

Writing Informal Reports

Format

Memo header

To: (name and title of target audience)

From: (name and title of writer: remember to sign or initial if it isn't an electronic submission)

Date:

RE:

CC: (distribution list when necessary)

Introduction [No heading necessary]

Discussion sections [Use headings provided in the outline attachment of the syllabus]

Conclusion [Reflection is the content]

Parts of an informal report

Reports are written for many different reasons and use two basic formats. One is the long or formal report and the short or informal report. But EVERY report, like every letter, essay, or article has 3 main parts: Introduction, Discussion sections, Conclusion. These reports follow the same format as the memo but are longer and more comprehensive. Because they are longer than one or two pages, reports also include such formatting elements as headings, bulleted or numbered lists, and graphs and charts or tables.

Introduction

The introductory section includes 3 parts:

1. a statement of the problem or situation,
2. the task assigned to the writer and the scope of the project.
3. purpose of the report and forecasts for the reader the topics of the report.

(PLEASE REFER TO OUTLINE SECTION I. INTRODUCTION)

Finally, when appropriate, the introduction ends with the conclusion or recommendation reached by the writer.

Discussion Sections

Another aspect of report writing that is somewhat different from other business communications is the reading patterns of various audiences. Remember that most memos and reports have a target audience, but a number of secondary audiences who must be accommodated. Some of the readers will skim the report. In other words, the report, particularly the discussion sections, may not be read in a linear way—from the first word progressing to the last. Therefore, the writer must be certain the report is comprehensible when read in that manner. Each section must work together as part of the whole report, but a reader should be able to read one section and understand the context. Anytime you use a list, or graphic or visual representation, you should introduce that list or visual and explain its purpose to the audience.

(PLEASE REFER TO OUTLINE SECTIONS II-VI)

Conclusion

Finally, the conclusion of a report, depending on its purpose, should remind the reader of any action needed, ask for a response, or indicate a willingness to answer questions. This section may also provide contact information for future communications. The Internship Experience Report conclusion should contain a final reflection of your internship experience.

(PLEASE REFER TO OUTLINE SECTION VII. REFLECTION)

Caution: Please note that the format of business and professional reports includes short paragraphs of text. So, do not use a heading as a paragraph marker. In other words, a heading may be followed by several paragraphs.