



InnovateNow Submission Guidelines

Thanks for agreeing to write an article for the InnovateNow website. Original editorial content developed by business experts is one of the valuable resources we aim to provide to site visitors, and contributions like yours are helping us fulfill that goal.

InnovateNow.us is the online presence for InnovateNow, a joint effort by businesses, schools and local and statewide governments to create new strategies for business success in Chicagoland and throughout Illinois. Our goal is simple, but ambitious: We aim to enable and promote the knowledge and relationships that will form the foundation for ongoing business innovation and regional economic growth.

The website offers information on upcoming events hosted by our member organizations, profiles of our annual Innovation award leaders and case studies highlighting innovative companies throughout the region and across the state. Independent content includes white papers and surveys, along with metrics and other useful business tools.

We're also **developing a series of articles, loosely organized around our four major topic areas:**

- **Innovation Leadership** – explores business models, processes, products and services that provide new value to customers and growth to companies' bottom lines. This site area includes a range of case studies highlighting the work of individual businesses, so articles for this section should incorporate real-world ideas.
- **Talent Pool** – presents ideas for improving workforce-development efforts, including plans that partner businesses with schools, agencies or other interested stakeholders. Articles here also could discuss theoretical training and education concepts or present ways for measuring program success.
- **Collaborative Networks** – looks at ways businesses can work with each other, along with area agencies and schools, to boost the fortunes of all. Articles here could talk about existing networks, or consider ways such networks could be formed.
- **Metrics** – discusses methods businesses can use to measure the success of newly implemented models, processes, products and services. Articles here could cover specific metrics or outline requirements managers should consider when evaluating ways to measure their business's success.

We've established the following guidelines to help article writers organize their ideas. These are guidelines, not rules, but we think they provide a good target to aim for when writers sit down to the keyboard. Any articles you submit are subject to our approval before they are posted, so contact us if you think your ideas won't fit these guidelines, and we'll work with you to make sure your writing efforts are successful.

Guidelines

1. Writing for online readers is different from writing for readers of print publications. Online readers are more likely to scan information, rather than read each word, and may well move on if too much scrolling is involved. As a result:

- Try to keep articles in the 500- to 700-word range, an optimal length for online information. If you think you'll need to go significantly longer than this target, perhaps your single article could be broken into multiple installments or topic areas.
- Write in an active rather than passive voice (e.g., "They run their lines 24 hours a day," instead of "They are running their lines 24 hours a day").
- Use bullet points, where appropriate, to organize related "chunks" of information and catch the attention of those who may be scanning, rather than reading each word.

2. InnovateNow's visitors are results-oriented business owners and managers. Business-school theory can provide fodder for new ideas, but, wherever possible, relate theoretical discussion to real-world situations, through actual experience or hypothetical scenarios.

3. Please make sure to check with any companies/organizations you mention, to ensure they approve of having their name used in the article.

4. Remember that InnovateNow will be editing for spelling, grammar and style; but, we do not take responsibility for your article's accuracy.

White Papers, Studies, Reports

We are also encouraging people to send white papers and studies that relate to Innovation Leadership, Talent Pool, Collaborative Networks, and Metrics. See detailed descriptions above.

We will not edit these documents. You are responsible for the accuracy and format/appearance. Please send them as a pdf. After review, these documents will be posted.

Please send questions and submissions to innovate_now@chicagolandchamber.org