



Editorial Style Guide

Guidance for Writing about EO

2024

EO Global Communications



Entrepreneurs'
Organization

EO Editorial Style Guide

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the updated Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO) Editorial Style Guide. This guide serves as a comprehensive resource to help maintain consistency and clarity in written communication across all EO channels.

In this guide, you will find:

1. Essential Writing Principles
2. House Style Conventions
3. Guidelines For Capitalization and Titles Specific to EO

We encourage all team members, freelance or agency contributors, members, and chapter staff as appropriate, to familiarize themselves with these guidelines and incorporate them into their writing practices for consistency.

[GENERAL WRITING]

HOUSE STYLE

In alignment with EO's headquarters location and organizational founding, effective 1 April 2024, EO has transitioned back to Standard American English (U.S. English) for spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

This is a departure from Oxford English, which had been the official brand style since 2019. Prior to that, EO's style was again, American. Use of the Oxford style had been intended to more proactively globalize EO's communications, which is still important.

However, in a time when translations are increasingly made possible by AI tools, we can convey the global nature of EO in other ways and through more languages. Also, the practice of writing and editing content in Oxford English has proven to be time-consuming and highly manual. Few digital editing tools are available to speed up content reviews.

While we honor our global identity, it is important to recognize the need for practicality and efficiency in our editing processes. By making this transition, we aim to streamline communication efforts while still maintaining our commitment to serving our diverse audience effectively.

This means the following common word spellings revert as follows:

- "programme" becomes "program"
- "organisation" becomes "organization"
- "behaviour" becomes "behavior"
- "colour" becomes "color"
- "centre" becomes "center"
- "enrol" and "enrolment" become "enroll" and "enrollment"
- "analyse" becomes "analyze"
- "cheque" becomes "check"

NOTE: When writing out 'organization' in EO's full brand name, we prefer that staff, members and chapters use a 'z' over 's' but recognize that some current and past UK Commonwealth countries may opt for the 's' locally (Entrepreneurs' Organisation). However, to be clear: EO's official brand is spelled: "**Entrepreneurs' Organization**" with the 'z' and with an apostrophe after the 's' to denote the plurality of EO's community and the relationship between entrepreneurs and the organization as one of shared ownership.

[TOP 10 BEST PRACTICES FOR WRITING IN EO STYLE]

1. ADDRESS YOUR READER

Avoid: Speaking or writing about EO members in the third person in marketing/communication materials that are directed to them.

- Example: "Members will not want to miss this special event."

Practice: Addressing members in the first or second person to foster a sense of community and connection.

- Example: "You won't want to miss this special event that celebrates our community's achievements."
- Example: "We celebrate EO's founding anniversary each September. Join us."

2. OPT FOR THE ACTIVE VOICE

Avoid: Passive constructions that diminish the impact of your message.

- Example: "The event was attended by members from various chapters."

Practice: Use active sentences to convey energy and initiative, focusing on the subject.

- Example: "Members from diverse chapters actively participated in the event."

3. BE CONCISE AND DIRECT

Avoid: Lengthy sentences that dilute the message and lose the reader's attention.

- *Example:* "In order to achieve success, it is imperative that we all work together collaboratively and effectively."

Practice: Craft concise, direct sentences that capture the essence of your message.

- *Example:* "Success hinges on our collaborative and effective teamwork."

4. SPELL OUT CONTRACTIONS

Avoid: Assuming universal familiarity with American English contractions.

- *Example:* "We're excited to announce she's speaking at the upcoming event. Don't miss out."

Practice: Spell out contractions to ensure clarity, especially for multilingual readers.

- *Example:* "We are excited to announce she is speaking at the upcoming event. Do not miss out."

5. WRITE OUT NAMES

In **internal communications** within the EO community, such as emails to members, annual reports, and blogs, please follow these guidelines:

- First reference: Use the individual's full name.
 - *Example:* "According to Jennifer Smith, 'the new initiative will greatly benefit our members.'"
- Second reference: Use only the first name.
 - *Example:* "Jennifer mentioned that she is excited about the upcoming event."

For **external communications** beyond the EO community, such as news and press releases, placed bylines in third-party media, or official statements, adhere to these standards:

- First reference: Again, use the individual's full name.
 - *Example:* "Entrepreneurs' Organization is proud to announce that John Doe has been appointed as the new president."

6. CAPITALIZE ALL LETTERS IN COMMON TITLE ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

When using common title abbreviations or acronyms like CEO or CFO, capitalize all letters to maintain consistency and professionalism in EO communication.

Avoid: Using lowercase letters or inconsistent capitalization for common title abbreviations/acronyms.

Practice: When spelling out a title that does not directly precede a name, make the term lowercase

- Example: "the chief financial officer" vs. "Chief Financial Officer, Joan Doe").

For a comprehensive list of EO-related abbreviations, acronyms, and terminology, refer to the [EO Glossary and Acronyms Guide](#).

7. AVOID OVERLY HYPED, GENERIC ADJECTIVES

In EO communications, maintaining credibility is essential. Therefore, it is crucial to avoid overly hyped, exaggerated adjectives that may appear salesy, pitchy, or gimmicky.

Avoid: Clichés and exaggerated language that may undermine credibility.

Example: "This once-in-a-lifetime event promises to be amazing!"

Practice: Use specific, defensible language that adds to a reader's understanding by focusing on tangible benefits.

- Example: "This prestigious event will offer financial strategies to propel your business forward."

8. RESPECT READERS' TIME BY ENABLING VISUAL SKIMMING

Avoid: Dense blocks of text that hinder readability and comprehension.

- Example: "The report contained lengthy paragraphs with no visual breaks."

Practice: Format content for easy skimming by breaking up paragraphs and using bullet points and selectively bolded text.

- Example: "The report included concise paragraphs and bullet points for key information."

9. WRITE TO BE INCLUSIVE

Avoid: Words and phrases that may be difficult to translate into other languages, or which may alienate certain people by age, gender, or culture.

- Example: "This lit party is going to crush it and be truly FOMO worthy!"

Practice: Use inclusive language that resonates with diverse audiences.

- Example: "This exclusive party is going to be truly memorable. All are welcome. Do not miss your chance to join us."

10. SPELL OUT ACRONYMS AND REDUCE CORPORATE JARGON

Avoid: Assuming readers' universal familiarity with industry-specific terms or abbreviations.

- Example: "We need SMEs to review the SOPs."

Practice: Explain terms and spell out acronyms upon first use to ensure clarity for all readers.

- Example: "We need Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to review the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)."

[PUNCTUATION, NUMBERS, SYMBOLS]

EXCLAMATION POINTS !!!

- **Avoid: Excessive use of exclamation points in EO writing.** Excessive use may diminish their impact and make the text seem exaggerated or insincere. EO's brand tone is intended to be professional, yet accessible. Familiar, yet not overly informal. While it may be tempting to add exclamation points to subject lines of emails, calls-to-action, or expressions of appreciation, the overuse of exclamation points can be perceived as overly hyped and pushy, immature, or even unprofessional.
 - Examples of overuse:
 - "Join us for an incredible event!!! You won't want to miss it!!!"
 - "Hurry up and buy now!!! Limited time offer!!! Act fast!!!"
- **Practice: Use exclamation points sparingly.** Reserve exclamation points for moments of genuine excitement or emphasis, such as highlighting important announcements or expressing enthusiasm for significant achievements.
 - Examples of appropriate use:
 - "We are thrilled to announce the launch of our new product!"
 - "Congratulations on reaching your sales target for the quarter!"

COMMAS,

One notable aspect of our style is the proactive use of the Oxford comma to help separate words or ideas within a written list of three or more items. Placed before the conjunction in such a list, the Oxford comma helps to clarify meaning and ensure more accuracy in our language translations.

- **With Oxford comma:**
 - EO brings together entrepreneurs, leaders, and visionaries to foster growth.
- **Without Oxford comma:**
 - EO brings together entrepreneurs, leaders and visionaries to foster growth.

Note in the first vs. second example below how the meaning can be interpreted in multiple ways when an Oxford common is not used. In the first example, the children's names could be interpreted or translated as cat and dog. With the comma, it is more clearly a list of individuals who live in the residence.

- **Without:** I live with my children, cat and dog.
- **With:** I live with my children, cat, and dog.

APOSTROPHES'

One notable aspect of our style is Use apostrophes to:

- **Communicate relationship and possession:**
 - Examples: "The cat's tail" (indicating that the tail belongs to the cat) and "The team's victory" (highlighting that the victory belongs to the team).
- **Exception:**
 - Examples: "The dos and don'ts of project management" (clarifying dos and don'ts as separate entities) and "The A's and B's on the report card" (distinguishing between different grades).

HYPHENS -

Use hyphens to:

- **Join related adjectives (compound modifiers) before a noun.**
 - Example: "information-led society," "long-term solution"
- **Form some compound words**—generally, a hyphen should separate identical letters.
 - (Example: "re-examine"), but there are anomalies (Example: "coordinate")
- **When using "mid," use a hyphen.**
 - Example: Training will be held in mid-June.

Do not use a hyphen when writing regional titles. EO uses a comma, as in:

- Coordinator, US West Region
- Manager, South Asia Region
- Director, Europe

SYMBOLS LIKE "@" AND "&"

- **Avoid** using an ampersand (&) as a substitute for the word "and" except in the official name of a company or in tables and graphs.
 - Example: "Ben & Jerry's" or as the title of a program.
- **Avoid** using the at symbol (@) as a substitute for the word "at".
 - Example: "The meeting is scheduled for 3:00pm @ the coffee shop.

DATES

Dates are written in the format: **Day, Month, Year**

- *Example:* The meeting is scheduled for 28 March 2024.
- *Example of date range:* The conference will take place 11-15 March 2024.

NUMBERS

- **Writing single-digit numbers:** Always spell out numbers less than 10, unless you are referring to money, dates, ages, or addresses.
- **Writing double-digit numbers:** Numbers 10 and above should always be presented in numeric form.
- **Using commas in numbers:** Use a comma for four digits or more
 - *Example:* 5,000 (The exception is dates, such as the year 2024)
 - *Example:* 2000 BC

PERCENTAGES %

- Use the word “percent” in running text, not the percentage symbol (%).
- Use the percentage symbol (%) in tables and graphs.

EO's FISCAL YEAR

- Always use full years with a forward slash in between without spaces:
 - *Example:* “FY2024/2025”
- For second mentions in a document or communication, it is acceptable to abbreviate to the last two digits.
 - *Example:* “FY24/25”
- Fiscal quarters are referred to as Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4.
- It is a fiscal year, not a financial year.
- In tables and graphs, an abbreviated version “FY24/25” is acceptable.

TIME ZONES AND TIME OF DAY

- Write time as: 3:30pm, 3:00pm, and 3:00–4:00pm.

- Do not use periods in writing “am” or “pm”.
- Do not use the 24-hour clock:
 - Example: 14:30
- When an event is occurring in a specific region, use that region’s time zone.
 - Example: 10pm Hong Kong
- In event promotions, prioritize Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) as the primary time zone, with Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) or Eastern Standard Time (EST) in parentheses as needed. This enhances inclusivity for our global audience while maintaining clarity in communication.
 - Example: Join us at 10:00 AM UTC (6:00 AM EDT)

CURRENCY

- Write US\$5,000 (no need to add .00; always put a comma); when it comes to millions, billions, or trillions, write those words out.
 - Example: US\$ million

ACADEMIC DEGREES

- Use an apostrophe (“bachelor’s” or “master’s”); when it is a specific type of degree.
- Capitalize the words (“Bachelor of Arts” or “Master of Science”), but do not add an apostrophe.
- You may also abbreviate as BA, BS, etc.

[STYLE GUIDE + CAPITALIZATION FOR EO TITLES]

In an organization as diverse and complex as EO, there are many distinct titles for leadership roles, products, and collaborating groups. Understanding and applying proper capitalization and title conventions in writing about them is vital for maintaining EO’s brand consistency.

Here, we outline key principles and rules for capitalizing titles across various leadership positions and organizational entities.

EO POSITION DESCRIPTORS

In our goal of writing with trust and respect for all readers, regardless of primary language or knowledge of EO, there are a few key guidelines to remember when writing about EO’s members and member-leaders.

1. **Always include a member's primary chapter affiliation/s**, in addition to any current leadership positions. If a member has more than one EO chapter affiliation at present, consider listing them.

- Example: Jamie Pujara
EO Global Board Chair-Elect
Member, EO Kenya
- Example: Alan Cheung
Director, EO Global Board
Member: EO Hong Kong, EO Tokyo Metropolitan, EO Greater China Bridge Chapter

2. **In regional leadership positions, spell out the region's EO internal abbreviation**, particularly if there is any chance the reader may not be familiar with them. This can be true in both internal (member) and external (public) communications.

- Example: [Name]
EO Regional Chair, Middle East, Pakistan, and Africa (MEPA)
- Example: [Name]
EO Growth Director, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

CAPITALIZATION RULES

In EO communications, adhering to precise capitalization guidelines ensures clarity and consistency. Here are the key rules:

Ratified EO Leader Titles

- Capitalize all words in ratified EO titles and when describing official leadership groups, such as Portfolios.
- Incorporate the word 'Global' as a descriptive adjective (never a noun) in official EO titles for members serving in positions at the global level.
- This is to distinguish between chapter chairs, regional chairs, and global chairs and more clearly communicate at what unique and important level each is contributing.
- We do this by adding the word "global" as an adjective to describe global board positions and the global organization. The same guidance should be followed for regional positions. Examples:
 - Global Board Director
 - Director, EO Global Board
 - Regional Chair, EO Europe
 - Regional Membership Director, EO Europe (It is also acceptable to omit 'regional' here since it is clear this role serves the region of Europe.)

SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL TITLES

- Capitalize each word in the title when referring to a specific, individual member leader in his/her/their position.
 - *Examples – please capitalize all words:*
 - [Name], Chair, EO Experience Portfolio
 - [Name], EO Regional Chair, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)
 - *Examples – do not capitalize all words:*
 - Yesterday, growth directors for EO Europe and South Asia gathered...
 - The role of a regional growth director in EO is to ensure....

ASSOCIATION-CENTRIC WORDS

- Use lowercase for association-centric words like member, membership, chapter, and region, unless referring to a specific person or entity.

GUIDELINES FOR CAPITALIZATION IN EO ROLES

- Capitalize uniquely branded product or program-focused positions, but do not capitalize roles that do not describe a specific product or program, such as those that are skill- or subject matter-focused (governance, finance, marketing and communications, membership, learning, engagement).

Examples – do capitalize:

- Forum chairs
- Accelerator chairs
- MyEO chairs
- GSEA chairs

Examples – do NOT capitalize:

- finance chairs
- governance chairs
- membership engagement chairs
- marketing and communication chairs

CAPITALIZATION IN EO HEADLINES AND SUB-HEADLINES

- **Capitalize:** All key words in a headline or sub-headline, excluding connectors like prepositions, articles, and conjunctions. Example:
 - Headline: "The Importance of Effective Communication in Business"
 - Sub-headline: "10 Strategies for Building Stronger Relationships with Clients"

OFFICIAL EO MEMBER LEADERSHIP GROUPS + LEADERSHIP TITLES

In an organization as diverse and complex as EO, there are many distinct titles for leadership roles, products, and collaborating groups. Understanding and applying proper capitalization and title conventions in writing about them is vital for maintaining EO's brand consistency. Here, we outline key principles and rules for capitalizing titles across various leadership positions and organizational entities.

EO'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP GROUPS + LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

At the global level of EO's organizational design, there are four main leadership groups. Each of these groups is made up of members serving roles with one- to three-year terms, depending on position. Each position is filled through application and growth within EO's Path of Leadership (POL) and is described as either Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3.

Members volunteering for global leadership positions in the Path of Leadership may choose one of two pathways: (1) growing within the regional groups (regional councils) or (2) growing within functional groups (portfolios, committees). The main groups are as follows:

- Global Board of Directors
- Four multifunctional portfolios
 - Experience Portfolio
 - Growth Portfolio
 - Products Portfolio
 - Training Portfolio
- Two standing committees
 - Standing Finance Committee (SFC)
 - Standing Governance Committee
- 10 regional councils

EO'S GLOBAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Writing titles for EO's Global Board Chair and Chair-Elect:

- [Name], Global Chair, EO Board of Directors
- [Name], Global Chair-Elect, EO Board of Directors

or

- Global Board Chair, [Name]
- Global Board Chair-Elect [Name]

Writing other Global Board titles:

- [Name], Director, EO Global Board
- Global Board Director, [Name]

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP GROUPS + POSITIONS IN FUNCTIONAL ROLES

Writing titles for leadership positions on EO's four portfolios or two standing committees: Please do NOT add the word "global" to any of these roles since they *only* exist at the global level in portfolios and committees. They are not replicated regionally or locally.

- Examples:
 - Growth/Training/Experience/Products Portfolio Chair, [Name]
or
 - [Name], Chair, Growth/Training/Experience/Products Portfolio
 - Growth/Training/Experience/Products Portfolio Member, [Name]
or
 - [Name], Member, Growth/Training/Experience/Products Portfolio

Style Notes on Capitalization:

- **Capitalize:** When referring to the specific governing body leading EO globally, always capitalize the term "Board," even when shortened. We prefer to write "Global Board" however.
 - Example: "Global Board of Directors, Entrepreneurs' Organization" or "EO Global Board"
- **Capitalize:** When the title "Chair" is associated with a person's name or specific entity, it is capitalized.
 - Example: "[Name], Growth Portfolio Chair" or, "[Name], Chair, Standing Finance Committee"
- **Lowercase:** If the title "Chair" stands alone without association to a specific person, it remains lowercase.
 - Example: "The chair of EO's Growth Portfolio will connect with you soon."

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP GROUPS + POSITIONS IN THE REGIONS

There are currently 10 'regions' within EO's organizational design structure. Each one is led by volunteer member-leaders who comprise a regional council (RC), serving in regional leadership positions defined by EO's Path of Leadership (POL). The current EO regions are as follows (from west to east):

1. Canada
2. U.S. West (USW)
3. U.S. Central (USC)
4. U.S. East (USE)
5. Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

6. Europe
7. Middle East, Pakistan, Africa (MEPA)
8. North Asia
9. South Asia
10. Asia Pacific (APAC)

Each of the 10 EO regions is led by its own chair and regional council. The top chair position for each is described *internally* as '**Tier 1**', which is one level down from EO's Global Board. They should be written according to either of these conventions:

- Regional Chair, EO Europe
- EO Europe Regional Chair

Additionally, each of the 10 EO regions is guided by members serving on their regional councils. These are described *internally* as '**Tier 2**' **positions**. They should be written according to either of these conventions:

- Member Experience Director, EO Europe
- EO Europe Member Experience Director

The primary **Tier 2 regional council leadership positions** within EO's current organizational design, as described in EO's Policies & Practices, are as follows:

- Area Director
- Finance Director
- Governance Director
- Growth Director
- Member Experience Director (MED)
- Member Products Director (MPD)
- Ad Hoc Director

Finally, each of the 10 EO regional councils is supported by members serving as official 'Experts' in varying functional capacities. These are described *internally* as '**Tier 3**' **positions**. Please follow these writing conventions:

- EO Accelerator Expert
- Chapter Launches Expert
- Communications Expert
- External Engagement Expert
- Forum Expert
- GSEA Expert
- Leadership Expert
- Learning Expert
- Member Engagement Expert
- Member Recruitment Expert
- MyEO Expert
- Strategic Alliances Expert
- Governance Expert

EO CHAPTERS' LEADERSHIP GROUPS + LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Within EO's organizational design, there are many chapter board positions. In EO, we describe them collectively as '**chapter officers**'. There are more than 2,000 chapter officers leading EO chapters worldwide. Locally, they are described as 'chairs' serving their specific chapter. However, with more than 200 chapters in 60 countries, each independently operated, some chapter boards elect to add custom positions (impact chair, diversity chair, SLP chair, etc.).

Following is the current list of 12 chapter officer positions across most EO chapters that receive training and other functional support from EO's global organization. **The same capitalization guidance as above applies:** Capitalize titles when writing about a specific person or specific EO product; do not capitalize when writing about a general position.

1. chapter president
2. Accelerator chair
3. finance chair
4. Forum chair
5. governance chair
6. GSEA chair
7. learning chair
8. marketing and communications chair
9. member engagement chair
10. membership chair
11. MyEO chair
12. strategic alliance chair

In all the above position titles, **always add the name of the member leader's specific EO chapter** to distinguish the person's role and location from other chapters or levels within EO's diverse organization.

Examples:

- Marco Polo, Membership Chair, EO Italy
- EO Italy Membership Chair, Marco Polo
- EO Italy's membership chair is responsible for...
or
- Amelia Earhart, President, EO Kansas City
- EO Kansas City President, Amelia Earhart

The president of EO Kansas City is responsible for...