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ADVANCING OPEN KNOWLEDGE

A Keystone Publication

The Guide to Successful Wikipedia Engagement

A Handbook for Corporate Professionals

WikiBlueprint

Ethical Wikipedia Consulting

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The Guide to Successful Wikipedia Engagement: A Handbook for Corporate Professionals

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About This Guide

Why we wrote it.

Wikipedia is the most consulted reference work in human history. An article there sits near the top of nearly every search for a company's name. It feeds the answer boxes and AI assistants that increasingly stand between a company and its customers, and it shapes the first impressions that journalists, investors, and job candidates form. For corporate professionals, the accuracy of that article is a serious business concern.

This handbook draws on years of work where corporate communications meets Wikipedia's editorial culture. It is written for in-house communicators, public affairs leaders, the agencies that serve them, and the executives who advise them. It shows you how to engage with Wikipedia on its own terms, ethically and effectively, so that the public record of your organization stays accurate and well sourced.

One rule runs through every page. People with a conflict of interest do not edit articles about themselves. You disclose your role, you propose changes on the article's Talk page with independent sources attached, and volunteer editors decide what goes in. Every protocol, strategy, and example in this guide is built on that model. The model is Wikipedia's own: the conflict of interest guideline prescribes it, and the community treats it as best practice. It is the approach that gets changes accepted and keeps them accepted.

You will find a plain account of the principles that govern Wikipedia, a step-by-step protocol for proposing changes with a disclosed conflict of interest, the common changes sorted by risk, and candid guidance on when an article is appropriate at all. Part 5 goes deeper on three questions readers raise most: the path to a new article, warning banners, and what AI systems do with the article. The advice is practical, strategic, and effective, because it is built on how Wikipedia works.

Read it once for orientation. Return to it as a reference.

The WikiBlueprint Team
Santa Cruz, California

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Part 1

Foundations

“Wikipedia is the most consulted reference work in human history, and the first thing much of the world reads about any company.”

Section 1

Introduction

The opportunity and the obligation.

Read this when you are opening the book for the first time.

Wikipedia is the largest and most widely read reference work in the world, with millions of visitors every day, and some of them are reading about your company right now. For a corporate professional, that is an opportunity with rules attached.

An accurate, well-sourced article strengthens how the world understands your company. It also sits on a platform you do not control, governed by policies on neutrality, verifiability, and conflict of interest that are enforced by volunteers with long memories. The companies that do well on Wikipedia are the ones that respect that arrangement.

One practical consequence matters most. Because you have a conflict of interest, you will not be editing the article. You will be proposing changes on its Talk page, the discussion page attached to every article, under an account that says who you are, backing every proposal with independent sources, and letting volunteer editors carry the accepted changes into the article. That is the engagement Wikipedia's own guidelines call for. This guide teaches that discipline in full: the principles, the protocol, the tone, and the judgment calls.

How to use this guide. Sections 2 and 3 explain why Wikipedia matters and what its principles require. Sections 4 through 7 are the operational core: how to propose changes, handle pushback, and sort requests by risk. Sections 8 through 12 answer the questions clients raise before they begin, and Part 5 goes deeper on three of them. Pressed for time? Read Sections 3, 4, and 7 first.

Keep this. You will not edit the article. You will propose, with sources, under your own name, and let the editors carry the change.

Section 2

Why Wikipedia Matters

Five reasons the article deserves executive attention.

Read this when someone above you asks why this deserves attention.

Search for your company's name and count the results you pass before you reach one you wrote. The Wikipedia article is usually among the first, and it shapes how people and machines describe you long after the search ends. Five reasons stand out.

01 Search Visibility

An article ranks near the top of nearly every search for a company's name, often above the company's own site. When a prospective customer, partner, reporter, or recruit searches for you, the article is frequently the first substantive thing they read. Its framing becomes their starting point before your own materials reach them.

02 Answer Boxes and AI Assistants

Search engines fill their knowledge panels, the box of facts beside the results, largely from Wikipedia, and the large language models behind AI assistants train heavily on it. What the article says is what the machines repeat, at a scale no press release approaches. As more of the public's questions get answered by systems built on Wikipedia, the article's accuracy matters more each year, and errors travel further. Section 15 sets out how the models use the article.

03 Legitimacy That Cannot Be Bought

Wikipedia's credibility rests on one fact: coverage there is earned. An article exists because independent sources wrote about the company, and its contents survive because volunteer editors judged them neutral and verifiable. That endorsement carries a weight advertising cannot match, for the same reason it cannot be bought.

04 Transparency and Accountability

A balanced article that covers both achievements and setbacks signals that your company is open to public scrutiny. Trying to scrub the record signals the opposite, and on Wikipedia those attempts are visible in the edit history forever. Companies that engage honestly with their full record, controversies included, come across better than companies that fight it.

05 The Widening Gap

The distance between companies with a solid article and companies without one keeps growing. Every answer box, AI summary, and journalist's background check widens it a little further. An article, once earned, is an asset that grows in value. That is why the work of maintaining it accurately is worth doing now, and worth doing right.

A caution. None of this makes the article a marketing channel. Wikipedia is a public record maintained by others, and every benefit above flows from its independence. Keep the article accurate, leave the optimizing instinct at the door, and the benefits follow on their own.

Keep this. The article is earned, and everything it gives you flows from that.

Section 3

Wikipedia's Key Principles

The rules behind the rules. Learn them once, apply them always.

Read this when you are about to write anything at all for Wikipedia.

Before you propose a single change, learn the six principles that govern Wikipedia. They are short, they are public, and every volunteer who reviews your request will be holding you to them. For corporate professionals, following them is more than best practice. It is the price of being heard at all.

01 Neutral Point of View

Wikipedia operates under a strict neutral point of view policy, known as NPOV. All content must be written without bias, and articles may not promote or defend any particular position. When engaging with an article about your company, present information as factually and plainly as possible, with no promotional language.

For corporate editors this principle takes discipline, because there is usually a mandate to highlight the positive. Articles must reflect the favorable and the unfavorable alike, as reliable third-party sources report them. Neutrality means representing the significant views that credible sources support, fairly and in proportion. The favorable ones get no extra room.

Example. Instead of: "XYZ Corporation is a global leader in sustainability."
Propose: "In 2023, XYZ Corporation was recognized by [reputable source] for its sustainability efforts."

02 Verifiability

Every fact on a Wikipedia page must be supported by reliable, independent sources that other editors can check. For corporate professionals, this means company websites and press releases carry little weight on their own. Reputable news outlets, academic publications, and independent industry reports are what count. Material that cannot be verified in independent sources will be removed, and promotional material will be removed faster.

In practice. When proposing updated revenue figures or a CEO change, cite a third-party financial news outlet or an official SEC filing, with the company press release as support at most.

03 No Original Research

Wikipedia is not a venue for new claims. Editors cannot add their own interpretations, analyses, or unpublished facts. Everything must come from previously published, reputable sources. This rule is what makes Wikipedia an encyclopedia.

This can frustrate companies that hold proprietary knowledge or internal data. Until those insights appear in an independent, reputable publication, they cannot appear on Wikipedia. Argue from the published record; internal knowledge, however solid, carries no weight.

In practice. Instead of citing an unpublished internal report on market trends, find independent reports from recognized industry analysts and cite those.

“Wikipedia’s neutrality is the discipline that gives the encyclopedia its credibility, and yours.”

04 Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest, or COI, arises when an editor has a stake in the subject of an article, as any corporate professional does with their own company's page. A COI changes the method of engagement, and only the method.

Disclosure comes first: state your role on your user page and on the article's Talk page before proposing anything. If your engagement is part of your job, Wikipedia's Terms of Use, the agreement every editor accepts on creating an account, require you to disclose the paid relationship regardless of how you participate. Then propose changes on the Talk page and leave the article itself alone. Undisclosed COI editing is the fastest way to lose the community's trust, and the edit history preserves the evidence permanently.

Example. "I work in corporate communications for XYZ Corporation and would like to request an update to our revenue figures, using this third-party source [reputable financial publication]."

05 No Advocacy

Wikipedia is not a platform for promotion, even in service of a worthy cause. Advocacy takes many forms: overemphasizing the positive, downplaying controversies, or reaching for language that flatters. The community watches for corporate advocacy, and detecting it is a skill volunteer editors practice daily.

Keep your proposals factual, sourced, and balanced in word choice and tone. If a sentence would look at home in a brochure, it does not belong in an encyclopedia.

Example. Instead of: "XYZ Corporation is at the forefront of technological innovation." Propose: "In 2022, XYZ Corporation introduced a new product line, covered by independent technology publications including TechCrunch and Forbes."

06 Transparency and Collaboration

Wikipedia is built by volunteers who maintain millions of articles together. Your role is to contribute in a way that respects that collaborative culture: disclose your COI, request changes instead of making them, explain your reasoning, and engage other editors with courtesy. Transparency builds trust, and trust is what moves a request from the pile to the page.

Example. “I am requesting these updates to reflect the company’s current leadership structure, using this reliable third-party source [Business Insider]. Happy to provide additional sourcing if useful.”

Professionals who internalize these six principles find Wikipedia navigable, and often friendlier than they expected. The rules are public, consistently applied, and designed to reward the kind of engagement this guide describes.

Keep this. If a sentence would look at home in a brochure, it does not belong on Wikipedia.

Part 2

The Practice

“Bring Wikipedia material that meets its own standard, and the standard starts working for you.”

Section 4

The Engagement Protocol

Eight steps from audit to maintenance, without touching the article.

Read this when you have a change to propose and a blank Talk page in front of you.

Wikipedia rewards preparation and punishes improvisation. The eight steps below form a complete protocol for keeping your company's article accurate while staying on the right side of the conflict of interest rules. Notice what is absent: at no point do you edit the article itself. Every change moves through disclosure and request, and volunteer editors carry accepted changes into the article. This is the process Wikipedia's own guidelines prescribe, and editors recognize and respect it.

| Step 1 **Audit the Article and the Record**

Before anything else, assess the current state of your company's article. Note factual inaccuracies, outdated information, and missing developments such as leadership changes or new business lines. Read the tone: is it neutral, or does it lean? Then read the Talk page and the edit history, the public log of every change ever made to the article. Together they tell you who watches the article, what disputes have already been fought, and which arguments succeeded. An hour in the history saves weeks of friction later.

In practice. You might find the article still lists a CEO who departed two years ago, and the Talk page shows a prior undisclosed account was blocked for promotional editing. Both facts shape your approach: the first is your opening request, and the second means your disclosure needs to be spotless.

Step 2 Register an Account and Disclose

Create a Wikipedia account with a name that does not impersonate the company, then disclose. State your employer and role on your user page, and repeat the disclosure on the article's Talk page before your first request. If you are engaging as part of your job, the Terms of Use require paid-contribution disclosure whether or not you ever touch an article. Disclosure is the foundation everything else stands on, and it only works in advance.

In practice. “I work for XYZ Corporation in the communications department. In line with the conflict of interest guideline, I will be proposing updates on this Talk page and will not edit the article, with independent sources attached to each request.”

Step 3 Build the Source File

Gather the independent coverage before you draft a single request. Every proposal must rest on reliable, third-party sources: reputable news outlets, industry analysts, academic publications, official filings. Company materials can support basic uncontested facts, and no more. Organize what you find by the article section it supports, and note the gaps. Where independent coverage does not exist, a request cannot succeed, and knowing that in advance keeps you from spending credibility on losing proposals.

In practice. For a product launch, the press release announces the product; the independent review establishes it. File both, and lead with the review.

Step 4 Propose Changes as Edit Requests

The formal mechanism is the edit request: a Talk page post that states the current text, the proposed text, and the sources, wrapped in the request template so it enters the volunteer review queue. Make each request specific enough that a reviewing editor can act on it without research of their own. Exact wording, exact placement, sources attached. The easier a request is to act on, the sooner it gets acted on.

In practice. “Request: replace ‘The company reported revenue of \$1.2 billion in 2019’ with ‘The company reported revenue of \$2 billion in 2022,’ per this Bloomberg report [link]. The current figure is three years out of date.”

Step 5 **Sequence the Work**

Begin with small, uncontroversial requests: factual corrections, leadership updates, well-sourced recent developments. Space requests out so each can be reviewed on its own merits. A batch of simultaneous proposals, especially favorable ones, looks like an attempted overhaul and invites blanket suspicion. Early accepted requests build a track record that makes later, harder requests easier.

In practice. Open with the leadership correction. Once it is accepted, move to the product portfolio. Save anything touching the controversy section until your account has a history of clean, sourced requests.

Step 6 **Engage with the Editors Who Respond**

Volunteer editors may accept your request, decline it, or counter with modified wording. If a request is declined, ask why, listen to the answer, and adjust. Never respond to a decline by re-arguing the same points harder, and never touch the article to implement a declined request yourself. Consensus is the currency here, and it is earned through responsiveness. An editor who modifies your wording has engaged with your request; treat that as progress.

Keep in mind. Stay professional and courteous in every exchange. Defensiveness draws scrutiny to your entire request history, and future reviewers read the old threads.

Step 7 **Approach Contentious Sections with Context**

If the article covers lawsuits, layoffs, or controversies, work within that coverage. Requests to delete well-sourced criticism look like whitewashing to every reviewer, fail almost without exception, and poison the account's credibility for everything that follows. The productive move is addition: sourced updates on how a matter was resolved, what changed afterward, and what independent reporting said next. Section 7 treats this territory in detail.

In practice. If the company settled a lawsuit, request an addition: "In 2022, XYZ Corporation reached a settlement, as reported by [independent news source]. The company subsequently implemented new compliance measures, per [second source]."

Step 8 **Monitor and Maintain**

The work continues after requests are accepted. Add the article to your watchlist, the feature that alerts you when a page you follow changes, so you see every edit. Watch for vandalism, misinformation, and significant unsourced additions, and respond to each through the Talk page with sources in hand. Keep the cadence low. A steady drip of company-driven requests attracts the wrong kind of attention; occasional, well-founded ones build a reputation for good-faith stewardship. Section 14 covers the warning tags an unmaintained article can attract.

Followed in order, these steps let a corporate team keep its article accurate indefinitely without a single direct edit. The method delivers accepted changes and lasting credibility.

Keep this. Disclose, source, request, sequence, respond, maintain. At no step do you touch the article.

Section 5

Strategies for Minimizing Backlash

Eight ways to engage without inflaming the community.

Read this when a request is about to touch something sensitive.

When a request goes badly on Wikipedia, the cause is almost always how it was made: whether the conflict was disclosed, whether anyone was consulted, and what tone carried it. The eight strategies below address the how.

01 Lead with Disclosure

Undisclosed COI activity is viewed with deep suspicion, and the suspicion works backward: once discovered, it taints everything you contributed before. Declare your conflict on your user page and the article's Talk page, and disclose paid contributions as the Terms of Use require. Openness costs nothing and buys the presumption of good faith.

Example. "I am a corporate communications representative for XYZ Corp. Our CEO was recently succeeded by Jane Doe, and I would like to request that update, using this Wall Street Journal article as the source."

02 Argue from Independent Sources

Requests built only on company materials get declined as promotional. Reference reputable news outlets, industry reports, and government records, and let the sources carry the argument. Where your record includes controversy, acknowledge it and cite the reporting on how it was addressed. A request that engages the whole record is far harder to dismiss than one that cherry-picks it.

03 Consult Before You Ask

Editors are protective of the encyclopedia's neutrality, and significant changes proposed cold can land as demands. Raise substantial matters on the Talk page conversationally before filing the formal request, and invite reactions to your framing. The consultation itself signals respect for the culture, which lowers the temperature of everything that follows.

Example. “I would like to suggest rewording this section to reflect that the layoffs were part of a broader restructuring, as covered by Business Insider. Does this framing seem neutral to others watching this page?”

04 Keep Requests Factual, Never Promotional

Marketing language is the fastest tell of a corporate hand. Words like “leading,” “innovative,” and “cutting-edge” are flagged at once. Present achievements in measured, factual terms with the sourcing attached; the facts will do the promoting. A restrained request is a credible request.

05 Move Gradually on Sensitive Ground

Requests touching scandals, layoffs, or litigation draw the most scrutiny, and sweeping proposals in those areas provoke backlash even when individually defensible. Add context instead of requesting deletions, and break large revisions into small, reviewable pieces. Each accepted piece makes the next one easier.

Example. “Following the 2022 recall, XYZ Corporation implemented stricter quality control measures, as reported by Bloomberg.”

06 Anticipate the Objections

Editors are wary of corporate requests on legal disputes, controversies, and financial claims. Address the concern before it is raised: acknowledge the sensitivity, explain how your sourcing ensures neutrality, and cite the specific policies your request satisfies. Fluency in the guidelines signals that you have done the work, and reviewers extend more patience to requesters who have.

Example. “I understand this is a sensitive topic. I am proposing context on the resolution of the case, as covered by Reuters. The request is written to the NPOV and Verifiability policies.”

07 One Request at a Time

Several simultaneous requests, especially favorable ones, look like an attempted overhaul and get treated as one. Space your requests so the community can weigh each on its merits, and start with the least controversial. Trust accumulates request by request, and so does the reviewing editors’ familiarity with your account.

08 Never Escalate a Decline into a Dispute

If an editor declines a request, fighting the decision entrenches it. Ask what would make the proposal acceptable, offer alternative wording, and be willing to compromise. Consensus is how everything moves on Wikipedia, and flexibility on phrasing is usually the price of the substance. Accounts that treat declines as invitations to battle get blocked, and their requests die with them.

Keep in mind. If your proposal is seen as too promotional, work with the reviewing editor toward neutral phrasing. The editor who declined your request is often the editor who will accept its revision.

Keep this. Backlash traces to how a request was made, and the how is yours to control.

Section 6

Working Well with a Conflict of Interest

Tone, posture, and what to avoid.

Read this when you are drafting the message and unsure of the tone.

Engaging on Wikipedia with a COI takes transparency, professionalism, and patience in careful balance. Editors read tone before they read substance, and the postures below decide how far your sourcing gets you.

01 Be Calm and Patient

Approach every discussion with composure, including when your requests are challenged or declined. Emotional or defensive responses escalate tension and shrink the space for collaboration. Editors work readily with requesters who stay measured.

02 Be Clear, Polite, and Deferential

Use plain, concise language to explain what you are proposing and why. Politeness goes a long way, and acknowledging the work other editors have put into an article goes further. You are improving an article together, and the framing of every message should reflect that.

03 Be Inquisitive When Declined

If a request is turned down, ask why and invite feedback. Real curiosity about the reasoning signals good faith, and good faith is remembered.

04 Be Prepared and Transparent

Arrive with reliable, independent sources, and disclose your role fully. Undisclosed conflicts are flagged fast, and the discovery costs more than the disclosure ever would.

05 Be Direct but Diplomatic

Acknowledge the sensitivity of hard topics, and make clear that accuracy is the aim and the criticism stays. Frame proposals as the addition of sourced context. Directness about what you want, paired with respect for why editors might hesitate, is the posture that gets hard requests through.

06 Avoid Humor, Especially Sarcasm

Humor is easily misread in text, and sarcasm lands as condescension almost every time. In a COI engagement, keep every interaction plain and professional. Save the wit for internal channels.

Patterns that inflame

The patterns below reliably escalate conflict and reduce the odds your proposals are accepted.

Arrogance or dismissiveness. A tone that treats other editors' work as less informed triggers immediate resistance. The community runs on mutual respect and notices its absence instantly.

Overconfidence in your expertise. Knowing your industry does not outrank knowing Wikipedia's principles, and claiming it does alienates the people whose consensus you need.

Aggressive rebuttals. Pushing hard against criticism signals you are there to win, and it produces knee-jerk rejection.

A polished corporate voice. A heavy PR voice strikes volunteer editors as manipulation and raises immediate suspicion about motive. Write like a person.

Excessive apology. Over-apologizing comes across as unsure and invites editors to question the strength of your sourcing. Respect and firmness coexist comfortably.

Inflexibility. Signaling that you will not consider alternatives hardens opposition before the discussion starts.

Approaches that build trust

By contrast, the following postures consistently earn goodwill and compound across engagements.

A conversational register. Phrases like “I wonder if we could consider” and “I would value your thoughts on” open an exchange instead of a negotiation.

Respectful curiosity. Asking why content is structured a certain way, or why a request was declined, defuses tension and shows regard for other perspectives.

Balanced confidence. Prepared and informed without being dismissive. Calm self-assurance paired with openness to feedback signals thoughtful contribution.

Empathy for the article’s builders. Editors feel protective of pages they have shaped. “I can see how much work has gone into this section” opens doors that arguments cannot.

Informal but professional. The community appreciates an approachable voice. Drop the corporate voice and stay professional without it.

Deliberateness. A measured tone that considers the broader effect of a proposal signals investment in the encyclopedia itself.

On a volunteer platform, tone does much of the work, and the goodwill it builds pays off in every future engagement.

Keep this. Editors read tone before substance. Write like a person.

Section 7

Sorting Changes by Risk

What passes, what draws scrutiny, and what fails.

Read this when a request has landed on your desk and you need to know whether it will pass.

Not every request carries the same weight. Some are routine maintenance and pass with minimal review. Some are substantive and earn scrutiny. And some fail so reliably that the productive move is to ask for something else. The three tiers below sort the most common corporate requests, and each entry gives the request that lands and the sources that carry it. Find the request you have been handed, and you will know before you file it how it will be received.

Tier 1 Routine

Low-risk factual updates. Properly sourced, these typically pass without contest.

Office locations and headquarters. The company moved, and the business press covered it. Sources: news coverage of the move, with the company announcement as support.

Outdated logo. A rebrand happened and the article still shows the old mark. Sources: third-party coverage of the rebrand, or the published brand guidelines.

Awards and recognitions. An award counts when someone outside the company found it worth reporting. Sources: industry publications or mainstream media reporting the award.

Executive names, titles, and dates. The most common request there is, and the easiest to grant. Sources: business press coverage of the appointments.

Founding date, ownership, subsidiaries. Plain corporate facts, corrected from the record. Sources: official filings and established reference works.

Revenue figures. Numbers the company has already reported in public. Sources: annual reports, SEC filings, or the financial press.

New products. A product belongs in the article once someone independent has reviewed it. Sources: reviews and reporting from respected industry outlets.

Partnerships. A partnership that made the business pages can go in. One announced only by the partners waits. Sources: reputable business publications.

Dead links and broken citations. Repairing the article's own sourcing is a favor to every editor who watches it. Sources: archived versions or equivalent replacement sources.

Typographical and small factual slips. The text should match the sources it already cites. Sources: the citations already in the article.

Tier 2 Substantive

Material updates that warrant careful sourcing. Expect review, and raise these on the Talk page with your reasoning spelled out.

Leadership transitions. A change at the top, with the reporting to match. Expect a reviewer to check the dates. Sources: reputable business news covering the transition.

Historical acquisitions. History the article skipped, added with the record to back it. Sources: business archives and reputable reporting on mergers and acquisitions.

Workforce figures. Headcount becomes a fact for the article once someone other than the company has published it. Sources: company reports, independent surveys, or labor statistics.

Environmental record. Reviewers read this section closely in both directions, so bring the strongest sources you have. Sources: independent watchdog reports and reputable media.

Expanded company history. More of the story, told in the sources' words. Sources: business histories and analytical reporting.

Citation quality upgrades. Swapping a weak source for a strong one is welcome work, and reviewers notice who does it. Sources: reliable third-party publications and academic sources.

Correcting misinformation. A wrong fact comes out when the record shows it wrong. Sources: fact-checking organizations and primary records.

Market position. Market share is a claim until an independent research firm has measured it. Sources: research firms such as Gartner or Statista.

International expansion. New markets, reported by someone who does not work for you. Sources: global business press and industry analysis.

Workplace rankings. A ranking counts when its method is public and its publisher is independent. Sources: recognized workplace surveys with independent methodology.

Tier 3 Requests That Fail

Certain requests fail so consistently that filing them costs credibility with nothing gained. Each entry names the request, the reason it fails, and the version of it that can succeed.

Delete the controversy section. Well-sourced criticism belongs in the article, and a request to remove it looks like whitewashing to every reviewer who sees it. It also draws fresh eyes to the very material you wanted gone.

Instead: a sourced addition covering the resolution and what changed afterward, alongside the existing coverage.

Soften the language of criticism. Blunting sourced criticism is advocacy, and reviewers hold the proposed words up against the sources. **Instead:** additional independent sources that supply context or aftermath, added as new facts.

Reframe the layoffs. Framing belongs to the sources and the editors who weigh them, and a company's preferred frame is presumed self-serving. **Instead:** independent reporting on the restructuring, requested as a factual addition in the reporting's own language.

Remove an old scandal as outdated. Age alone does not retire coverage. Events that received serious reporting stay in the record. **Instead:** a sourced update on current status, and where warranted, an argument that the event takes more space than the overall coverage supports.

Answer critics inside the article. The article is no right-of-reply venue, and a company statement carries no independent weight. **Instead:** the company's response only as an independent outlet covered it, cited to that coverage.

Add favorable competitor comparisons. Selective comparison is promotion wearing the clothes of data. **Instead:** neutral market figures from independent research, stated without ranking language.

Replace the article with a company-written version. A wholesale replacement from a conflicted account is declined on sight, however good the draft. **Instead:** a numbered change log of specific proposals, each sourced, submitted one at a time for review.

Delete the whole article. Subjects almost never succeed in deleting articles about themselves once independent coverage exists. **Instead:** accuracy work inside the article, which is where the leverage is.

One exception. Unsourced or falsely sourced negative claims are a different matter entirely, and there Wikipedia policy is on your side. Material that fails verification can be challenged and removed, and claims about living people face an even stricter sourcing standard. Point to the policy, show the record, and keep the request narrow. Editors act quickly on well-founded verifiability challenges, because a verifiability challenge defends the encyclopedia itself.

Keep this. Tier 1 passes, Tier 2 earns review, Tier 3 costs credibility, and every Tier 3 request has a substitute that works.

Part 3

Hard Questions

“The bar is high by design. Honesty about where you stand is worth more than enthusiasm about where you want to be.”

Section 8

Frequently Asked Questions

Fifteen questions clients ask most often.

Read this when you have one question and five minutes.

These are the questions we hear most from corporate communications leads, public affairs professionals, and executives navigating Wikipedia for the first time. The answers are short by design. Each connects to a fuller treatment elsewhere in this guide.

Q1 Can I remove negative information about my company?

No. Deleting well-sourced critical content is treated as a violation of the neutrality policy, and requesting it damages your standing. The productive path is addition: sourced context and updates on how the issue was resolved. If a negative claim is unsourced or fails verification, that is a different matter, and policy supports a narrow, well-documented challenge. Section 7 has the full list of substitutes.

Q2 How do I correct inaccurate or outdated information?

File an edit request on the article's Talk page: current text, proposed text, and the reliable sources that support the change. Explain plainly why the existing information is wrong. A volunteer editor reviews the request and, if it holds up, makes the change. You never make it yourself. Section 4, Step 4 shows the form.

Q3 How long does it take for changes to be approved?

It varies. Small, uncontroversial requests may be handled within days. Substantial or sensitive ones can take weeks or longer, and the request queue runs on volunteer time that cannot be scheduled. Strong sourcing and a request that is easy to act on are the only levers you control.

Q4 Do I need to disclose my role?

Yes, without exception. Disclose your connection on your user page and on the Talk page of any article you engage with. If the engagement is part of your job, the Terms of Use require paid-contribution disclosure. Disclosure is what separates ethical engagement from covert influence, and the community treats it that way.

Q5 Can I use my company's press releases as sources?

Sparingly, and only for basic uncontested facts such as a launch date. Press releases are self-published and are treated as promotional. Independent coverage from reputable outlets is what carries a request, and a press release standing alone will sink one.

Q6 What sources does Wikipedia consider reliable?

Reputable news organizations, academic journals, established industry reports, and government publications. Corporate websites, marketing materials, sponsored content, and most blogs carry little or no weight. The test is editorial independence and a reputation for fact-checking.

Q7 Can I create an article for my company if one doesn't exist?

Only if the company meets Wikipedia's notability guidelines, which require significant coverage in multiple reliable, independent sources. A premature article gets deleted, and the deletion becomes part of the public record. Section 9 walks through the standard honestly, and Section 13 walks the path gate by gate. If the coverage exists, the path runs through Articles for Creation, the review queue every new draft passes through, with full disclosure.

Q8 What if an edit war starts around our article?

Stay out of it. If editors are reverting each other over content that concerns you, contribute sources and reasoning on the Talk page and let the community reach consensus. Joining a revert cycle from a conflicted account ends badly every time.

Q9 What if someone accuses me of biased editing?

Respond calmly and transparently. Point to your disclosure, restate your sourcing, and invite review of your requests. If your engagement has followed the protocol in this guide, the record defends you. That is one of the underrated benefits of doing it right.

Q10 How do I avoid being flagged as promotional?

Write in neutral, factual language and cut the sales language. Words like “innovative,” “leading,” and “cutting-edge” are red flags. Balance the record, cite independent sources, and avoid requests that only ever add favorable material. Section 14 explains what the promotional tag responds to.

Q11 What happens if my request is declined?

Ask the declining editor to explain, and treat the explanation as a roadmap. Many declined requests succeed on the second pass with better sourcing or more neutral wording. What never works is re-filing the same request unchanged, or making the edit yourself.

Q12 Should I hire a professional Wikipedia consultant?

It can be worthwhile if you are unfamiliar with the policies, and it can be catastrophic if you choose badly. The market includes operators who edit covertly and promise outcomes, and their work gets exposed and reversed. Evaluate any consultant on disclosure practices, verifiable standing in the editor community, and willingness to tell you no. Part 4 takes this up in full.

Q13 How do I keep my requests from looking self-serving?

Disclose your role, request instead of editing, cite independent sources, and engage with the unflattering parts of the record as readily as the flattering ones. A history of balanced requests is the strongest answer to the suspicion, and it accumulates.

Q14 How often should I monitor the article?

A weekly or monthly check is reasonable for most companies, with a watchlist set to notify you of changes. Monitor consistently and request sparingly. High-visibility companies during news events warrant closer attention.

Q15 Can Wikipedia articles be deleted?

Yes. Articles that fail notability or verifiability standards, or that are irredeemably promotional, get nominated and deleted through community discussion. If your article is nominated, engage calmly in the discussion with sources and policy-grounded arguments. If it is deleted, the answer is more independent coverage over time, and only then another attempt.

Keep this. Short answers here; the section named in each carries the rest.

Section 9

Why Your Company Probably Doesn't Qualify

An honest look at notability for corporations.

Read this when someone asks why the company has no article.

Whether you run a small business or lead marketing at a mid-sized company, you may wonder why your successful, well-regarded organization has no Wikipedia article. You have put in the years, earned industry recognition, perhaps generated real media coverage. So why are you absent from one of the world's most visited websites?

The answer lies in Wikipedia's strict standard for notability, which puts independent verification ahead of self-description. The test is documentation, and documentation is where most companies fall short: the work is real, and no one outside the company has written it down.

01 Notability: Wikipedia's Gatekeeper

Notability, as Wikipedia defines it, has nothing to do with how successful your company is. It refers to the presence of significant coverage in reliable, independent, secondary sources. That is the criterion for whether any subject warrants a standalone article. If that coverage does not exist for your company, no article will stand, regardless of how valuable the business is or how respected it is within its industry.

02 The General Notability Guideline

The General Notability Guideline, or GNG, is the overarching rule. A topic qualifies if it has received significant coverage in reliable, independent, secondary sources. Each of those words carries weight.

Significant coverage. In-depth articles or analyses about your company. A passing mention, a short blurb, or a directory listing does not count.

Independent sources. Outlets with no connection to the company. Company blogs, press releases, and marketing materials are excluded, and articles that merely republish your interviews generally are too.

Reliable sources. Publications with established reputations for fact-checking and editorial oversight. Major newspapers, respected journals, and academic publications qualify. Social media and self-published content do not.

Secondary sources. Analysis or commentary about the company by someone else. A journalist's assessment of your performance qualifies. An interview with your founder is a primary source and does not.

Qualifying requires significant coverage across multiple sources that satisfy all of these tests at once. Many companies, particularly growing or niche-focused ones, are not there yet.

03 An Even Higher Bar for Companies

Beyond the GNG, Wikipedia applies extra scrutiny to businesses through its organizations and companies guideline, known as NCORP. The community's working expectations there are demanding.

Multiple references. More than one or two articles. Strong company pages often rest on ten or twenty qualifying sources.

Depth. Whole paragraphs or entire articles devoted to the company, its history, and its offerings.

True independence. Trade publications that serve your own industry are often discounted, and sponsored or pitched coverage is discounted entirely.

Editorial reliability. Recognized outlets with real fact-checking. An industry blog, however well read, does not meet the standard.

Secondary analysis. Independent evaluation of the company. Founder interviews and launch announcements do not suffice.

For many mid-sized and regional companies this is the hard truth: a handful of trade features and local stories, however real, does not clear the bar. Without high-quality coverage across multiple independent outlets, the company is unlikely to qualify.

04 The Pitfalls of Hiring Covert Editors

Faced with these requirements, some companies turn to paid editors who promise fast results and work in secret, without disclosing their conflicts. The convenience is an illusion, and the risks are real.

Wasted money. The community hunts undisclosed paid editing as a sport. Flagged articles get scrutinized and deleted, and the spend produces nothing lasting.

Reputation risk. Covert editing operations have been exposed in major news outlets, and the resulting coverage does far more harm than the missing article ever did.

No permanence. Even a published article faces continuous review, and pages that fail the notability standard are eventually found and deleted.

05 The Ethical Alternative

If your company may qualify, there is a better path. Section 13 is the full route.

Build the source base first. Gather the independent, secondary coverage before considering an article: feature treatment in respected publications, national media, academic mentions.

Submit for community review. Use the Articles for Creation process with your conflict of interest disclosed. Volunteer reviewers weigh the sources and decide.

Hire consultants who disclose. An ethical consultant follows the disclosure rules, guarantees nothing, and will tell you honestly whether the record is ready. Editors who work in secret leave you with the risks above.

“A Wikipedia article is the recognition of a body of independent coverage the company has already earned.”

If the body of work is not there yet, build it through media engagement and industry contribution, and let the article follow. On Wikipedia, patience and verifiable coverage are the only shortcuts that exist.

Keep this. Notability is documentation, and the test is what independent outlets have written about you.

Section 10

Why You Probably Don't Qualify for a Biography

An honest look at notability for individuals.

Read this when someone asks why they have no article.

Most people, including the very accomplished and widely respected, do not qualify for a Wikipedia biography. That is no judgment on the work or the person. Wikipedia is an encyclopedia, and encyclopedias include only subjects with significant, independent, reliable, secondary coverage. Directories of professionals live elsewhere.

That requirement sits at the heart of Wikipedia's biography guideline, WP:NBIO, and it applies identically to artists, founders, academics, scientists, CEOs, organizers, and musicians. The question is the same for all of them: has this person been written about deeply, repeatedly, and independently by reputable publications? If the answer is no, then however extraordinary the career, Wikipedia is not yet the venue.

01 The People Who Most Often Fall Short

Highly successful individuals miss the bar constantly, and the shortfall traces to the documentation that exists, almost never to the quality of the work. The patterns below are the ones we see most.

Interview-driven media presence. The coverage is mostly interviews and PR-shaped pieces, and in every one of them the subject's own framing does the talking.

Local or niche-only press. Hometown papers and trade publications know you well, and they lack the editorial weight the standard asks for.

Pitched or paid placements. The piece exists because someone arranged it, wrote it, or paid for it, and reviewers can usually tell.

Audience without analysis. A large following proves reach. Notability needs someone serious to have examined the work.

Achievements without third-party study. The accomplishments are real, and no reporter, scholar, or critic has yet written them up in depth.

None of this is an insult. It reflects the difference between personal success and encyclopedic documentation. Wikipedia records how the world has chosen to write about someone, and that record either exists or it does not.

02 What Significant Coverage Really Means

Many people assume any media mention counts. It does not. A name-drop or a brief quote establishes nothing. Significant coverage is specific.

Articles substantially about you. Pieces where you are the subject of the reporting. A quoted source in someone else's story does not count.

Reporting that examines the work. Coverage that takes your career seriously enough to analyze it, at length.

Multiple pieces across multiple outlets. A single profile is rarely enough. Notability rests on a body of independent coverage.

A longform feature, a critical review, a reported analysis: sources like these form a defensible biography. Mentions in event writeups, listicles, newsletters, and alumni magazines signal activity without documenting notability.

03 Reliable, Independent, Secondary: All Three

WP:NBIO requires sources that satisfy all three conditions together.

Reliable. Publications with established fact-checking and editorial oversight: major newspapers, reputable magazines, academic journals, scholarly books. Personal websites, social media, newsletter platforms, company blogs, self-published books, sponsored content, and interviews you gave do not establish notability, even when their portrayal of you is accurate.

Independent. Coverage cannot come from you, your organization, your PR team, your clients, or your collaborators. If a piece exists because someone close to you arranged it, it does not count toward notability, wherever it was published.

Secondary. Wikipedia needs reporting about you; statements by you are primary. Interviews and first-person essays can support specific facts inside an article, and they cannot show that you belong in the encyclopedia. Secondary coverage means a journalist, scholar, or critic engaged your work on their own terms.

“A Wikipedia article should never be the goal. It is the byproduct of work the world has decided, on its own, to document.”

04 Who Does Qualify

Notable subjects share a common pattern: their work was judged important enough that others documented it at length without their involvement.

Multiple in-depth profiles. Substantial pieces in major or respected media that treat the subject seriously as a topic.

Significant awards with press coverage. Nationally or internationally recognized honors that prompted independent reporting.

A body of work analyzed by others. Contributions that critics, scholars, or journalists have engaged on their own initiative.

A central role in reported events. Material involvement in events covered seriously on their own newsworthiness.

Sustained third-party discussion. Work that kept people writing long after the news cycle moved on.

05 Why the Bar Is So High

Wikipedia’s rules exist to keep articles neutral, accurate, and verifiable. Without substantial independent coverage, a biography would have to rest on promotional material, unverifiable claims, or framing supplied by the subject. That is why Wikipedia does not accept a posture of trust me, I have done great things. It requires documentation from others, and the requirement is what allows a global reference work to remain trustworthy.

The path forward. The clearest path is to keep doing substantive, public-facing work that draws independent attention on its own merits. Over time, journalists write about work that warrants it, coverage accumulates, and a base of sources that clears the bar can emerge. At that point a Wikipedia biography becomes achievable, because it simply reflects the public record.

If you are unsure whether you or someone you represent meets the biography standard, we are glad to help. WikiBlueprint performs ethical notability evaluations: we audit the existing sourcing, weigh it against WP:NBIO, and deliver a written verdict with candid guidance on whether a draft is viable now or what would need to change first. We operate transparently and in full alignment with Wikipedia's conflict of interest and neutrality policies.

Keep this. Wikipedia records how the world has chosen to write about you, and that record either exists or it does not.

Part 4

Working with Help

“The right help works in the open, and stays through review.”

Section 11

Why You Shouldn't Hire a Wikipedia Consultant

The objections, and the realities they overlook.

Read this when you are deciding whether to bring in help.

When we started WikiBlueprint, the goal was simple: help organizations and individuals navigate Wikipedia ethically and effectively. But Wikipedia looks easy. It is free, user-generated, and open to everyone. So why hire a specialized consultancy at all?

Below are the six objections we hear most often, paired with the realities they tend to overlook. We share them because a mishandled Wikipedia engagement is one of the few communications problems with no fast fix once it goes public.

01 “We can do it cheaper.”

There is no shortage of freelancers offering cut-rate Wikipedia work, and you get what you pay for. The hidden costs arrive later: errors that take real effort to unwind, requests that violate the guidelines, and in the worst case an article deleted because it was created improperly. When that happens you are back at the start, with time lost and your credibility on the platform damaged, because the failed attempt is preserved in the record.

02 “We can do it ourselves.”

Anyone can engage with Wikipedia, and in-house teams regularly try. The editorial standards around notability, verifiability, and neutrality are unforgiving, and well-intentioned teams run into problems they did not anticipate. Requests are declined for reasons they cannot make sense of, drafts are rejected for sourcing they thought was strong, and the tone draws the scrutiny it was meant to avoid. The do-it-yourself route often costs more in cleanup than expert help would have cost at the outset.

03 “We don’t care how it gets done.”

Some clients want the article published and are indifferent to the method. On Wikipedia that posture backfires. Undisclosed paid editing and covert promotion lead to deletion, to account blocks that follow the company, and in exposed cases to press coverage that becomes its own crisis. The community is vigilant, and the archives are permanent. Publication is the easy part, and staying published is the whole point.

04 “It doesn’t look that hard.”

The editing interface is approachable, which misleads. Producing content that survives requires meeting the notability standard, sourcing every claim to reliable publications, clearing a high neutrality bar, and navigating a community whose established editors have built their judgment over decades. The learning curve is steep, and it is climbed in public, where every stumble is logged.

05 “Wikipedia isn’t that important for our business.”

The article outranks your website in search, feeds the answer boxes, and trains the AI assistants your customers now ask first. It is often where a potential client, partner, or journalist starts, and it carries a credibility your own channels cannot match because you do not control it. That lack of control is the strongest reason to take it seriously. Section 15 sets out how far the article now travels.

06 “Bigger shops must be better.”

Large PR agencies routinely hand Wikipedia work to junior staff still learning the platform’s policies. You believe you are buying senior counsel and receive a second-year associate’s education at your expense. What matters here is depth of experience inside Wikipedia’s community and an unbroken record of working within its rules. Headcount is no substitute for either.

Keep this. Publication is the easy part. Staying published is the whole point.

Section 12

Why You Should Hire WikiBlueprint

How we work, and where we fit.

Read this when you have decided to bring in help and want to know what to expect.

WikiBlueprint is an ethical Wikipedia consulting practice founded by Jake Orlowitz, a nineteen-year Wikipedia editor, English Wikipedia administrator, and founder of The Wikipedia Library at the Wikimedia Foundation. We are a founder-led team by design: veteran editors and administrators, an academic librarian who runs research, and two engineers. Every engagement gets senior attention, because there is no one else to hand it to.

Four commitments define how we work.

01 The Audit Comes First

Before any drafting begins, we run the full source audit: the deep sweep of press archives, trade publications, institutional records, and everything in between, weighed source by source against Wikipedia's tests. You receive a written notability verdict you can act on before committing to a larger engagement. When the honest answer is not yet, we say so in writing, along with what would need to change. Clients tell us the verdict alone was worth the fee, whichever way it came out.

02 Named, Verifiable Standing

Our founder's identity, editing history, and standing in the Wikipedia community are public and checkable. That matters in a market where many providers operate anonymously for reasons that become obvious later. When you disclose on a Talk page, the disclosure carries a two-decade record behind it, and the editors reviewing your requests can see who prepared the ground.

03 Finished Work, and You Post It

Everything we produce is finished work handed to you: exact proposed text, exact disclosure language, exact replies, ready to copy and paste. You never compose a word for Wikipedia, and you post everything under your own openly disclosed account. We never edit Wikipedia ourselves, on any engagement, under any circumstances. That division keeps the engagement transparent from end to end, and it leaves a public record your organization controls and can stand behind.

04 We Stay Through the Full Arc

Community review runs on Wikipedia's own clock, and most providers disappear once something is submitted. We stay: prepared responses to reviewer questions, policy-grounded replies to challenges, and monitoring after publication for reverts (an editor undoing a change), warning tags, and deletion nominations. An article's first year is when it is tested, and the engagement is built to cover it.

"Jake was able to teach me about editor norms and culture, as well as how to successfully engage with them. This resulted in my research institute's page being successfully updated with news and sources. Jake's strong ethical standards and deep understanding of Wikipedia processes has proven invaluable to me and my organization."

Seth Kroll, **Harvard**

What we promise

Wikipedia is reviewed by volunteers who weigh coverage differently from one another, and no consultant can promise that a reviewer will accept a proposal or act on any schedule. Pushing volunteers to move faster reliably backfires; patience and policy are what move requests.

What we promise is the work: proposals grounded in the strongest independent sourcing, argued as the analysis recommends, submitted openly, defended with policy, and written for you down to the last word, so that your only jobs are checking facts and pressing post.

We work inside Wikipedia's rules because articles built any other way do not last. We do not edit without disclosure. We do not write promotional copy. We do not promise outcomes the community would not endorse.

In closing. Wikipedia is an essential part of your organization's public record, and it is worth getting right. You could try to do it cheaper, do it yourself, or cut corners. On a platform this public and this closely watched, those shortcuts cost more than they save. If you want an accurate, ethical, lasting presence on Wikipedia, we would be glad to help.

Get in touch

WikiBlueprint

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"The most striking thing about Jake is his ability to build a strategic vision and light a flame to see it made real. Jake has inspired faith at the highest levels, and has rewarded that faith by delivering tangible, impressive results. I trust his vision; I trust his drive; I trust his ability to execute. When Jake tells me something is a good idea, I listen."

Maggie Dennis, **Wikimedia Foundation**

Keep this. We do the work and you post it, and the fee pays for the work.

Part 5

Deeper Dives

“The article is the foundation under everything that now describes you. Build it in the right order, keep it clean, and keep it current.”

Section 13

The Path to a New Article

Eight gates a new article passes through, in order.

Read this when the record is there and you want the article.

Three readers arrive at this section. One believes their organization or their work merits an article and wants to know how to create one. One tried, watched the draft get declined or the article get deleted, and wants to understand why. One manages a public profile for a living and is deciding whether Wikipedia belongs in the plan at all. The section is written for all three.

The honest answer to how to get a Wikipedia page is rarely a five-step checklist. Wikipedia has spent two decades building standards whose purpose is to keep most subjects from getting articles, and the path to one runs through those standards instead of around them. The standards are knowable, the path is repeatable, and subjects that meet the bar get articles that hold up over time.

Subjects that do not meet the bar do not get articles that last, whatever the skill of the consultant, the persistence of the submissions, or the cleverness of the strategy. The wall is real, and it is built into the system on purpose.

What follows is the process, organized into the eight gates a successful article passes through. Each gate explains why it exists, what policy governs it, what you do, and the condition to meet before moving on.

| Gate 1 **Confirm notability before anything else**

Wikipedia is an encyclopedia, and its model rests on the idea that articles exist for subjects the world has already taken notice of, never for subjects that hope the article will attract notice. The notability gate is what keeps the encyclopedia from becoming a directory.

The General Notability Guideline says a subject is presumed notable if it has received significant coverage in reliable sources that are independent of the subject. Each phrase does precise work. Significant means substantial discussion, not a passing mention. Coverage means written treatment of the subject as the focus of the piece. Reliable means published by an outlet with editorial oversight and a reputation for accuracy.

Independent means produced by people with no financial or organizational tie to the subject. All four conditions hold at once, in multiple sources. Sections 9 and 10 apply the test to companies and to people.

Set aside an afternoon and audit the coverage that exists. Open a spreadsheet. List every article, profile, study, book chapter, or major feature where the subject is the primary focus. For each entry note the publication, the date, whether the publication has independent editorial control, and whether the piece is about the subject or mentions it in passing. Then count the entries that pass all four tests. Three is a floor. Five to ten is a comfortable case. Ten or more, across years and outlets, is a strong one.

The most common mistake is counting sources that feel as though they should qualify and do not. Press releases never count, even when a news outlet republishes them. Sponsored content does not count. Profiles in publications the subject paid to appear in do not count. Interviews are mixed: one where the journalist did reporting of their own and supplied independent context can sometimes count, and a question-and-answer piece with soft questions cannot.

Trade publications that exist to cover an industry favorably rarely count. Local news depends on whether the outlet has editorial standards or functions as a community bulletin board.

Keep in mind. If you find yourself reaching, you do not have notability. The instinct to count borderline sources is the single biggest predictor of an article that will be deleted. Wikipedia editors have seen every version of this audit done dishonestly, and the bar is either met or it is not.

Before moving on, you should be able to point to at least three to five sources that any neutral reader would agree are independent, substantial, and from outlets with editorial standards. If you cannot, the answer is to build the coverage first, which is Gate 1B.

| Gate 1B **When you do not yet meet notability**

Most subjects who want an article do not yet qualify, and the most useful thing this section can do is say so plainly. Pursuing an article you do not qualify for is an impossibility problem, and no amount of effort turns it into a difficulty problem. The right move is to build the foundation that will eventually justify an article, then return to Gate 1 in a year or two.

Notability is earned. It accumulates as a byproduct of work that journalists, scholars, and researchers want to write about on their own initiative.

So stop thinking about Wikipedia and start thinking about your public record. Build relationships with the journalists who cover your field and be useful to them as a source on stories that are not about you. Speak where the program is selected editorially. Publish where there is editorial review. If you are a company, do things that are newsworthy beyond your own announcements. If you are a person, do work that other writers find worth analyzing.

Keep in mind. Hiring a public relations firm to chase coverage that will satisfy Wikipedia editors is a common move. It sometimes works, and it carries a risk. Editors can often tell when coverage was generated through a coordinated push, and coverage that shows the marks of one has been discounted more often at notability discussions over the past few years.

Return to Gate 1 only when you can name three to five new pieces of substantial, independent coverage that you did not pay for and did not write.

| Gate 2 **Confirm an article does not already exist**

Editors are protective of their work, and recreating an article on a subject that was deleted, merged, or redirected before is one of the fastest ways to have a submission rejected without serious review. Wikipedia keeps deletion logs, and any new submission on a title that was deleted for lack of notability gets extra scrutiny.

Search Wikipedia for the subject's exact name and its common variants. Then search the deletion log, at [Special:Log/delete](#), for the same terms. If a prior article existed and was deleted, read the deletion discussion, which the log usually links, and understand why. If the reason was notability and your situation has not changed in substance, you face a much higher bar.

Keep in mind. Some titles are salted: administrators have locked them against recreation after repeated low-quality submissions. A salted title is unlocked only by an administrator, and only on a strong showing that circumstances have changed.

Before moving on, you have either confirmed that no prior article exists, or you have read the prior deletion discussion and know what failed. If an earlier version was deleted for notability and your case has not strengthened substantially, do not proceed without expert guidance.

Gate 3 **Disclose any conflict of interest before you write a word**

Wikipedia runs on volunteer editing by people with no financial stake in what they write about. When someone with a conflict of interest edits without disclosing it, they violate the Terms of Use. When they are caught, which they almost always are, the consequences reach past the single article: the account is flagged, the subject's Talk page carries a permanent record of the violation, and the article becomes harder to maintain from then on.

Two rules apply. The conflict of interest guideline covers anyone with a personal, professional, or financial relationship to the subject. The paid-contribution policy covers anyone receiving compensation, directly or indirectly, for editing about the subject, and it is part of the Terms of Use every editor accepts on creating an account. Both require disclosure on the account's user page and on the Talk page of any article affected.

Before creating an account, decide who will do the posting. If you are the subject, an employee, a contractor, a board member, a publicist, or anyone compensated in connection with the work, you have a conflict and you disclose it. Create the account under a real name or one that identifies your affiliation.

Add the disclosure to your user page with the paid template, stating the relationship in plain English: who is paying, and on whose behalf. "Has an interest in this topic" is not disclosure. "Is employed by X and is proposing changes about X" is.

Keep in mind. Do not create a second, undisclosed account to do the work while keeping the disclosed one clean. Wikipedia calls this sockpuppetry, and its investigations process catches it routinely through technical and behavioral analysis. The consequences are indefinite blocks on every related account and, for paid editors, public naming on Wikipedia's noticeboards.

Before moving on, you have an account with an explicit, unambiguous disclosure of the conflict on its user page, posted before any request touches the subject.

Gate 4 **Build the source list before drafting prose**

Articles are built from sources outward, never from prose inward. Most failed submissions were written first and padded afterward with whatever citations the writer could find. Successful submissions start with a strong source list and say only what those sources support. The verifiability policy requires every substantive claim to trace to a reliable published source, and the no-original-research policy forbids drawing conclusions the sources did not draw.

Take the source list from Gate 1 and expand it. Find every substantial, independent piece of writing about the subject and read all of it carefully. Note what each source says and does not say. Group facts that appear in several sources, note discrepancies, and let the major themes emerge from the body of coverage. The result is a document that lists every important fact about the subject with the source that supports it. Facts no independent source mentions cannot go in. Facts that appear only in your own materials cannot go in.

Keep in mind. Be most careful with facts you know to be true that no reliable source has reported. The temptation to include them is strong because you know they are accurate. The policy is unambiguous: if no independent source has published it, it does not belong in the article, regardless of its truth.

Before moving on, you have a source-by-source notes document covering the subject's history, work, significance, and any well-documented controversies, long enough to support an article and disciplined enough that every fact traces to a specific source.

Gate 5 **Draft in encyclopedic prose**

Wikipedia has a specific tone, and learning to write in it is harder than it looks for anyone who has spent a career writing for another purpose. Marketing copy tries to make readers feel something. Encyclopedic prose tries to inform them without making them feel anything in particular. The neutral point of view policy asks articles to represent fairly, proportionately, and without bias the significant views published in reliable sources, and the Manual of Style covers tone, format, and structure.

Write in the third person, past tense for events and present tense for ongoing facts. Use the subject's full name in the opening sentence and a shortened form after that. Cut every word that carries an evaluation: leading, innovative, premier, world-class, renowned, acclaimed, pioneering, cutting-edge, passionate, committed. Cut every phrase that carries advocacy: is dedicated to, strives to, is committed to. If a sentence could appear unchanged on the subject's About page, rewrite it.

Include the harder material where independent sources have covered it: controversies, criticism, regulatory actions, lawsuits, leadership turnover, layoffs. An article that omits significant negative coverage from reliable sources fails the neutrality policy and will be flagged.

In practice. A promotional draft reads to its author as fair and accurate, because the author has spent months inside the subject's point of view. Read the draft aloud, or better, have someone with no connection to the subject read it aloud, and watch for the moments when the prose tips toward advocacy. Those are the sentences to rewrite.

Before moving on, you have a draft an experienced editor would describe as flat and informative. If your draft is exciting to read, it is probably wrong.

Gate 6 **Submit through Articles for Creation**

Articles created directly in the encyclopedia by new editors, above all by editors with a conflict of interest, draw more scrutiny and faster deletion than articles submitted through the proper channel. Articles for Creation gives new submissions a structured review by experienced editors before they appear in the encyclopedia, and the conflict of interest guideline asks editors with a conflict to use it. Going through it signals respect for the process and improves the outcome for a disclosed submission.

Open the Article Wizard, which walks a new editor through the submission step by step. Paste in the draft. Confirm that the disclosure is visible. Submit for review. Then wait; the review queue runs from a few weeks to several months depending on the backlog.

If the submission is declined, read the reviewer's feedback carefully. Most declines come for one of three reasons: insufficient notability, promotional tone, or insufficient independent sourcing. Each is addressable, and only by going back to the relevant gate and doing the work. Resubmitting without addressing the substance brings a faster second decline.

Keep in mind. Do not respond defensively to a reviewer, and do not argue about whether the sources suffice. The reviewer is applying standards settled long before your submission, and argument hardens their position. The productive response to a decline is to fix what the reviewer flagged.

Before moving on, you have a submission with an explicit disclosure, a strong source list, and encyclopedic prose, and if declined, you have responded by addressing the feedback.

| Gate 7 **Engage the community after acceptance**

Once an article is accepted, the work shifts from creation to maintenance. Articles do not stay good on their own, and articles about organizations are prone to drift, vandalism, and one-sided edits by people who understand the subject less well than you do. Engaging the community properly from the first day establishes you as a responsible contributor and makes every later request easier.

The rule that runs through this Guide holds after publication as it held before: with a conflict of interest, you do not edit the article. Add it to your watchlist so you see every change. When you spot a factual error, post on the Talk page with the request template, explain the error, cite the source that supports the correction, and wait for a reviewing editor. When the article needs a substantive update, go through the same process. Be patient, be specific, and cite a source for every requested change. Section 4 gives the full protocol.

Keep in mind. The temptation to edit directly grows with time, especially for small changes that feel obviously right. Resist it. A pattern of direct edits from a conflicted account, even trivial ones, becomes a record that can be used to question your good faith on the edits that matter.

Before moving on, you have an established pattern of Talk page requests for every change, with a track record of cited proposals that uninvolved editors have implemented.

Gate 8 **Maintain the article over time**

Articles age. Information goes stale, new events happen, and independent coverage keeps accumulating; a healthy article reflects all of it. An article that is created and then ignored degrades, and AI systems drawing from an outdated article produce outdated descriptions. Search results built on a stale article describe an organization that may no longer exist in the form the article describes.

Schedule a quarterly review. Read the article. Note what has changed in the world that the article does not yet reflect, and what new independent coverage has appeared. File requests for the updates the article needs. Watch for new tags, and respond promptly when an issue is raised on the Talk page. Section 14 covers the tags in full.

“The article you stopped paying attention to two years ago
is the version of you that AI systems are still describing
today.”

The condition here has no end date: a pattern of regular, light-touch engagement that keeps the article current, neutral, and well sourced over years.

What this looks like done right

An organization that works through the eight gates carefully ends up with something of real value: an article that is accurate, defensible, and free of the cleanup tags that erode trust across every system that draws on Wikipedia. That article represents the organization across search results, AI summaries, and knowledge panels for years, with light maintenance, because it was built correctly the first time.

An organization that skips gates ends up with something different: a draft declined at review, an article tagged or deleted soon after creation, and a public record on the Talk page of the shortcuts it tried. The downstream problem in AI-mediated search is harder to fix than the original work would have been. What separates the two outcomes is whether the work was done in the right order, with the right disclosures, on a foundation of independent sources.

Keep this. Right order, right disclosures, independent sources.

Section 14

Warning Banners

What the tags mean, why they stay up, and how they come off.

Read this when there is a yellow box at the top of your article.

Several thousand Wikipedia articles about companies and organizations carry a cleanup tag at any given time. It is a pale yellow box at the top of the page saying, in plain prose, something like "this article reads like an advertisement." The problem is fixable, and many organizations have fixed it. The path is more direct than it looks once you understand what the tag is doing, and it is worth understanding that before deciding what to do.

01 What you are dealing with

Start with visibility, because it shapes everything else.

By the numbers. The English Wikipedia receives on the order of 4,500 pageviews a second. For a query that matches a real organization, its article is typically the first or second organic result, and one widely cited industry analysis found Wikipedia articles on roughly 73 percent of first-page Google results. Almost nothing on the open web competes with it for attention.

If your article gets a few hundred views a day, that is the daily readership of a mid-sized trade publication, landing on a single page about you, every day. A few thousand views moves the comparison to a regional newspaper.

Multiply by 365 and the annual exposure becomes a meaningful share of your earned-media footprint. None of it is yours to control or place, and most of it is read by the people whose impression of you matters most: journalists doing background, prospective hires before an interview, donors before a check, partners before a contract, regulators before an inquiry.

When the page leads with a yellow box saying the article may be unreliable or promotional, the box is the first thing all of those readers see, ahead of your founding date, your mission, your products, and your awards. That is the unseen cost, every day the tag stays up.

02 What the banner says about you

Cleanup tags look unassuming: a pale box, a line or two of procedural phrasing, a link to a policy page few readers open. It is easy to assume articles simply have them. They do not. Of roughly seven million articles in the English Wikipedia, tagged company and organization articles are a small fraction, and each one was flagged because a volunteer editor read it and concluded it had a real problem.

The editor who placed your tag almost certainly does not know who you are, holds no view of your industry, and is unlikely to return to your article. A small, dedicated group of editors specializes in this work. They patrol thousands of pages a year through maintenance categories, internal lists of every article flagged for a given problem, with names like "Articles with a promotional tone." Yours was flagged because it tripped one of their well-developed pattern recognizers, not because anyone is targeting you.

"You are not in a fight with anyone. You are dealing with a system that responded predictably to specific signals in your article, and those signals can be addressed."

03 Why it matters more than it used to

A few years ago, you could argue that the article was one of many sources a reader might check. That argument no longer holds. The article feeds the knowledge panel beside search results, the summary at the top of other engines, and the research tools built on the open web.

It is the single most-cited source across the AI assistants, and when it carries a cleanup tag, those systems often surface the caveat. AI overviews have been observed quoting cleanup banners directly, and knowledge panels can render with weaker confidence signals. Anyone using a research tool that cites Wikipedia gets the tag along with the content.

The damage is a slow loss of trust at the moment someone forms a first impression, multiplied across every search and every query. The encouraging side is the inverse. When the tag comes off, those surfaces update. The cleanup language disappears from AI summaries within days, sometimes within hours for systems that re-crawl often, and the knowledge panel renders without a caveat. It is one of the few reputation interventions with a clear before and after, on a timeline you can roughly predict.

04 Why it got tagged

Editors who do cleanup work are patient, methodical, and indifferent to your competitive landscape. They look for specific problems, and when they find them, the problems are usually real. Four tags account for most cases.

The tone reads like marketing copy. Phrases such as leading provider, innovative solution, trusted by, world-class, cutting-edge, passionate about, committed to excellence, or any sentence that could appear unchanged on your About page. The tag is {{advert}}, applied when more than a sentence or two crosses the line. An encyclopedia is flat, almost dull. It reports what happened, and your page should too.

The sources are too close to the subject. Citations that are mostly your own website, your press releases, interviews in which your executive does the talking, and trade publications that exist to cover your industry favorably. The tag is {{primary sources}}. The substance of an article rests on what unaffiliated journalists, scholars, and researchers have written about you. A bylined article in a major newspaper counts; a press release republished in a trade outlet usually does not.

The article omits what an independent observer would include.

Controversies, criticism, regulatory actions, lawsuits, leadership turnover, layoffs. An article in which only good things ever happened is not telling the truth about an organization the way an outsider would tell it. The tag is {{POV}}, for the neutral point of view policy, the most basic of Wikipedia's content rules.

The article was written by someone with a financial connection. Bursts of edits from a single account that edits only this article; a username that matches an employee; detailed knowledge of internal matters no independent source reported. The tag is {{COI}}, and it is the one to worry about most, because it is the hardest to remove without doing the work properly.

If any of these describes your article, the tag is doing its job. The path forward is editorial.

05 What not to do

The single worst move is to remove the tag yourself. It will not last. Editors keep watchlists, personal feeds of the articles they follow, and the editor who placed your tag almost certainly added your article to theirs. So did others, because tagged articles appear automatically in maintenance categories that other patrollers monitor. Removals are caught within days, often within hours. The tag goes back up, and now you have a record of trying to bypass the process, which makes everything that follows harder.

Your edit history is examined, your account may be flagged for review on the conflict of interest noticeboard, and the article may attract a second tag. The Talk page may turn into a discussion of you that lives in the public record and is the first thing the next editor reads.

The second move to avoid is hiring a firm that promises to clean up the article fast and out of sight. The community has spent two decades learning to spot paid editing that breaks the rules. Firms that work this way get caught, their clients are sometimes named in public investigations, and the articles often end up worse than they started. Once an organization is associated with such a firm, the cleanup becomes much harder.

Neither warning is meant to frighten. They are predictable failure modes, and knowing them puts you ahead of most organizations that have tried to handle this on their own.

06 The honest read

Open your article and read it aloud if you can. Ask whether it sounds like an encyclopedia entry or like something your communications team wrote for the website. If it sounds like the second, you have found the problem.

Then look at the citations. Open every link and count how many go to your own properties, how many to press releases, and how many to independent journalism or scholarship. A healthy article has most of its citations in the third group. If yours leans on the first two, it stands on a foundation Wikipedia does not consider strong enough.

Then check what is missing. Search the news for your organization's name alongside words such as controversy, lawsuit, criticism, investigation, or layoffs. If significant things happened that any independent observer would write about, and they are nowhere in the article, that is part of the picture. Including the harder material, where independent sources covered it, is usually what moves an article from promotional to encyclopedic. It is the part most organizations resist, and the part that does the most work.

Last, ask whether you or anyone in your organization edited the page directly. Editors can usually tell. If it happened without disclosure, the account is already outside the conflict of interest rules and the Terms of Use, and that history shapes how every later request is received.

07 What to do

Now you know what the tag responds to. The next step is to engage the community on the article's Talk page. Identify yourself clearly as someone connected to the organization, using the connected contributor template. Explain what you would like to see addressed. Propose specific changes for editors to review and implement through the request system, citing the policies by name: neutral point of view, verifiability, no original research, reliable sources.

Show respect for the volunteers who keep the project running, and be patient when they push back. Section 4 gives the protocol step by step, and Section 5 the tone that carries it.

In practice. Editors are not your adversaries. They are usually relieved when someone connected to the subject shows up and says, in plain language, "I have a conflict of interest, here is what I think the article needs, what would you suggest?" That posture is rare. Editors recognize it at once, and it is the single strongest predictor of a good outcome.

Sequence the work so the sourcing fixes come first and the request to remove the banner comes last, once the article the banner described no longer exists. A tag removed by an uninvolved editor after the work is done stays off. Organizations that handle this well do more than lose the tag. They end up with a stronger article than they started with, because the work of addressing a cleanup tag is the work of building an article that holds up over time.

Keep this. The tag responds to signals in the article, and the signals can be addressed.

Section 15

Wikipedia in the Age of AI

How language models use the article, and what that means for you.

Read this when someone asks an AI assistant about you and does not like the answer.

For most of its first two decades, Wikipedia was something close to a public utility. People used it to settle arguments, look up dates, and orient themselves on unfamiliar topics. It was the most-visited reference work in history, and it sat alongside other sources, one tab among many. That has stopped being true. Wikipedia is now the substrate under the systems that increasingly answer questions for everyone else.

The implication for an organization is direct. The quality of your article now shapes how AI systems describe you, how research tools summarize you, how knowledge panels frame you, and how the next generation of search talks about you. If the article is incomplete or carries a cleanup banner, those problems propagate. If you have no article, the systems that mediate public knowledge fill the silence with whatever they can find, which is rarely what you would have written.

01 How the models use the article

Large language models depend on Wikipedia in two distinct ways. The first is training. When a model is built, it ingests a vast body of text from the open web, and Wikipedia is among the most heavily weighted sources in it. The paper that introduced GPT-3, still the most detailed disclosure any major lab has made about training composition, listed the English Wikipedia as a discrete dataset.

It made up about three percent of the training tokens by volume and was sampled at roughly three times the weight of the general crawl of the open web, so the model saw Wikipedia far more often than its share would suggest.

The reasoning, consistent across every lab since, is that Wikipedia is well edited, structured by topic, written in consistent prose, cross-referenced, and licensed for reuse. Whichever assistant someone asks about your organization has, at some level, learned the answer from Wikipedia first.

The second is retrieval. Modern systems do not rely only on what they learned in training; they fetch current material from the web in response to a question and weave it into the answer. When they retrieve information about an organization, Wikipedia is the most-cited source by a wide margin. A 2025 study by Profound of 680 million AI citations found Wikipedia accounted for nearly half of ChatGPT's ten most-cited sources, far ahead of any other domain.

The combined effect is that Wikipedia shapes AI output twice: at the foundation, through training, and at the surface, through retrieval. No other source occupies both positions. Major newspapers shape training and rarely surface as citations at the moment of answering; specialty databases surface at runtime and contribute little to training. Wikipedia does both, for almost every topic, in almost every system.

02 What this means for you

Translate that into the experience of someone asking about you. A journalist preparing for an interview asks an assistant to summarize your organization. A graduate student asks another to explain what you do. A potential donor types your name into a third. A regulator's staffer asks a fourth for your history. A prospective hire searches, and an AI overview writes an answer at the top of the page before they scroll.

In every one of those encounters the answer is shaped, often disproportionately, by your Wikipedia article. If the article is thorough, neutral, and well sourced, the answer reflects that. If the article is thin, the answer is thin. If the article leans toward your own messaging, the system may repeat the bias or strip it out and present a hollow remainder.

If the article carries a banner saying it reads like an advertisement, the system may quote the banner. If there is no article, the system may invent plausible details, decline to answer with confidence, or fall back on whatever marketing material it can find.

This is what makes the moment different from earlier eras of online reputation. Search optimization was a contest over which links appeared in a list. Social media was a contest over what appeared in a feed. Both were public and contestable. AI-mediated information is different: the reader sees no list of sources to weigh, only an answer, generated for them, that they tend to trust as a synthesis of expert knowledge.

By the numbers. Pew Research found in 2025 that about eight percent of users who encounter a Google AI overview click through to a traditional result, roughly half the rate for standard results. The share of searches that end without any click rose from 56 to 69 percent in a single year. For a growing share of your audience, what the summary says is the entire encounter.

03 The feedback loop

A second-order effect changes what comes next. Language models now generate enormous volumes of web content: articles, blog posts, marketing copy, press releases, product descriptions, even news. Research by Graphite found that nearly half of new web articles published in late 2024 were generated with AI in some form, up from about five percent before ChatGPT's launch. A growing share of that content is indexed, cited, and used as evidence for further claims.

This creates a problem for Wikipedia in particular. Its sourcing standard asks that claims rest on independent, reliable publications, and the community spent twenty years developing judgments about which outlets qualify. Those judgments now have to account for the possibility that the outlet itself publishes machine-written content of uncertain origin.

The community is responding in real time. Source policies are tightening; outlets once accepted have been moved to deprecated status, which bars them as sources, or allowed only in narrow contexts; editors are more skeptical of claims without several independent corroborating sources; and proposals on machine-generated content appear on the policy noticeboards regularly. The bar for adding material to an article is going up.

This cuts two ways at once. The importance of a strong Wikipedia presence is rising, because Wikipedia is now infrastructure for AI. The difficulty of building or improving one is rising too, because the editorial standards are tightening. Shortcuts that would have worked five years ago now hit walls. The reverse also holds: organizations that earn coverage in independent journalism, do work that scholars write about, and build a public record on independent sources will do better than they ever have.

04 When there is no article

Many organizations are outside this conversation because they have no article at all. That used to be a neutral state. It is no longer neutral. Asked about an organization with no article, a system works with what it can find: the organization's own marketing, scattered mentions, social media, sometimes nothing.

The results are uneven. Some answers are reasonable. Some are thin, or glossy in a way that mirrors the marketing verbatim. Some are wrong, attributing facts that are not true or confusing the organization with another entity that shares part of its name; for organizations with common-word names, the rate of confusion is striking. None of it is hostile. It is what happens when a system built for synthesis runs out of independent material to synthesize.

The decision to pursue an article is therefore no longer a question about Wikipedia. It is a question about whether you are willing to let AI systems describe you from whatever they can scrape, or would prefer a neutral, well-sourced reference for them to draw on. The bar to inclusion is real: Sections 9 and 10 set it out, and Section 13 walks the path. Many organizations meet it without realizing. Many others are closer than they think. Some are not there, and the right move is to build the coverage first.

05 What to do, in three cases

You have a strong article. The work is maintenance. Watch for changes and for tags. Make sure new developments are reflected when independent sources cover them, through the protocol in Section 4. The biggest risk is drift: leadership changes go unrecorded, recent work is missing, and the systems describe an organization years out of date.

You have a weak or tagged article. The work is to address what is wrong. Read it as an outsider would, understand what the tags respond to, and engage the community with proper disclosure until the article represents you fairly on independent sources. Section 14 covers the tags. The downstream effect on AI descriptions follows, often within days or weeks of the article improving.

You have no article. The work is upstream. Earn the coverage that would justify one; do work that journalists, researchers, and scholars want to write about; build the independent record that supports a neutral entry. Then pursue the article through Section 13, or accept that the work itself is the foundation and the article follows as coverage accumulates.

In all three cases the principle is the same. Wikipedia rewards substance over messaging, and the organizations that come through this transition well are the ones whose public record is strong enough that an encyclopedia entry built from it represents them accurately.

06 The longer view

It is tempting to see this as a problem to solve. It is closer to a shift in how public knowledge is mediated, comparable in scale to the move from print encyclopedias to online ones, or from telephone directories to search engines. Earlier shifts produced winners and losers, and the losers were rarely the organizations doing the underlying work well. They were the ones managing perception instead of substance, who discovered that the new medium did not reward what the old one had.

Wikipedia has always rewarded substance, and the systems built on it inherit that bias, often without intending to. An organization with independent coverage, written about by people who do not work for it, comes through the transition stronger than it went in. An organization that built its public presence on press releases and curated messaging finds the new infrastructure cannot be steered the way the old one could: one 2025 analysis of four million AI citations found syndicated press releases accounted for 0.04 percent of them.

By the numbers. The Wikimedia Foundation reported in October 2025 that human pageviews had fallen about eight percent year over year, and roughly 23 percent since 2022, as AI summaries answer questions without sending readers through. Wikipedia's role has not shrunk. People still encounter it, through intermediaries, and the article still does the work. It does the work invisibly now, inside answers that may not say where they came from, which makes the article matter more.

“A small yellow banner used to be a minor nuisance. It is now a signal that travels through the systems people trust to tell them what is true. The same holds in reverse: a strong, well-cited article is the foundation for being represented well in a world where AI is increasingly the first answer, and often the only one.”

The strategic implication has held for years; the urgency is new. The work of earning a strong public record, supporting a neutral and well-sourced article, and engaging the community properly when adjustments are needed now carries the weight of nearly every system's account of who you are.

The work itself is what it has always been: deep research into independent sources, carefully drafted prose that meets Wikipedia's standards, transparent disclosure, respectful engagement with the editors, and ongoing attention to keep what was built from drifting. What has changed is what that work is in service of.

Keep this. What the article says is what the machines repeat.

Glossary

A working vocabulary for Wikipedia engagement.

The terms below appear throughout this handbook and are central to Wikipedia's editorial culture. Many carry the WP: prefix that marks a Wikipedia policy or guideline. Familiarity with this vocabulary is the difference between requests that get accepted and requests that get declined.

Articles for Creation (AfC)

The process by which new article drafts are submitted for community review before publication. The required path for editors with a conflict of interest. Section 13, Gate 6.

Cleanup tag

A banner placed at the top of an article by a volunteer editor to flag a problem: promotional tone, sources too close to the subject, missing viewpoints, or a financially connected author. Section 14.

Conflict of Interest (COI)

A relationship between an editor and an article's subject that creates an incentive for biased editing. Wikipedia requires COI editors to disclose openly and to propose changes on the Talk page in place of editing articles directly.

Deletion discussion

A community debate, open for about a week, on whether an article should be kept or deleted. Sources and policy carry weight in it; the subject's importance carries none. Section 8, Q15.

Edit Request

A formal Talk page proposal, entered into a volunteer review queue, that states the current text, the proposed text, and the supporting sources. The standard mechanism for COI contributions.

Edit War

A cycle of editors repeatedly undoing each other's changes. A serious violation of collaborative norms that can result in blocks. The remedy is Talk page discussion.

General Notability Guideline (GNG)

Wikipedia's overarching rule for whether a subject warrants a standalone article. Requires significant coverage in reliable, independent, secondary sources.

Independent Source

A source with no connection to the article's subject. Excludes the subject's own publications, press releases, paid placements, and content produced by collaborators. Independence is a precondition for establishing notability.

Notability

The standard a subject must meet to qualify for an article, established by significant coverage in reliable, independent, secondary sources. A subject's importance or success is not the test.

Neutral Point of View (NPOV)

Wikipedia's core editorial policy: content presented fairly, proportionately, and without editorial bias. Significant viewpoints are represented in proportion to their coverage in reliable sources.

No Original Research (NOR)

The policy prohibiting unpublished facts, interpretations, or analyses. All content must trace to previously published reliable sources, and editors may not synthesize new claims from them.

Paid Editing

Contributing to Wikipedia in exchange for compensation, direct or indirect. The Terms of Use require disclosure of all paid contributions, naming the employer, the client, and the affiliation. Undisclosed paid editing is a serious violation that can result in bans and deletions.

Primary Source

Material produced by an article's subject or by direct participants: interviews, press releases, official statements, self-published work. Primary sources can support specific facts and cannot establish notability.

Reliable Source

A publication with a reputation for accuracy, fact-checking, and editorial oversight: major newspapers, peer-reviewed journals, established magazines, respected industry publications. Excludes personal blogs, social media, self-published works, and paid placements.

Salted title

An article title that administrators have locked against recreation after repeated low-quality submissions. Unlocked only by an administrator on a strong showing that circumstances have changed. Section 13, Gate 2.

Secondary Source

A source that analyzes, evaluates, or interprets primary material. Independent journalism, scholarly analysis, and critical reviews qualify. Notability is established primarily through secondary coverage.

Significant Coverage

Substantive treatment of a subject: articles substantially about it, examining its work or impact in depth. Passing mentions and brief quotes do not qualify.

Sockpuppet

A second account used to hide who is editing. Wikipedia's investigations process catches them through technical and behavioral analysis, and every linked account is blocked. Section 13, Gate 3.

Speedy deletion

Removal of an article without a debate, applied to articles that are plainly promotional or plainly fail the standard. Section 8, Q15 and Section 13, Gate 6.

Talk Page

The discussion page attached to every article, where editors propose changes, raise concerns, and build consensus. The required venue for editors with a conflict of interest.

Verifiability (WP:V)

The policy that all content must be supported by reliable published sources other editors can check. Verifiability is the threshold for inclusion, and even accurate information can be removed if it cannot be verified.

Watchlist

A personal feature that notifies an editor of changes to tracked articles. Useful for monitoring your organization's article for inaccuracies, vandalism, and significant changes.

WP:NBIO

The notability guideline for biographies. Requires that a person has received significant coverage in reliable, independent, secondary sources.

WP:NCORP

The notability guideline for organizations and companies. Stricter than the general guideline, requiring multiple in-depth sources with full editorial independence from the subject.

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