

WRITING

Writing a business report

LEVEL

Intermediate (B2)

NUMBER

EN_B2_3132W

LANGUAGE

English

Learning outcomes

- I can explain how to structure a detailed business report and summarise my findings in a conclusion.
- I can present facts clearly and objectively.



Warm-up

Read the quotes and **answer** the questions.

1

“Hey, boss! We really need to get some ice lollies for the freezer – I swear I’d work so much better.”

2

“I would like to recommend stocking the freezer with iced treats as a proven way to improve the performance of workers on a warm day.”

Which proposal do you think is more persuasive?

Why do you think this is?

Have you ever made a proposal to a boss or a colleague?

What was the outcome?



Writing a business report

Read the text. **Answer** the questions.

A business report is a technical piece of writing. It's written to prove something, to identify a problem, to raise concerns about something or to present research on a topic. Here are some things to bear in mind:

The reader: Who is going to read the report? How much do they know about the issue already?

The register: A business report should be written in formal language. This means no contractions, no slang or idioms, and using impersonal structures such as the passive voice.

Presenting information: A report is fact-based and objective. You can use graphs and tables. You should also use bullet points to make the report easy to read.

1. What are some reasons for writing a business report?
2. What **register** is used in business reports?
3. How can you make a business report easier to read?

Writing a business report

A **business report** should have a very **clear structure**, making it as **easy to read** as possible.

Below are the things that a business report should always have.

title

The **title** should tell the reader exactly what the report is about.

headings

Each section should have a **heading**, indicating what it is about.

introduction

In the **introduction**, explain the problem and say what the purpose of the report is.

body

The **body** allows you to discuss the issue in more detail and show facts and results.

conclusion

A summary of the report's findings, perhaps advising of potential solutions, should be included in the **conclusion**.

Writing a business report

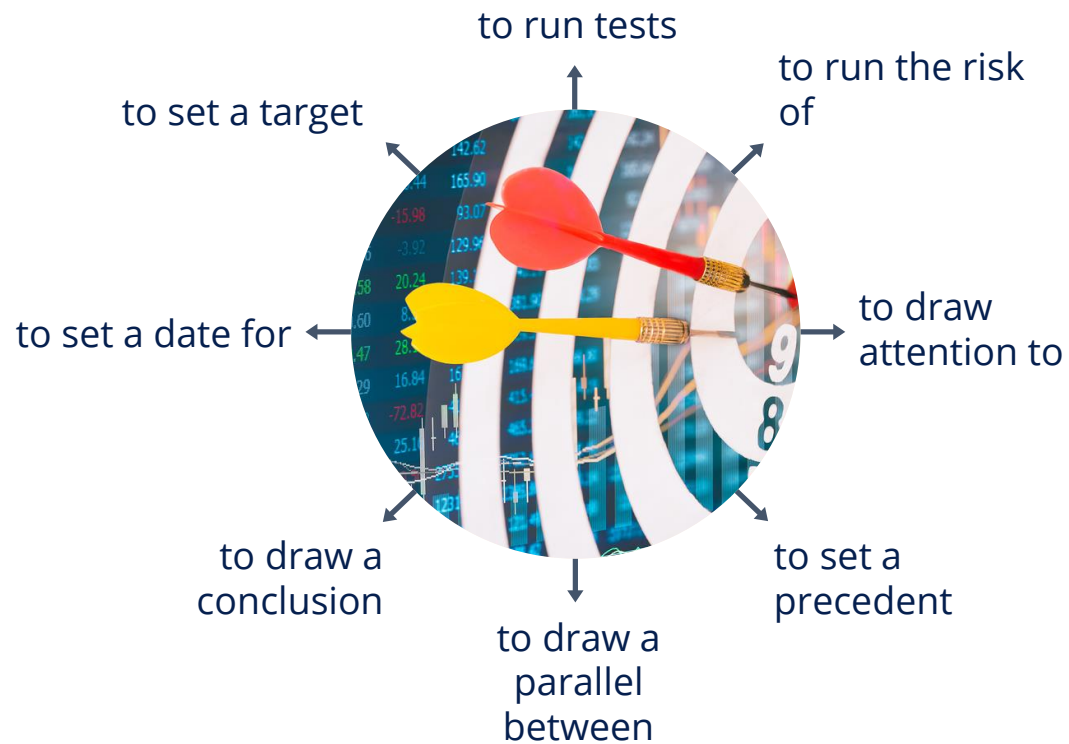
As mentioned earlier, a **business report** should be written in **formal language**.

Below are some **phrases** which you can use while writing.

introduction	presenting facts	conclusion
The purpose of this report is...	Interviews were conducted with...	To summarise...
The aim of this report is...	Tests were run by...	I have no hesitation in recommending...
This report is intended to show...	According to...	I would like to make the following recommendations:...



Vocabulary review





Vocabulary review



The company has **set a target** to reduce emissions by 20% by 2021.

Such an initiative will **set a precedent** within the firm.



We need to **set a date for** the implementation of the scheme.

We can **draw several conclusions** from the data.





Vocabulary review



I would like to **draw your attention to** the table on the right.

We can **draw a parallel** between this scheme and the transport scheme introduced by the government.



The company is going to **run tests** to check for pollution.

We **run the risk of** alienating our partners.





Fill in the gaps

Fill in the **gaps** with either *draw*, *set* or *run*.

- 1 The company should _____ a date for the meeting with shareholders.
- 2 The lab will _____ tests to check for contaminants.
- 3 Our competitors have _____ some ambitious targets for this quarter.
- 4 We can _____ some interesting conclusions from the data.
- 5 If we are too ambitious, we _____ the risk of bankrupting that sector of the company.



Writing

Write your answers to these questions and share your answers with the class.

1 Have you ever **set a target** that you could not meet?

2 How often do the council **run tests** on traffic and pollution in your area?

3 Have you ever worked on a project which **set a precedent** for those to come?



Passive voice

The passive voice is often used to create an **impersonal tone**. This is extremely useful in a business report as it needs to be **objective**.

Impersonal structures also help to make the report more **formal**.



We **made** a mistake.
Mistakes **were made**.



Transform the sentences from active to passive

1 We have set a target to reduce emissions.



A target has been set to reduce emissions.

2 We are going to run tests on traffic noise.



3 We should set a precedent for others in the industry.



4 We must draw a parallel between what is happening now and what happened 5 years ago.



5 We have to set a date for the next meeting.



6 We can draw some interesting conclusions from the survey.





Vocabulary review





Vocabulary review



This report **puts** the data **into context**.

We cannot understand this data **in isolation**.



The table on the right helps to **clarify** the issue.

The data **provides grounds for** expanding the scheme.





Vocabulary review



Owing to our initiative, productivity has risen by 7%.

On account of objections from the neighbourhood, the scheme is delayed.



It is a consequence of years of fiscal mismanagement.

Therefore, I suggest implementing the scheme as soon as possible.





Fill in the gaps

Complete the sentences using the words and phrases from the previous slides.

The meeting was delayed _____ account of the manager being late.

We really need to _____ that chart into context, _____ isolation it means very little.

The rollout of the scheme will be delayed owing _____ a problem in our plant.

The enthusiasm for the scheme provides _____ for its early implementation.



Writing

Think about a **current problem you have at work**. Using some of the words below, describe the problem.

owing to

a consequence
of

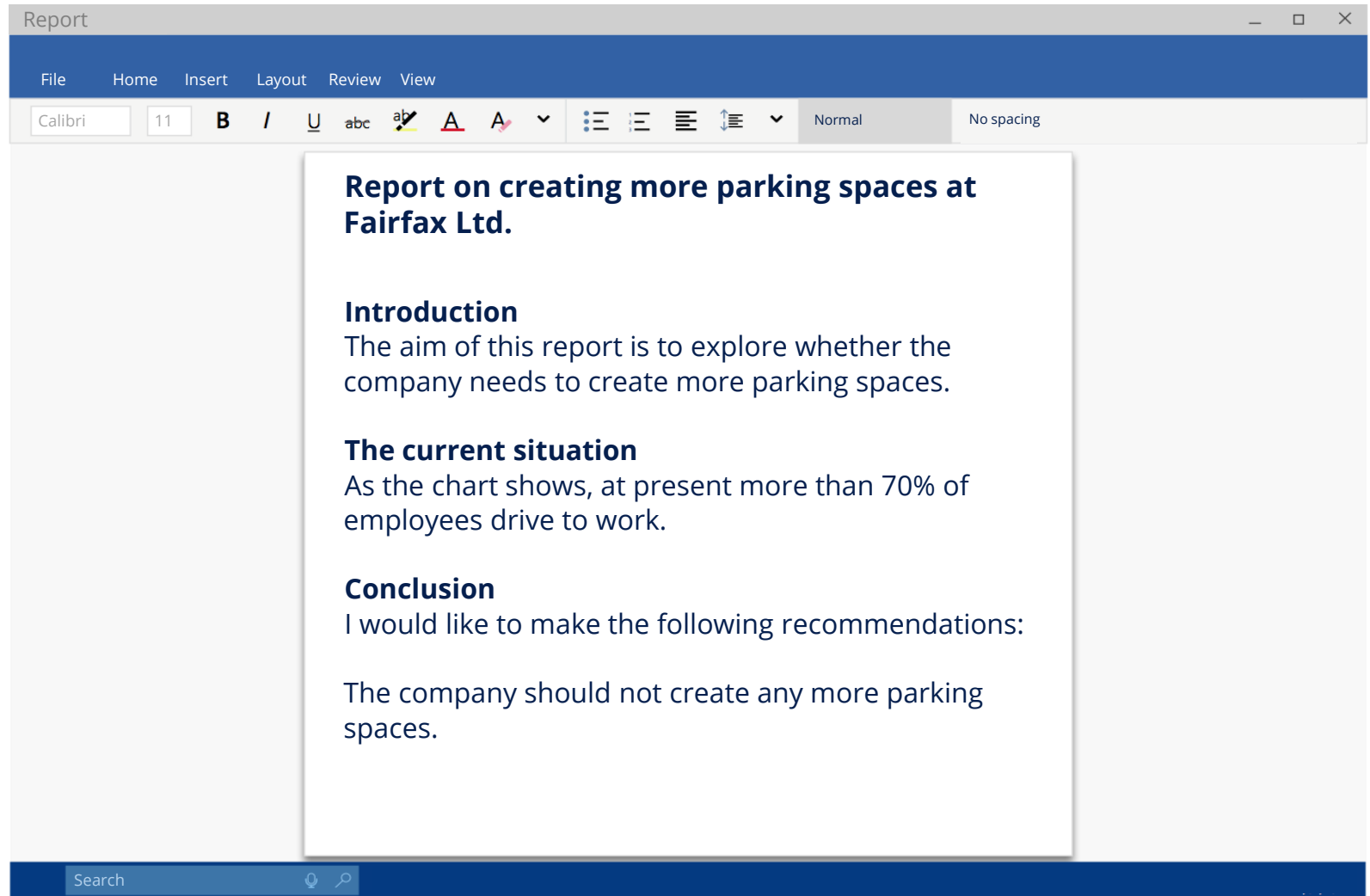
in isolation

on account of

put into
context

clarify

Writing a business report





Reflect on the text

What is the purpose of the report?



What is the conclusion of the report?



Write a business report

Write a brief report outlining **a change you would like to see at your workplace.**

For the purposes of this class, you can invent data to back up your claims.





After writing

Here are some **questions** to ask yourself after you have written your business report.

- 1 Is all of the information relevant? A business report needs to be concise.
- 2 Does the report fulfil the purpose which was outlined in the beginning?
- 3 Is the report written clearly and is it easy to read?
- 4 Is everything in the report objective? If there is any subjective information, it must be eliminated.





End of the lesson

Idiom

A write off

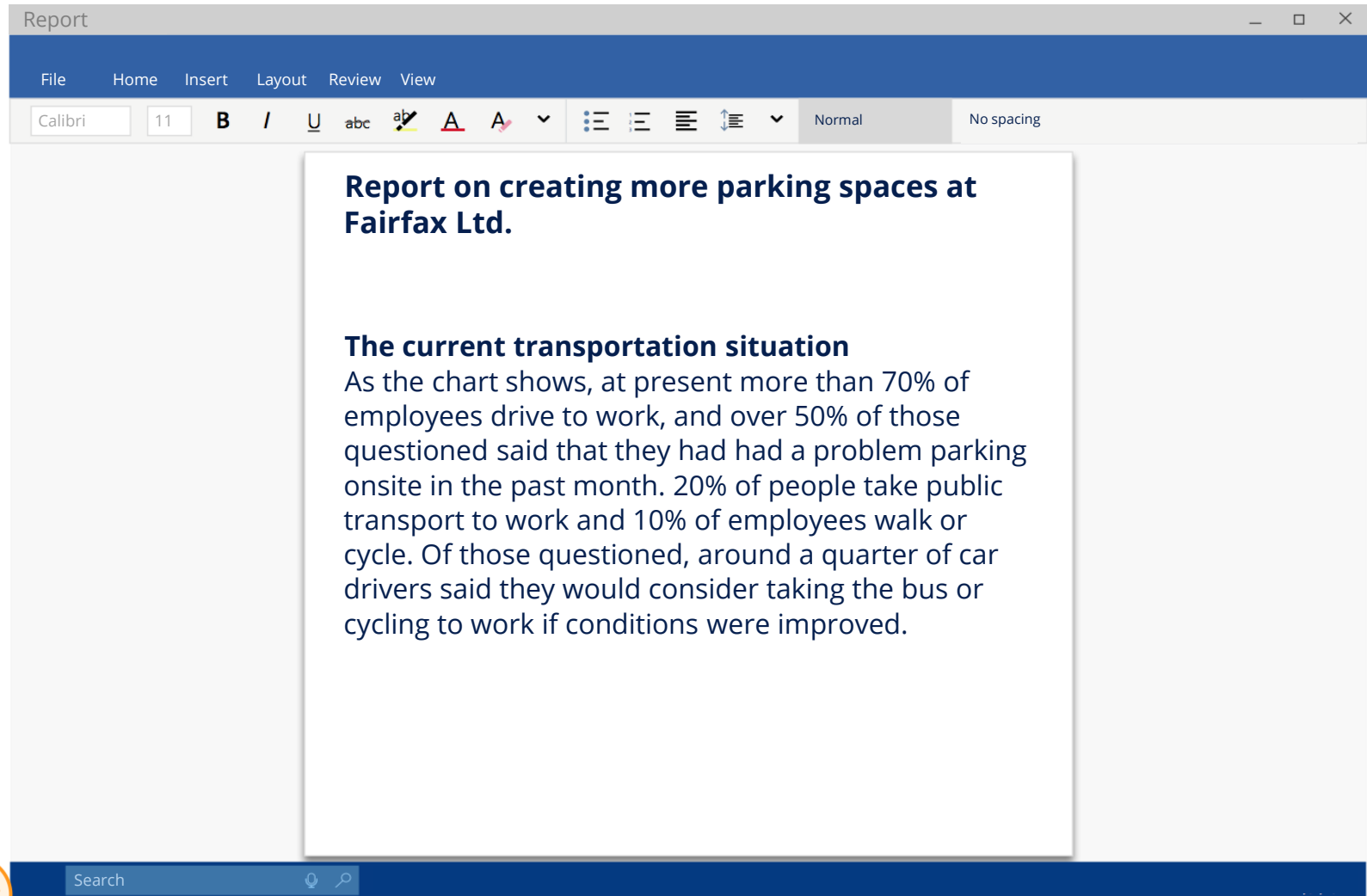
Meaning: You can use this expression when something has failed.

Example: Ok, this article is a total write off, the idea just isn't working. I'm going to start fresh tomorrow.



Additional practice

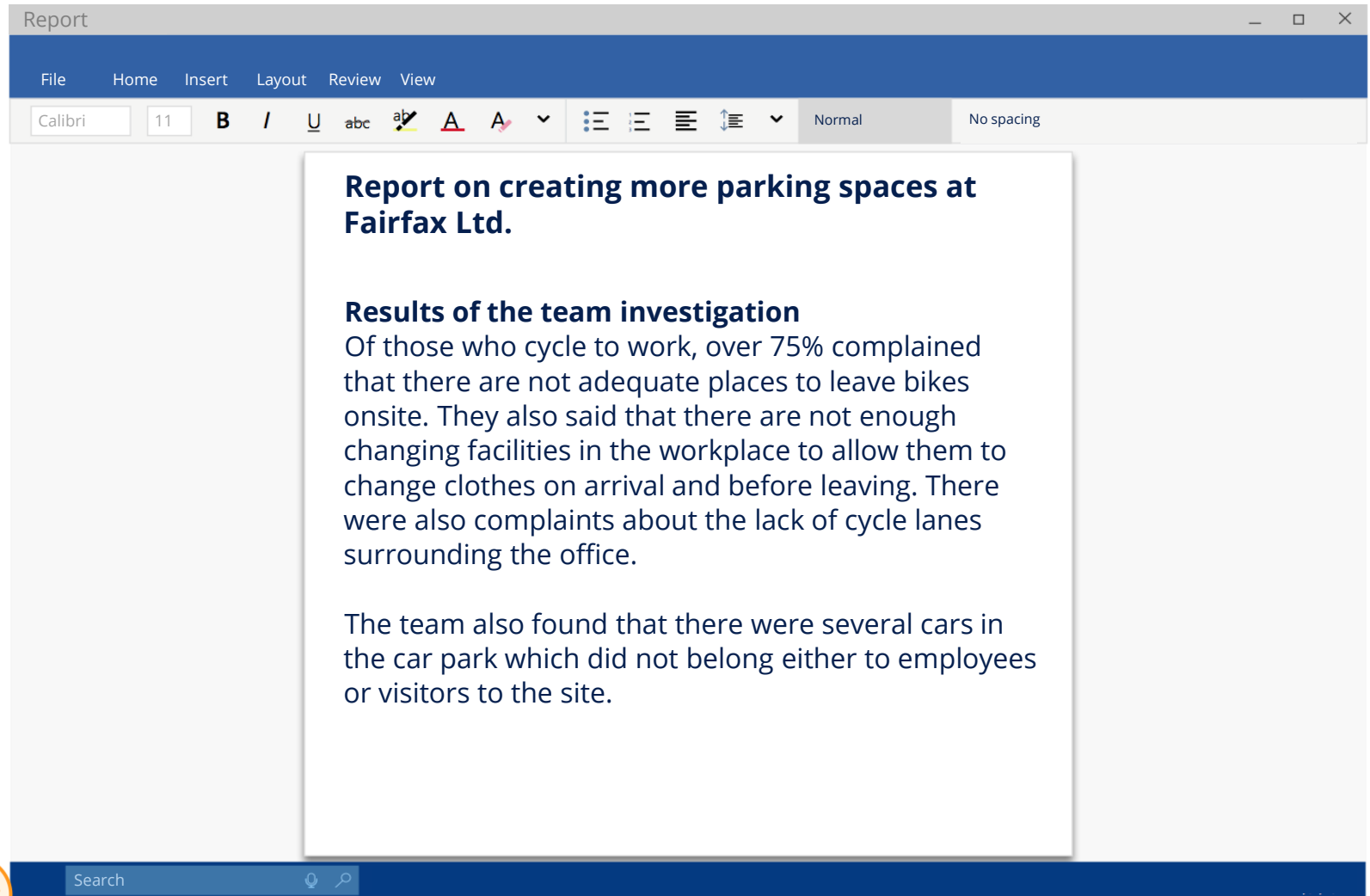
Writing a business report



Here is a longer example of the **main body** from the business report on slide 19 .



Writing a business report



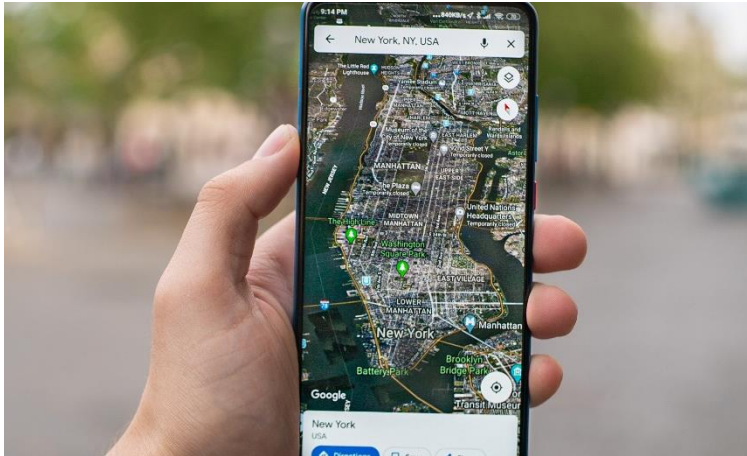
Here are more findings
from the main body
(cont.)



Reflect on the text

Answer based on your reading of slides **26** and **27**.

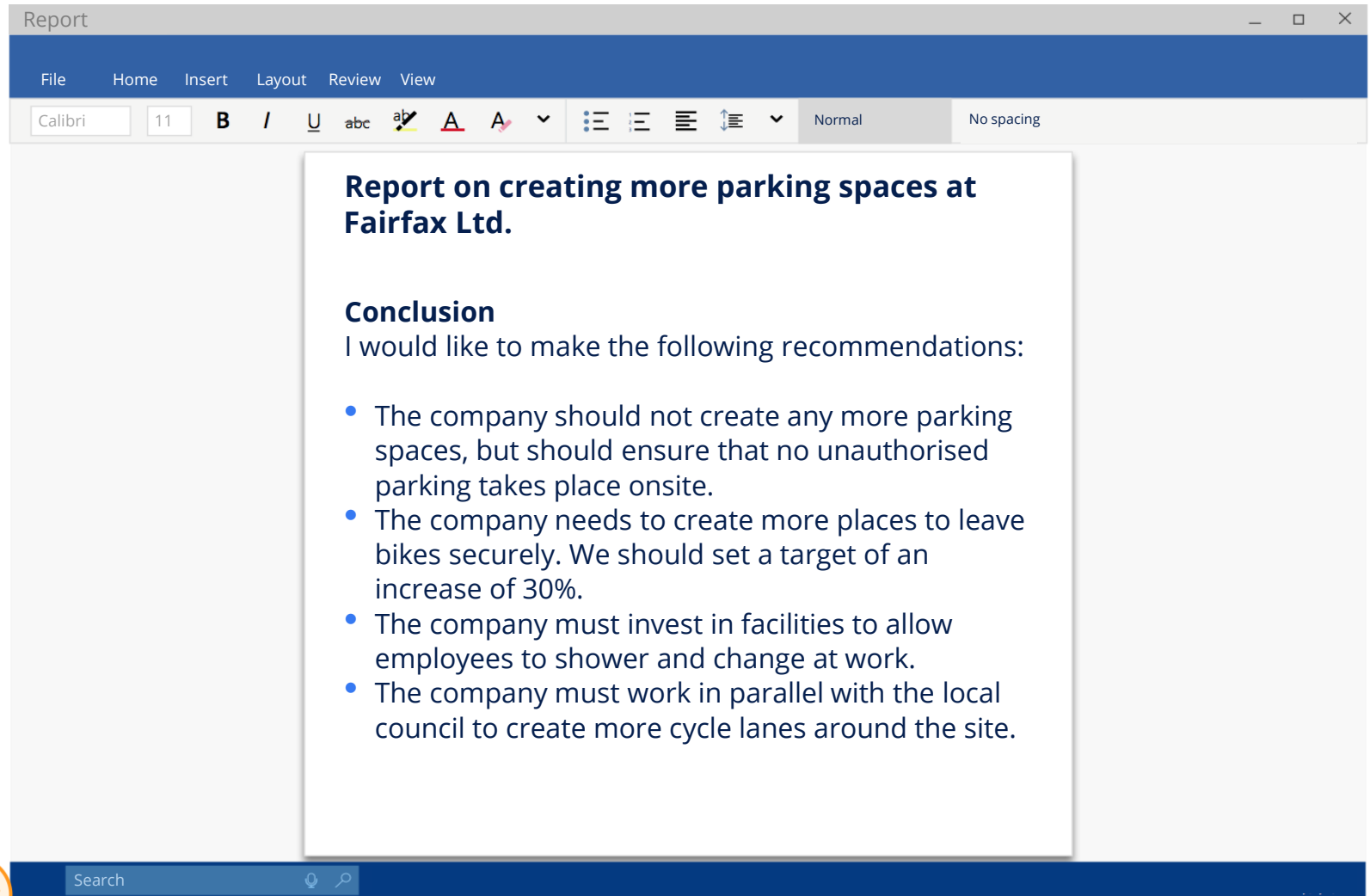
What would your recommendations for this report be?



Give a reason for your answer.



Writing a business report



Here is the detailed conclusion of the report.



Reflect on the text



**Consider the
recommendations on the
previous slide.**

**Do they match the recommendations you
gave?**



Answer key

P. 10: 1. set, 2. run, 3. set, 4. draw, 5. run

P.13:

2. Tests are going to be run on traffic noise.
3. A precedent should be set for others in the industry.
4. A parallel must be drawn between what is happening now and what happened five years ago.
5. A date has to be set for the next meeting.
6. Some interesting conclusions can be drawn from the survey.

P.17: 1. on, 2. put/in, 3. to, 4. grounds



Summary

Writing a business report:

- A **business report** should have a very **clear structure**, making it as **easy to read** as possible.
- title; headings; introduction; body; conclusion
- A **business report** should be written in **formal language**.

Verbs with *set*, *draw* and *run*:

- *to set a target; to set a precedent; to set a date for*
- *to draw a conclusion; to draw your attention to; to draw a parallel*
- *to run tests; to run the risk of*

Passive voice:

- The passive voice is often used to create an **impersonal tone**. This is extremely useful in a business report as it needs to be **objective**.
- **Impersonal structures** also help to make the report more **formal**.
- *We made a mistake – Mistakes were made.*

Vocabulary review:

- *to be a consequence of; to put into context; to clarify; to provide grounds for*
- *on account of; in isolation; owing to; therefore*
- *This **is a consequence of** mismanagement.*



Vocabulary

to set a target

to set a precedent

to set a date for

to draw a conclusion

to draw your attention to

to draw a parallel

to run tests

to run the risk of

to be a consequence of

to put into context

to clarify

to provide grounds for

on account of

in isolation

owing to

therefore

