**Writing from Personal Experience: Nine Tips and Techniques**

*For some [articles](https://www.ukwriterscollege.co.uk/freelance-journalism-for-magazines-and-webzines-course/), writing from personal experience is an excellent way to captivate your audience. Readers crave authenticity, and it doesn’t get much more authentic than sharing your own, honest perspective. Here are nine tips and techniques to transform your personal experiences into impactful articles:*

1. **Identify your purpose**: Before you write anything, determine *why* you want to share your experience. What do you hope readers will gain from your story? Does it offer unique advice? Is it an opinion piece? Having a clear purpose will guide and focus your writing.   
     
   Perhaps you want to write about your experience of moving to a new country. Writing about it in a general sense may be too broad, so define a specific purpose. For example, you may decide to offer advice on dealing with culture shock. You could discuss the different stages, how you felt during each stage and how you adapted.
2. **Think deeply about your experience**: Take some time to place yourself back in the moment and reflect on the specifics. What was going through your mind? What details and emotions stood out? If you delve beneath the surface, you may gain deeper insights and make connections to the broader messages you want to convey.
3. **Explore universal themes**: Your [personal experiences](https://www.thewriterscollege.com/write-your-memoir-course-2/) are unique to you. But they’re often an opportunity to explore ideas that will resonate with a wider audience.

Say you’re writing an article about your volunteer work at an animal shelter. Your reader may not relate to this experience in a practical sense, but the story can still strike a chord if you use it to explore a universal theme – building self-esteem through acts of kindness, for example.

1. **Create a narrative structure**: Whether you write from a general perspective and add personal anecdotes, or the entire piece is a tale of your experience, you’ll need to organise it into a coherent narrative.

Consider using classic storytelling elements: introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, conclusion. This structure will give your story a natural flow and keep your audience reading in anticipation of new developments.

1. **Show, don’t tell**: Instead of simply recounting your experience, transport your reader into it. Use action, dialogue and literary devices to *[show](https://www.thewriterscollege.com/give-your-writing-a-makeover-show-dont-tell/)* how events unfolded and how you and others reacted.

Incorporate vivid sensory details – sights, sounds, scents, tastes and textures. But remember, excessive use of adjectives is distracting. Rather, use concrete verbs and nouns to immerse your reader in the scene.

1. **Use dialogue effectively**: When you just report what someone said, it doesn’t say much about their character or draw your reader into the story. It’s far more effective to reveal character traits, conflicts and emotions indirectly through well-written dialogue.   
     
   Ensure that the dialogue serves a purpose in advancing the story and that it sounds natural. Try testing the natural flow of dialogue by reading it aloud.
2. **Be honest and authentic**: Authenticity is key when writing from personal experience. Readers appreciate genuine storytelling that they can engage with on a deeper level.   
     
   Writing honestly about raw feelings, vulnerabilities, mistakes and difficulties is more helpful than sugar-coating; not only is it rewarding and therapeutic, it’s also a great way to win trust.
3. **Reflect on your own growth**: When sharing your experience, reflect on the effect it had on you. If you learnt a valuable lesson or grew as a person, discussing these changes will add depth to your narrative and provide closure for readers. You could also discuss how the situation affected any other people involved.
4. **Edit and revise**: Once your story is complete, take care to [edit and revise](https://www.ukwriterscollege.co.uk/tight-lines-how-to-reduce-your-word-count/) it thoroughly. Pay special attention to clarity, coherence and overall flow. Cut unnecessary details and digressions that distract from the main narrative.   
     
   Polish your language into concise, impactful sentences that make your purpose clear. You don’t want your article to come across as a ‘dear diary’ post.

Writing from personal experience isn’t always easy. It requires vulnerability and introspection, and not every article lends itself to this approach. But it can be liberating to tell a story through your own lens, and it has the potential to inspire and help others, too.   
  
So if you love writing about your adventures and odysseys, trials and tribulations, why not give these tips and techniques a try in your next piece?