

## ***Public Works Digest***

### **Tips and suggestions for producing a great article**

1. Look for a way to breathe life into the piece:
  - Organize your article around a number, i.e., "10 tips for master planning success" or 2 things or 50 things ...
  - Tell the story as an answer to an intriguing statement or question, i.e., "How Fort (XXX) overcame (something)" or "Where is the military lodging world heading?"
  - Offer the information as "how-to help," i.e., "Fast way to find out how to ..." or "Get quick answers to ..." or simply "How to ..."
  - Start with an example that illustrates what you are writing about, then explain how that fits into the big picture, and then write about the big picture. Be careful to emphasize your topic and not the example by making its description lengthy.
  - Ask yourself why this information is important to the reader – for example, the Director of Public Works at Fort XXX. What does the reader get out of it? Use that as an aid as you organize and write.
2. Avoid writing in the first person. (You are a reporter writing an article, not an editorial.)
3. Great photos and graphics help to pique the interest of the reader and to tell the story.
  - Photos should be high resolution. Higher is better. Graphics also need to be high res.
  - Photos can also be illustrations. Rather than a snapshot of a project, shoot something that illustrates what you are writing about. An example is the solar panels photo on the cover of the Sep-Oct 2011 Energy and Water issue.
4. Length – about 700 words is optimum, but less or more is OK when needed to cover the subject.
5. Provide related information in a sidebar.