



Op/Ed Quick-Start Guide

Opinion

An opinion (often called an Op/Ed) is a well thought-out piece tied to current events or newsworthy topics

Letter

A letter to the editor is a short response to something that appeared in that media outlet

Editorial

An editorial is similar to an opinion but is written by an editorial board member

An Opinion Primer



750-800 words

not including headline, byline or "bio" line at the end of the piece

This can vary

Before writing the piece, it is OK to confirm guidelines with the opinion editor



This also is firm



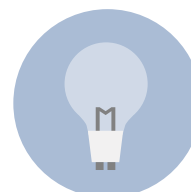
Opinion editors will not take 1,500 words and edit it down to 800

Opinion editors often will spike submissions that do not fit the length guideline



Consider your audience

- A daily newspaper has a wide audience to consider, so making things simpler may be necessary
- A trade publication has a more narrow audience, so making things simpler may not be necessary



Be knowledgeable & understandable

- It's a fine line between being too "in the weeds" and understandable
- Avoid industry jargon or "inside baseball" verbiage if possible
- Avoid making average readers go to dictionary/ thesaurus every sentence



Eye-opening intro

Capture the reader's attention in the first 2-3 paragraphs

Most opinions make one main point. That needs to be done clearly, quickly and authoritatively.



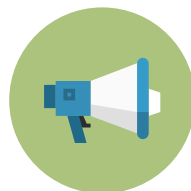
Make your opinion stand out

- Try to avoid highlighting someone else's research/writing/etc.
- While you may have to mention someone else's research/writing/etc., keep it brief—avoid rehashing what their thoughts are, this is your opinion
- Remember, editors are looking for original thought



Be brief & concise

- Use short paragraphs (2-3 sentences in most cases)
- Avoid overly-long and comma-filled sentences
- One-sentence paragraphs are OK



Promote it

- Don't assume everyone will find it on their own
- Share it on your website, social media
- Incorporate it into your marketing materials