

Submitting Your Article

Your manuscript should be submitted as a Microsoft Word document to the acting editor in chief, Ryan Burke, at rburke@ncmahq.org. Include your contact information in the e-mail (full name, phone number, e-mail address).

Evaluation and Acceptance

You will receive an acknowledgment e-mail reply, but we cannot guarantee when or if an article will be published. Articles are evaluated based on readability, soundness of content, timeliness, and interest to our readers. We also consider whether you support your ideas with concrete examples. Articles that essentially only promote a particular company, product, and service are not considered publishable.

We may accept your article outright or accept it contingent on your revision. If an article is accepted, an editor will contact the author to advise him/her of the issue of publication. All accepted articles are subject to editing for style, clarity, language, and length.

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CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

The Magazine and Its Audience

Contract Management (CM) magazine is the National Contract Management Association's flagship publication for people and businesses working in the buying and selling communities of both the public and private sectors. With a circulation of 20,000, *CM* is a monthly magazine written and edited specifically for contract management professionals. Each issue provides comprehensive reporting on issues and trends relevant to contract management of all shapes and sizes.

Common article topics include, but are not limited to: alternative disputes resolution, commercial contracting, construction contract management, environmental contracting, information technology, e-commerce, e-business, education, grants management, health care contracting, international acquisition, program management, small business, state and local government contracting, and professional development.

Before You Write

CM seeks original and useful articles dealing with contract management problems, insights, applications, and opinions. As a contract management professional, your personal experiences in the field can become valuable to readers. Apply your practical insights, solutions, and encountered problems to their situations. Focus on the lessons learned, rather than chronology of events. Before you begin to write an article for *CM*, ask yourself these questions:

- Is this topic practical to the reader?
- Do I have specific examples of lessons learned?
- How can other professionals adapt what I have done?
- What kinds of pitfalls might they run into?

Avoiding the Pitfalls

Articles are not accepted in *Contract Management* magazine if the article:

- Is not related to contract management,
- Is poorly organized,
- Lacks valuable insight,
- Offers too few examples, or
- Is promotional of a particular organization and self-serving.

Writing Your Article

Here are our suggestions for an easy-to-read, successful *CM* article:

- The length of your article should be between 2,000–4,500 words.
- Create a clever working title using active verbs. Try to keep it brief, between four and eight words.
- Provide a byline. Include the author(s)' full name(s), suffixes, degrees, etc.
- Provide a two- to three-line biography. Include the author's name, title, affiliation/employer, employer's city and state, and NCMA chapter membership information.
- Use subheadings in the article to help the reader focus on the direction of the story at least every two pages.
- Pay attention to tone. Avoid lecturing. Convey your ideas by showing the reader what to do, rather than telling them what to do. Explain your ideas clearly by avoiding excessive jargon, and define jargon you must use.
- Use details such as dates, statistics, references, and quantities to clarify and support your points. Sometimes pertinent information that is self-contained can be used as a sidebar. Steps of a process or a list of resources can be boxed off as a nice design element and easy-to-read sidebar.
- Explain the relevance to others. Make your points using examples from your experience, and then tell readers how they can apply your experience to their situations.
- Avoid the passive voice. Active language is straightforward and simple.
- Edit your article at least twice. Delete unnecessary words and phrases. Turn passive sentences into active ones. Move paragraphs to achieve continuity and use transition sentences to help paragraph-to-paragraph flow. Make sure paragraphs flow logically.
- Check the accuracy of your article. Using your original source material, verify every date, name, fact, and figure. Accuracy is your responsibility, not that of *CM* magazine editors.
- Use illustrative charts, graphs, figures, and tables when appropriate.
- Use endnotes rather than footnotes.
- Make sure that your article is approved by your public affairs office prior to submission to NCMA.