Whatever may be the content, following the rules regarding language makes a report effective:

- Simple and clear language should be used.
- Poetic, complex or ambiguous language should be strictly avoided.
- Clear, direct and apt vocabulary is preferred.
- Jargon, unknown and unfamiliar vocabulary are not preferred.
- Impersonal language usage makes it more credible.
- Coherence in terms of subject matter is highly essential.
- Positive language reflects the writer's positive attitude.

To write an effective report, you need to know the essential parts of it. They are:

1. **Preliminary pages**
   a. Cover page
   b. Title page
   c. Certificate
   d. Acknowledgements
   e. Contents page along with chapter headings and page numbers
   f. Preface/foreword
   g. List of tables
   h. List of graphs and diagrams
   i. Abstract

2. **Main Text**
   a. Introduction: Introduce the theme of the report, review of related literature, methodology followed by the person/s
   b. Main findings: Statistical analysis, testing of hypothesis
   c. Conclusions and recommendations

3. **End Matter or supplementary parts**
    a. Appendix/appendages
    b. References/bibliography
    c. Glossary

Depending on the type, format and nature of a report, the parts to be included are decided. If it is only a letter format, all these parts are omitted. If it is a progress report, it talks about only the present condition, and suggestions are not included. Similarly, if it is an informative report, it is supposed to give the required information. If it is analytical in nature, it should analyse and offer necessary recommendations. Thus, the parts to be included depend on the choice based on the need and the purpose. We will discuss here how to write each part effectively.

Preliminary Pages

Cover page: Should consist of name of the report, name of the author, organizational affiliation, time period spent, time, publisher (if it is published). The cover page usually consists of a diagram or pictorial representation of the matter discussed inside the document.

Title page: Should include the name and designation of the receiver, title of the report, name and designation of the approving authority along with the date of submission.

Certificate: Only the reports that need to be validated, like project reports, research reports and the like need a certificate. There are standard formats in universities, institutions and organizations. A certificate without the signature of the signatory authority is not valid.

Acknowledgements: The only part of a report where the author assumes a personal tone. The writers wish to express their acknowledgements to all those who helped them in the endeavour, so acknowledgements are quite unique and personal to each report and we will not give a sample.

Contents page along with chapter headings and page numbers: This page gives a clear understanding of the number of chapters, their sub-divisions, and the corresponding page numbers. When the outline of it is drawn, the division of different chapters is indicated. Page numbers can be given only when the writing is completed. So, though this page is included in the primary pages, this can be written only at the end. A sample is given to study and understand the chapter division.

Synopsis/abstract: The writer should address the readers guiding them regarding the objectives, methodology adapted by the writer in conducting the work, tools used, layout, and significance of the work done. Synopsis/abstract is a statement of all this. By reading the abstract of a project report, any specialist will be able to judge the quality. So a technical report should have an effective abstract that will throw light on the major aspects. If it is a longer one, it needs a summary, i.e., the report in a nutshell.

Preface/foreword: An abstract is meant for only specialists of the concerned field, but a preface/foreword is meant for everyone. It is included in published versions of reports. This details the entire thought process of the writer during the process of writing. Right from the aim with which it started, how the contents are divided into chapters, unique features and findings, major uses, to general acknowledgements—all are included. A foreword guides the reader whether to read the document further or not, i.e., it helps in the selection of suitable reading material.

List of tables, graphs, and diagrams: In many technical and business reports, it is essential to convert the data into non-verbal items like tables, charts, graphs and diagrams. All of them should be numbered. Each of the non-verbal items should be unique, and should indicate the number of the chapter and then the number of that item. Observe the numbers given to the tables in this chapter.

Main Text

The main text of the report begins with an introduction, proceeds to main findings or observations and ends with a conclusion. This is the vital and major part of the document.

Introduction: The introduction informs about the necessity of the work done, its significance and the objectives and methodology followed by the investigator/s. The introduction should detail the context and circumstances that led the investigator/s to take up the project, like the order of higher authority, as part of a job, or as a special assignment. The main text projects the objectives with which the investigation began, and which direct the entire work. The objectives may be multiple and interdisciplinary in nature. The methodology used to do a laboratory experiment is different from that of a telephonic survey conducted to gather information. The introduction should give details about the survey of literature and methodology followed by the investigator/s. Mention the document's plan and layout, so that the reader will have a clear idea of the entire report.

Findings: Then proceed to give the details of all major findings and observations. The arrangement of the information should facilitate the reader to grasp the outcome of the project. The data should be given along with the analysis, observations and suitable interpretation. If the report is informative in nature, the chapter should consist of an orderly arrangement of the data collected. If the report is analytical or analytical with recommendations, the statistical data has to be presented in a pre-decided order. The data should be analysed either in an inductive or a deductive method.

All the statements made need to be well-supported by the required data. Presenting a huge amount data in non-verbal forms minimizes space usage and gives clarity to the reader. The conversion of written matter into a diagrammatical form requires the knowledge of types of non-verbal items and selection of suitable form, and following the concerned rules of conversion. Each non-verbal item has to be given a double number, i.e., first number indicates the number of the chapter, and the second number indicates the serial number of the item. If the report deals with any research, project or a laboratory work, you should support the work with photographs to add some credibility. In an analytical and recommendations report, once the problem is analysed, multiple solutions are listed along with respective advantages and disadvantages. The deliberations made at this stage support the final conclusions and recommendations made by the project.

Conclusions and recommendations: This chapter sums up the entire deliberations, discussion, analysis made in the previous chapters. If it is an informative report, in the conclusion, you should write your final analysis of the findings. If you are writing a report on the working condition of a machine, this chapter analyses the findings of its condition that is discussed in the earlier chapters. It neither suggests any change nor recommends any action. If the report is analytical in nature, this chapter should offer the summary of the analysis made in all the previous chapters. If the report is analytical and is supposed to give recommendations, this chapter offers summary of the analysis along with possible solutions and recommendations. These recommendations listed and steps to take necessary action should be written in an order. All the conclusions listed here should have appropriate documental evidence in the earlier chapters.

End Matter or Supplementary Parts

Appendix/appendages: Sample documents, detailed calculations, experimental results, statistical data, specimen questionnaire used for survey, sample forms used for investigation are usually included in this part. These pages are relevant to the investigation but are not very important, as the name of the chapter suggests. If any mathematical deviations are there in the report, list them here.

Bibliography: This is the list of all the sources — from books, journals to internal documents and Web links. Arrange all of them in an alphabetical order, with the name of the author, title of the work, place of publication, publisher, and the date of publication in a line. For journals, magazines and newspapers, provide the page numbers as well.

Glossary: If the target reader is not familiar with the terminology used in the report, the glossary helps them understand the document clearly. It is a list of special vocabulary (with explanations) used in the report.

Review and Editing

After finishing the writing of the first draft, take sufficient time to go through the document. By now, you have complete clarity of the matter, so you will be able to do a review of the document effectively. Edit the report as many times as you can because this makes it more and more effective.

Raj Petroleum Products
Mumbai
Interoffice Memorandum

Date: 3 February 2010

To: Mr Amith Nanavathy
        Director (Sales)
From: Mr Dharmender
        Head, Technical dept.
Subject: Technical training—suggestions

Report

The entire sales team of Raj petroleum products attended a technical training session, 'Meet Your PC', for three days from 25 January to 28 January, 2010. This technical training focused on assembling of a computer, fundamentals of Microsoft Office and correct usage of SAP software. This training session was handled by our technical director Ms Savitha Bimani and senior technical officer Mr Ramesh Kumar. These are the recommendations of the technical team.

Recommendations

a. The sales team needs to use the computer very often for various purposes. So such technical training is necessary.

b. Such training should be conducted periodically.

c. Such training sessions should include some sessions on personality development.

d. Training in advanced computer languages is also necessary.

2. Letter Report

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Department of Computer Science
Srinidhi Engineering College
Hyderabad-12

20 February 2010

The Head of the Department
Humanities and Science
Srinidhi Engineering College
Hyderabad-12

Sub: Verification of report of ELCS lab

Dear Sir,

The department of computer science is ordered to take up verification of English Language Communication Skills laboratory of Srinidhi Engineering College. As per the orders of the Principal, the department has sent the team to verify the working condition of computers and software of ELCS lab. The team spent two days, i.e., 15 and 16 February in the laboratory, and the report is given below.

There are 61 systems in the lab; of them, 60 are meant for the students and 1 is meant for the teacher. All the systems are LG with 512 MB RAM speed and the software used is Globerena company's 'English Made Easy'.

Of the 60 systems meant for the students, 48 are working and 12 of them are encountering problems. The software installation is not done properly, so it is advised to reinstall the software properly. The system in the teacher console is also not working properly. The hard disk of this system is corrupt and needs replacement. The headphones are in working condition and the recording facility is also working very well.
It was found by the inspection team that the UPS is fixed in a wrong place. It should be fixed near a window.
We hope this verification report will be useful to you.
Sincerely,

Dr Ramana. V
Head of the Inspection Team

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Memo Report

A memo report is mainly used for internal communication, that is, within the organization. It is used to handle routine business matters such as passing information from one department to another, making changes, alerting employees, solving a problem, etc. It helps the administration in making decisions or solving certain problems. A memo report is a permanent record of the internal operations of an organization and is quite similar to a letter report. But it differs in structure and is more informal than the letter report because of its circulation within the organization. Generally, a memo report is shorter than a letter report and adopts a matter-of-fact style.

A specimen memo report is given in the CD showing the structure. It is written on the letterhead of the organization. Inside address or salutations are not required. The main body of the memo report includes headings appropriate to the discussed matter. Although there is no complimentary close or signature, sometimes the memo report is signed or initialled at the end. Most organizations have a printed format for memos in which a memo report can be submitted.

Letter Report

Letter reports are important written documents that present technical/business information as well as problems in the format of business letters. The only difference between business letters and letter reports is in the organization of content and in writing style. All parts of a business letter are used here except the inside address, which is often omitted in form letters, generally used for a wider audience. The style of writing is factual, but it does have a personal touch in the use of pronouns and sustains readers' interest by showing them courteous consideration. Facts are pointed out as benefits to the readers, material is broken down, and the terminology is within the readers' range of understanding.

Subject headings in the main text of the letter report serve as a guide, which lets the reader know what follows, thus conserving his/her time. Tables and figures, if any, should