REPORT WRITING

A report is usually a piece of factual writing, based on evidence, containing organized information on a particular topic. A person transmits certain facts, ideas, or suggestions useful for another person through a report. It can also be the description of an event or a condition.

The following list will give an idea of the importance of reports and report writing to the organizations and the individuals.

• A report is the only tangible product of a professional.

All the efforts of engineers, academicians, and researchers culminate in reports that convey to others the efficiency with which they carried out their assignments.

• Reports enable decision-making and problem solving in organizations. Based on the information presented, analysis discussed, or the suggestions rendered, administrators can make important decisions and solve serious problems.

• Reports help the authorities in planning new ventures and in evaluating worker and material. If an organization wants to open a new branch in a nearby locality, it can plan for the same more effectively after going through the feasibility report prepared for this purpose. Similarly, if the organization wants to assess the qualities and capabilities of a person, it can do so by going through the annual assessment form submitted by the supervisor of that person. It can also evaluate a newly introduced machine or product by listening to or reading the report prepared for this purpose.

• Reports are an important means of information dissemination within and outside the organization. Many of the routine reports, such as inspection reports, inventory reports, or annual reports, transmit information across and outside the organization.

• Reports serve as a measure of the growth, progress, or success of an organization. The success of any organization depends on the quality and quantity of information flown through its personnel in the form of oral or written reports. For instance, an organization focusing on research can bring out reports from time to time to provide information on the progress being made, which serve to prove its worth to prospective clients. Also, a manager can measure the progress his/her department is making by going through monthly reports on the status of all the projects.

• Reports serve as a valuable repository of information. Organizations of various kinds preserve reports of importance and value for a long time so that they can refer to these reports whenever needed. For example, an academic institution can refer to the previous assessment

reports it had received from some committee in order to improve its performance.

• Reports reveal gaps in thinking. A report can give the recipient an idea about whether the writer had thought and proceeded logically and whether he/she had conducted an indepth study of the topic.

A report is usually a piece of factual writing, based on evidence, containing organized information on a particular topic.

Remember that all reports carry legal responsibility.

They can be used as legal instruments. Your activities, as an employee, and your competence at work are reflected through reports.

• Reports develop certain skills in the writer. Reports not only help organizations but also help the writer to develop certain skills, such as the ability to organize, evaluate, and communicate with greater accuracy.

➢ Short report

➢ Long report

(a) **Short Report:** A short report does not run more than 3-4 pages. It follows the simple style of presentation and only facts are reported in it. It is presented in letter style or memo format. It can be formal as well as informal. It can be self-initiated or in response to some demand, request or order.

(b) **Long Report:** A long report can run up to any number of pages. It can contain the outcome of some research. The report writer needs to study the problem, issue or topic in detail, collect data, analyse the data, draw conclusion, and present the outcome with suggestions or recommendations. It is generally formal in nature and prepared on demand. The examples of long reports include a dissertation, thesis, project report or field report.

18.3 Formats

There are different styles of writing a report. But for convenience, we shall discuss only two formats that are commonly used in preparing reports. They are as under:

➢ Memo format

➢ Letter format

18.3.1 Memo Format

The word *memo* is short for *memorandum*. Mainly, a memo is a brief note, written statement, record or communication that is used for internal communication. It is generally used for formal communication. It is used by a person known to the recipient personally. It can be used to convey some information or decision, make request to the co-worker(s), superior(s) or subordinate(s). It is short in length. Generally, the organization provides printed memo forms to its employees. The writer needs to fill in the columns only. The format is decided by the organization. It is slightly different from a letter in style. It is less formal in tone and without formal elements, such as 'organisation's address', 'salutation', 'recipient's address', and 'complimentary close'.

If a short report is to be submitted within the organization, the memo format is used. The writer fills in general information in the printed columns. The conclusion, suggestions and recommendations are incorporated in the main text. This type of report is also called 'memo report'.

18.3.1.1 Elements

The memo format contains the following elements:

(a) Heading

This is a compact block of information that appears at top of the page. It includes the following elements:

- ➤ Name and place of the organization.
- ➤ The label- Interoffice Memorandum.
- ➤ Reference number: (optional)
- ➤ Date: (The day of drafting or circulation of the report)
- ➤ To: (Designation of the recipient)
- ➤ From: (Designation of the report writer)
- ➤ Subject: (The specific purpose of writing the report)

(b) Body

Body is the text of a report that contains entire information/detail. The formal salutations- 'Hi', 'Dear', 'Respected'- are not required in the body. Personal pronouns- 'I', 'We', and 'You' are acceptable because the report is prepared for internal use of the organisation. In case of a short report, the conclusion, suggestions and recommendations are incorporated in the main text.

(c) Signature

Complimentary close, such as 'sincerely', 'faithfully', etc., is not required in the format. Only name of the report writer is sufficient to write. Even it is not necessary to mark the signature, but can be put in with the name. Designation is not written in this section because it is already mentioned in the heading segment.

(d) Enclosures

If some document(s) is to be enclosed to the report, it is referred at the end of the report by adding a notation:

- ➤ Enclosed: Committee's report.
- ➤ Encl: Letter of Recommendation.

(e) Distribution

If a copy of the report is to be sent to the person(s), other than the addressee, it is mentioned under the notation 'Cc'. It includes the designation(s) of the recipient(s). Cc stands for 'courtesy copy'. Earlier it was stood for 'carbon copy'. For example:

- ➤ Cc: Accounts Officer.

Note: The above mentioned two segments (Enclosures and Distribution) are not mandatory to be mentioned in the memo format. Either of them is framed if situation demands.

Example:

You are President of the Debating Club of your college. The club recently organized an intra-college debate competition. You are to submit a report to the Principal on the event. Draft the report with necessary details.

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MODERN COLLEGE
New Delhi

Interoffice Memorandum
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Date: 24 November 2020

To: The Principal

From: President, Debating Club

Subject: Report on Debate Competition

This is to inform you that the Debating Club of the college organized an Intra-college Debate Competition on 21 November 2020 at 12:30 PM in the Seminar Hall of the college. Here is the report on the event:

Topic of the debate: MONEY IS ALL IMPORTANT IN LIFE.

The participants were judged by three teachers- Dr. Sushma Sharma (Deptt. of Chemistry), Dr. Avtar Singh (Deptt. of Hindi), and Dr. Anuradha Ghosh (Deptt. of English).

The competition was bilingual and participants were allowed to speak in Hindi or English. The competition started at 12:30PM. Twenty six students participated in the competition. All the students were good at speaking. Most of them presented their views forcefully. It was difficult for the judges to decide the winners. Finally, the following students got the prizes:

- Ms. Payal Singhal, the student of B.A. (prog.), 3rd semester. (1st Prize)
- Mr. Sushant Bhatia, the student of B.Com., 1st semester. (2nd Prize)

The first prize was Rs. 2000, and the second, Rs. 1000.

All the students were very much enthusiastic and participated with great zeal. The society has also planned an Inter-college competition so that the students of our college can participate in the competition and excel the skill of debating.

(signature)
Mayank Sharma

18.3.2   Letter Format

If a short report of few pages is to be sent outside the organization, the letter format is used. In case of long report, it may act as a cover letter. It contains all the routine parts of a business letter.

Activity 3:

Identify in which case you will use memo format, and in which case you'll use letter format:

- You are to submit a report to the Principal of your college.
- You are to send a report to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Delhi.

18.3.2.1 Components

- ➢ Report writer's organization and its address
- ➢ Reference number (optional)
- ➢ The date of sending the report
- ➢ Recipient's name, job title and his/her organization's name with complete address
- ➢ Salutation
- ➢ Subject line
- ➢ Main text
- ➢ Complimentary close
- ➢ Signature, name and job title of the report writer
- ➢ Enclosures notation (optional)
- ➢ Copy notation (optional)

Example.

You are convenor of NSS committee of your college. You have received a letter from the university to submit a report on the activities carried out by the committee during the previous semester. Draft the report with necessary detail.

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PQR College
Anand Nagar, New Delhi
Tel: (011) 23456789, Fax: (011) 23452345

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Ref: 89/nsspqrc/3   Date: 10 November 2020

The Vice-Chancellor
University of Delhi

Mall Road
Delhi- 110007

Subject: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE NSS UNIT.

Dear Sir,

The NSS unit of PQR College carried out the following activities during the even semester of the academic year 2019-20:

1. Free Health Check-up Camp

The unit, in association with Cipla and GTB Hospital, organized a Health Check-up Camp on 14 January 2020 in the college campus for the students, teachers, staff members and nearby residents. 517 persons were examined at the camp. It benefited all the visitors.

2. Blood Donation Camp

The unit, in association with All India Institute of Medical Sciences, organized a Blood Donation Camp in the college campus on 27 January 2020. The students were very much enthusiastic to donate blood. A total of 169 units of blood were donated by the students and staff members.

3. Cleanliness drive

The unit launched a cleanliness drive between 10 February and 13 February 2020. The NSS volunteers cleaned the campus as well as made students aware of the importance of cleanliness. Posters were put up at various places in the college campus and nearby area to highlight the need of cleanliness.

4. Awareness Talk

The unit organized an Awareness Talk on COVID-19 by a team of doctors from AIIMS on 16 March 2020. The speakers made the students aware of the symptoms of COVID and measures to protect them from infection.

5. Adoption of Thalassemic patients

In order to reduce the burden of Blood Banks, the unit adopted 10 Thalassemic patients. Members of the unit decided to donate blood to meet transfusion requirements of the patients.

Yours Sincerely

(signature)

Varun Dhawan
Convenor
NSS Committee

18.4 Types

On the basis of purpose, reports can be as under:

➢   Informational report

> Analytical report
> Feasibility report

18.4.1 Informational Report

An Informational report presents the data, facts, problem(s), condition(s) or situation(s) without any kind of analysis or interpretation. It doesn't contain conclusion or recommendation(s). The writer only collects, compiles and organizes facts for the reader. It generally pertains to the report of meeting held, an incident, situation, or so.

Example:

Your college **organised a Science Exhibition. Being the** organizer of the exhibition, submit a report **to the Principal on the event.**

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ABC COLLEGE
New Delhi

Interoffice Memorandum

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Date: 19 March 2020

To: The Principal

From: Organiser, Science Exhibition

Subject: Report on the Science Exhibition

This is to inform you that a Science Exhibition was held in our college on 17 March 2020. The students from 10 different colleges participated in the exhibition. Here is a report on the event:

Theme: ENERGY CONSERVATION

Chief Guest: The renowned environmentalist, Mr. Chandi Prasad Bhatt

Inauguration

The exhibition was inaugurated by Mr. Bhatt on the day at 10:00 am. He delivered an impressive speech on the topic of environmental degradation. He emphasized on the need to use the renewable energy sources. He told the students that conventional resources of energy are limited and may exhaust some day. Moreover, they cause environmental pollution. He encouraged the students to conserve energy and use renewable sources to make the environment clean.

1. Models

There were 15 stalls in all. The students from our college as well as from other colleges displayed various working and non-working models. Their detail is appended below:

(a) Solar Lamp

The students from Maharaja College demonstrated a live model of solar lamp. They described the functioning of the lamp to the visitors. They also demonstrated a solar battery which could be charged through sunlight. The stall attracted students the most.

(b) L E D Bulbs

The students from Khalsa College demonstrated the working of L E D bulbs. They explained the visitors how L E D bulbs save electricity consumption as compared to CFL and traditional bulbs. It motivated the students to save electricity.

(c) Wind Mill

The students from Mangalam College demonstrated a live model of 'wind mill'. They displayed the functioning of the mill and how it generates electricity. The students were very much keen to know about the technology.

(d) Bio Gas Plant

The students from Vidya College demonstrated a live model of Bio-gas plant. They demonstrated how waste material can be utilized to produce energy which can be used to light lamps, cook food, and so on.

(e) Other Models

Other than the above, the students also displayed a number of posters and non-working models. The visitors were very much interested in them.

2. Lecture

Mr. Arijit Singh, from Bureau of Energy Efficiency, delivered an impressive lecture on energy conservation. He enlightened the students about the BEE marks (stars) on electrical and electronic devices.

The exhibition ended at 5:00 pm. It hailed tremendous response. All the students and visitors appreciated the effort. It also provided the students a platform to showcase their innovative ideas and experiments. Such exhibitions should be held time to time.

(Signature)

Maneesh Sharma

18.4.2 Analytical Report

An analytical report presents the data with analysis and interpretation. The writer objectively investigates and analyses the situation, condition(s) or problem(s), and puts the conclusion and recommendation(s) into the report. At first, s/he identifies the problem, collects data, analyses it, tries to find the reasons, draws conclusion, and incorporates suggestion(s) or recommendation(s) towards its solution. If a report presents only the facts, pertinent to a situation or issue, it is an Informational report; but if the writer analyses the facts, draws conclusion, and makes recommendation(s), it is described as Analytical report. It is also

known as 'Interpretative' or 'Investigative' report. Project report, Feasibility report, and Research report are some of the examples of analytical reports.

Examples:

(i) You are **President of the Students Counsel of your college. The students have been facing problems with the services provided by the college library. You meet the Principal who has suggested you to prepare a report in this regard. Draft the report with findings and recommendations.**

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ARIHANT COLLEGE
New Delhi

Interoffice Memorandum
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Date: 20 November 2020

To: The Principal

From: President, Students Counsel

Subject: Report on the Deficiencies in the Services of College Library

As asked by you, I investigated on the deficiencies in the services provided by the college library. Here is the report on the issue with findings and recommendations:

FINDINGS

I talked to the librarian, staff members, and some of the teachers. I also collected data from the library as well as carried out a survey on two-hundred students of the college. I found the following deficiencies:

1. Improper Arrangement

The books in the library are not arranged in a proper manner. The books of a particular subject are partially stacked in the sections of other subjects. It causes problem while searching the books.

2. Scarcity of Text Books

The text books are not available in required numbers. Moreover, they are issued to the students. As a result, other students do not find text books to study.

3. Old Editions

I found that the purchase of new books has not been made for a long time. The old editions of books are either of no use, or very less effective to use. These do not meet the requirements of new syllabus.

4. Behaviour of the Staff

The behaviour of library staff is not cordial. They are not cooperative. They talk to the students in a rude manner.

5. Congestion in the Library

The furniture in the library is not arranged properly. The issue counter is near to the place of reading which causes disturbance to the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of my study, I recommend the following suggestions to be implemented:

1. The library staff should be instructed to arrange the books of each subject in their respective sections.

2. The text books should not be issued to the students for home use. They should be made available to the students only in the library to sit and study.

3. Some of the text books as well as new editions of the other books should be purchased immediately.

4. The library staff should be advised to deal with the students politely.

5. The furniture should be arranged properly. There should be a separate reading room for the students to sit and study in a peaceful environment.

I hope that the above recommendations will be implemented on an early date so that students can utilize the services of library in a better way.

(signature)

Praveen Kumar

(ii) **As Administrative Officer of Manglam College, you, as a part of routine inspection, visited the college canteen. Write a report to the Principal about the findings. Also include recommendations in the report.**

MANGLAM COLLEGE
New Delhi

Interoffice Memorandum

Date: 27 November 2020

To: Principal

From: Administrative Officer

Subject: REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF COLLEGE CANTEEN

As a part of routine inspection, I visited the college canteen on 24 November 2020. I am sending you this report on the visit with findings and recommendations for your perusal and necessary action:

FINDINGS

The inspection concentrated on two major aspects: hygiene and facilities. I found the following deficiencies:

1. Unhygienic food

I found that the quality of food, served by the canteen, was not up to mark. The chefs were not cooking food as per standards. They were using inferior quality of material for cooking. Their utensils too were not clean.

2. Limited options of food items

I found that the canteen had been serving limited food items. As a result, less number of students visit the canteen and maximum go outside.

3. High price

As compared to the quality and quantity, the prices of all the food items are higher than market rates.

4. Less seating space

The space provided to the canteen is very much congested. The students have to wait for their turn for a long time. They even sometimes miss their classes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend the following measures that can help to improve the condition:

1. A warning letter should be issued to the canteen manager to ensure proper hygiene.

2. The canteen should be asked to add more options of food items.

3. A committee should be set up to review the prices of food items served by the canteen.

4. The canteen should be shifted to some bigger place so that it can accommodate more students.

I hope that above mentioned suggestions may help to improve the condition and you may take appropriate action in this regard.

(signature)
Amitabh Basu

18.4.3 Feasibility Report

A feasibility report is the outcome of detailed examination of a proposed project. The report details whether or not the project should be undertaken; and includes the reasons for the decision. A study is carried out before the project is approved or disapproved. The study identifies the constraints as well as potential risks; and defines the mitigating solutions. The constraints can be social, environmental, financial, technical or legal. The study analyses the potential market, investment requirements, competition, profitability and marketing strategies in the short and long term.

Example:

You are **Vice Principal** of a college. Your college wants to **start two short-term** courses during **the forthcoming summer vacations. The Principal has directed you to find out the feasibility of starting the courses. Draft a report with the recommendation of courses along with the reasons to start the courses.**

XYZ COLLEGE
New Delhi

Interoffice Memorandum

Date: 29 February 2020

To: Principal

From: Vice Principal

Subject: Report on the Feasibility of Starting Two Short-term Courses during Summer Vacations

This is with reference to your memo 96/AD/1, dated 27 January 2020, to submit a report on the feasibility of starting two short-term courses in the college during forthcoming summer vacations. Here is the report with recommended courses along with reasons:

1. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend the following two short-term courses that can be offered to the students during summer vacations:

(a) English Language Proficiency Course.

(b) Effective Communication and Personality Development Through Theatre.

2. REASONS

These courses can be offered to the students because of following reasons:

(a) Availability of Students

I talked to the students and found that they were very much interested in these courses. It is expected that minimum one-hundred students will easily be available to join the courses.

(b) Availability of Teachers

I talked to the concerned teachers. Two teachers from the English department of our college are ready to teach the ELPC. I also talked to the teachers from the National School of Drama, and they too are ready to take the classes during summer vacations. I have obtained their consents, and the same have been enclosed herewith.

3. Additional Income

The college will have an additional surplus of income, over the expenditure, amounting to Rs. 20,000 from the courses. The detail of the income from fee as well as expenditure has been given in the statement enclosed herewith.

In my opinion, there is every possibility to start these two courses during forthcoming summer vacations. It would not only fetch additional income to the college, but also provide better utilization of vacations to the students.

(signature)

Suman Malhotra

Encl: (Two) as stated.

18.5 Points to Remember

The writer should keep the following points in mind while preparing a report:

- The subject matter should be presented in a logical way.

- The facts should be complete, reliable, accurate and properly arranged.

- The writer should not infuse his/her biased opinion in the report. The conclusion should be based on facts only. The suggestions and recommendations should be impartial.

- The report should be brief, But should not compromise with completeness.

- The language should be direct, simple and grammatically correct. Ornamental language and figures of speech should be avoided.