It is very important to follow a proper format when writing business reports. There are standard writing formats for reports that can be easily understood by anyone reading it. The following guide will help you learn how to:

* Format your report.
* Decide what should go in your report.
* Avoid plagiarizing with the use of in-text or embedded citations.
* Create a Works Cited page.

If you are wondering about how to write a business report, then read on further.

**Section 1. Formatting**

* Use a size 12 font. Style should be sans serif (no tails eg. Ariel).
* Title of the report is centred, bold and is in ALL CAPITAL letters. Hit the enter key twice after the title.
* 1.5 spaced paragraphs.
* Reports are FULLY JUSTIFIED.
* **Subtitles** are used to highlight different sections of the report. Subtitles are typed in lower case and are **Bold**.
* Block style paragraphs/headings. (Left Align)
* Number pages in the Footer of the document. Never number the first page, on the ***second page*** RIGHT JUSTIFY Page ***2 of?***
  + Steps to follow: Select View, Header/Footer, Page Setup, Layout, and Select Different First Page.

***Formatting Example:***

**WRITING YOUR REPORT**

**(2 spaces)**

The main purpose of a report is to provide information so that others can make a decision or take action.  Reports are an essential part of business life, and skills you develop now will serve you well throughout your career.

**Length of a Report**

Reports can vary in length, as long as they meet the required outcomes. Before preparing a report, it is important to clarify what information is required, and how much detail the person requesting the report needs.

**Section 2. Parts of a Report**

***Title Page:*** The title page should include the following;

* The title of the report,
* The author(s) name (the name of the person preparing the report – YOU)
* The person the report is prepared for (the teacher's name)
* The date the report is due
* The school's name and the course code
* Be creative with your title page but make sure they are presentable and readable.

***Table of Contents Page:*** This page includes the table of contents of the major titles or heading mentioned in the report. *Do not include the title page or the table of contents.* You should mention the page number on which the main heading and sub heading lies. The page numbers should be written an inch from the bottom of the page.  
  
***Executive Summary:*** The executive summary is used to summarize the background of the report in one page for managers who do not have time to read your business report. The executive summary should include purpose and scope of the report and also the major conclusions and recommendations suggested. Mention only the information that is worth writing in the executive summary.

* What is the purpose of the report?
* What issues are covered?
* Brief details of main points.
* Major conclusions and recommendations.
* All covered in the same order as the report.
* Write this section last after you have had time to fully evaluate the report information in its entirety.

***Report Body:*** This is the information section of the report. The headings and page numbers should match according to the table of contents.

**The report body should contain:**

**Introduction:** The introduction will explain your audience why they are given this report to read and what is covered in the main body.

**Main Body:** The heart of your report lies within the main body. All your important data and information that needs to be mentioned while writing a business report need to be covered in the main body. Separate the main section into logical subsections and label with sub-titles. Discuss higher priority issues like brand or ad awareness first. **Add visuals (graphs, charts, tables etc.)**

**Conclusion:** The conclusion will analyze your result and bring your business report together. This is the answer to your business report, and will be read by everybody. Keep the conclusion short and to the point.

**Recommendation:** This will provide your reader the possible suggestions that will help address the issues mentioned in the business report. You should mention the recommendations using bullets and numbered points when writing a business report. You should be thoroughly sure about the recommendations made as they may be followed by the reader.

***Bibliography:*** This is where you will use proper MLA format (see your agenda for details) to cite all resources used in the report.

***Appendix:*** Contains supplementary material too detailed for the main body of the report.  
May include photographs, tables, charts, maps, statistics, questionnaires etc.   
any inclusions must be clearly labelled and referred to in the body of the report.

*Example: (See Appendix A for a statistical chart on teen buying habits.)*

**Section 3. In-text or Embedded Citations:**

***Citation -*** a short note recognizing a source of information or of a quoted passage it is used when you incorporate another’s words, facts, information or ideas.

* **Quotations that are 3 lines or less are:**
* Incorporated into the essay, thus double spaced
* Appear with quotes around it
* placed immediately following the sourced information in brackets

***Example:***

When it comes to mathematical information, “a good diagram is an invaluable aid to clear reasoning, whereas a bad one can seriously mislead” (Edwards 47).

***The citation in the Works Cited list will look like this:***

Edwards, A.W.F. Cogwheels of the mind: the story of Venn diagrams. Baltimore:

Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

* **Quotations that are 4 lines or more are:**
* Fully justified
* Single spaced
* Indented .5 on both left and right margins (this is called a double indent)
* No quotes are necessary around the quotation
* placed immediately following the sourced information in brackets

***Example:***

Ground rules are vital if you want to establish an effective working group. Ground rules will be the basis for a strong working relationship based on: trust, honesty and an awareness of the expectations of each other. Social groups also have ground rules, but these tend to have developed over time and are very often un-spoken rules. However, if a group member violates these ‘rules’ they are often made to feel acutely aware of it. In a team, where individuals come together with people they don’t know, and have to start working as a team, making ground rules explicit is very important. (Adair 153)

***The citation in the Works Cited list will look like this:***

Adair, John. Effective Team Building. Aldershot: Gower, 1986.

***\*Another option for citing sources is to use Footnotes or Endnotes.***

***Footnote:*** a note at the bottom of the page that acknowledges a quotation or a comment on a passage of text.

***Endnote:*** are similar to footnotes, but instead of appearing at the foot of the page they are collected together at the end of the report.

* Quotations that are 3 lines or less are:
* Incorporated into the essay, thus double spaced
* Appear with quotes around it
* Place either a footnote or an endnote (using Word software, at the end of the quote select: insert, reference, either footnote or endnote)
* Quotations that are 4 lines or more are:
* Fully justified
* Single spaced
* Indented .5 on both left and right margins (this is called a double indent)
* No quotes are necessary around the quotation
* Place either a footnote or an endnote (using Word software, at the end of the quote select: insert, reference, either footnote or endnote)

**Section 4. Works Cited Page(s)**

A page of resources used in your report, known as a “bibliography” and is now called “works cited”.

* Should be titled “Works Cited” one inch down from the top of the page with the words centered across the top of the page.
* Follow the MLA format for works cited entries from the ***Source It Guide*** found under the Peel Digital Library.
* Works-cited entries are always double spaced.
* The first line of an entry should begin at the left margin with the subsequent lines of each entry being indented five spaces from the left margin.
* Works-cited entries are arranged in alphabetical order using the first word of the entry.
* Remember, the page(s) containing the “works cited” are numbered as part of the text of the paper but do not count as part of your page minimum.