggested headings	General	Case Study (accident or near miss)	Good practice
<i>Summary</i>	A short section (one or two paragraphs) to get people interested and encourage them to read your paper. Emphasise the human element. Appeal to a wide audience (everyone can learn from your experience).	Who was harmed and/or put at risk by the accident or near miss? Why is this incident so important? How will this paper help the reader to prevent a similar event at their workplace?	What was the problem you responded to? Who was affected by the problem? How will your paper help the reader to avoid the same problem?
<i>Introduction</i>	Set the scene – where and what. Emphasise aspects that will apply widely, not just to your company/location/plant	Where did the incident occur? What happens at that location? What has happened in the past at that location that is relevant to the incident?	What activity, process or system does your good practice apply to?
<i>Background and the actual event/problem</i>	Why you wrote your paper. The event or activity that provided you with the opportunity to learn something.	What was happening at the time of the incident? What were the key events that caused (or could have caused) harm? Should be a factual account of the incident. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid discussing causes here. Avoid "hind sight bias" – describe events as they would have appeared to the people involved at the time, not how you see them now having had time to analyse them. 	How did you know you had a problem? What prompted you to do something about it?
<i>Investigation and analysis</i>	Activities performed to collate the information for the paper. Analytical approach.	What information was collected during the investigation? How was it analysed? Were any particular methods used?	How did you analyse the problem? What sources of information did you refer to?
<i>Findings</i>	Outcome from the analysis.	What caused the incident? <i>LPB uses the following definitions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Immediate cause = the unsafe act or condition that led to the incident</i> <i>Underlying cause = the failures in the way risks are managed that allowed the unsafe act or condition to arise</i> <i>Root cause = the events or situations that started the chain of events that resulted in the underlying and immediate causes. Typically a failure of management, planning or organisation.</i> 	Why did the problem exist? Were these inherent in the system(s) you were using? Or were they due to misunderstanding or misusing the system?
<i>Lesson learnt</i>	Things done to reduce process safety risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminated the hazard; Substituted with something less hazardous; Engineering controls; Instrumented controls; Procedures; Competence; Mitigation. 	What have you done since the incident to ensure it does not happen again? Did any of them turn out to be not useful? Which ones were most effective?	What opportunities for improvement did you identify? Could they all be implemented? If any were rejected, why? How successful do you think the things done, turned out to be?
<i>Conclusions</i>	Why this paper is important. What are the 1-2 (3?) major pieces of learning?	Why should people pay attention to this incident? What may happen if they don't?	Why should people consider applying this good practice? What may happen if they don't?
<i>References</i>	Use a numbered list and include the reference number in the text of the paper. References should include title, author, publisher and date. References to LPB papers should include the issue number.		

The review process

All papers that are published in LPB have undergone a peer review by the Editorial Panel. The Editorial Panel is made up of process safety experts from a range of industries and locations (<http://www.icheme.org/lpb/editorial-board>). The purpose of the review is as follows:

- To confirm that the paper is suitable for LPB and its readers;
- To give constructive feedback from experts in the process safety field;
- To alert you to any errors or omissions in your paper.

After submitting your paper to the LPB editor, the review follows a number of steps:

- The editor will briefly check that the paper fits into the scope of LPB.
- If so, then the paper is circulated to the Editorial Panel. They will be asked to review the paper and advise the editor if it is suitable for publication in LPB – making a recommendation on whether the paper should be accepted for publication; accepted following revision, or rejected.

- You will be given feedback about your article, outlining the changes, if any, that need to be made before it can be published. The feedback is given in the spirit of improving your paper and ensuring that it is of a high standard. If the Panel cannot reach a consensus opinion on the overall recommendation, they may defer giving feedback until they have discussed it further at the next Panel meeting (held four times per year).
- If you are invited to revise your article based on the reviewer's comments, you will be given the opportunity to resubmit the paper with all or some of the changes suggested by the Panel. If you decide not to accept all the reviewers' comments, you can include a brief explanation of why you do not believe they are applicable in your revised paper. The editor will include this explanation when the revised paper is sent back to the reviewers.
- The editor will make the final decision on whether the paper is accepted for publication, based on advice from the Editorial Panel.

Schematic representation of the peer review process

