

# Week 9

Comm 1234

Technical Writing Fundamentals

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# Plan for today

- Summary Memo Report description
- Introduction to formal reports
- Introduction to informal reports
- Summary Memo Report sign-up

# Summary Memo Report

- Worth 20% of final grade
- Consultation on March 21<sup>st</sup> (next week)
- Final submission on March 28<sup>th</sup> (two weeks from today)
- Summarize the five chapters of the formal report in the Technical Style Guide
- Each chapter summary should be 100-120 words.

# Summary Memo Report

- Consultation:
  - Bring in a first draft of at least your first two summaries.
  - Prepare at least **two specific questions** about how to improve what you've written or how to proceed with the rest of the summaries.
  - Worth 5 out of the 20 marks for the assignment.

# Summary Memo Report

- Content
  - Title page
  - Chapter summaries
  - Works cited (if applicable)
- Avoid jargon
- Stick to the core messages, arguments, or explanations



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# Formal Reports

- Long
- Solicited
- Professionally bound or placed in report cover
- Typical audiences:
  - Politician reading recommendations
  - Business owner being convinced to purchase a new line of equipment

# Formal Reports

- Front Matter
  - Letter of transmittal
  - Title page
  - Acknowledgements
  - Table of contents
  - Lists of figures and tables
  - Abstract

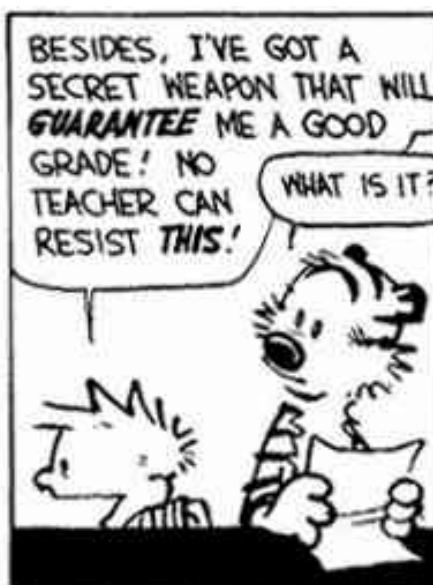


# Formal Reports

- Report Proper (tons of variety)
  - Introduction
  - Body
  - Conclusion
- Supplementary Matter
  - References or Works Cited
  - Glossary
  - Appendices
  - Index



THAT'S PLENTY. BY THE TIME WE ADD AN INTRODUCTION, A FEW ILLUSTRATIONS, AND A CONCLUSION, IT WILL LOOK LIKE A GRADUATE THESIS.



# Informal Reports

- Might not be solicited
- Usually fairly short
- Multiple purposes and formats
  - Incident report
  - Field trip/conference report
  - Investigation report
  - Progress report
  - Recommendation report

# Informal Reports

- Uses various *functional* headings
  - Purpose
  - Introduction
  - Discussion
  - Synopsis
  - Findings
  - Conclusion
  - Recommendations
- Might use *descriptive* headings
  - Collection strategies
  - Public education

# Accident/Incident Report

- Most companies will have a form to fill out.
- If not, this format works well:
  - Synopsis (5 Ws: who, what, where, when, why)
  - Details (step-by-step account of the events)
  - Possible causes (use concrete evidence)
  - Action taken
  - Action required / recommendations



# Field/Trip Report

- Before the trip, be clear on what you are supposed to...
  - Do
  - See
  - Report on
- During the trip, make sure to...
  - Take notes (and pictures, if allowed)
- After the trip, make sure to...
  - Write the report immediately

# Field/Trip Report

- Use standard functional headings (introduction, findings, recommendations, etc)
- Should close with an evaluation of the whole trip and the overall results





**"Today our math class took a field trip to the Stock Exchange where we learned about negative numbers."**

# Investigation Report

- Usually done to investigate a complex *problem* or *opportunity*
- Usually done before a major project
- Content might blend with that of an incident report or a field report



# Progress Report

- Done mid-way through major projects or campaigns
- Can serve many purposes
  - Allows management to make informed changes
  - Gives an opportunity to evaluate the project and identify unnoticed problems
  - Can be used to reassure clients
  - Serves as a record of information

# Progress Report

- Typical components:
  - Introduction
  - Work completed
  - Present status
  - Work remaining
  - Summary



**"You got an 'F' in all of your subjects. How can they call this a 'progress' report?"**

# Recommendation Report

- Solicited or unsolicited
- Positive or negative
- Need to decide on *direct* or *indirect* strategy



"WHAT DO I RECOMMEND? TRY THE PRIME RIB  
AT THE RESTAURANT ACROSS THE STREET."



# Sign-up for consultations

- I'm available starting at 12:30. (If necessary, I can meet on Thursday the 24<sup>th</sup> instead.)
- Consultations will take place in my office, M206-L. (Merritt Building, second floor—right across the hall)