



Notes



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29

WRITING REPORTS

Look at the following:

RAVI INDUSTRIES

16, Pragati Tower,
Nehru Place,
New Delhi

To Mr. S.K. Singh (Managing Director)

From C. Rao (Office Manager)

Date: 7 July, 2000

Subject: Report on suitable premises for shifting the office of the company.

As suggested in your letter of 4 June, 2000 I inspected a number of buildings in South Delhi. After careful consideration, I recommend Jain building, which is situated in Kailash Colony. This building, I feel, would be the most suitable for our requirements.

The building consists of two storeys, and has 15 rooms in all. The rooms are fairly large (30' 20') well lit and airy. Since the rooms are fairly large, we shall be able to put partitions in some of them.

The toilet facilities for both men and women are adequate. There are also watchmen's quarters comprising two rooms each, and situated to the left of the main gate.



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The only disadvantage that I visualize is that there is not much open space around the building and the parking space may be inadequate for all the cars. But for the junior office staff there is a bus stop two hundred yards away.

I have started preliminary negotiations with the owner, Mr. Anupam. He is likely to accept the offer. Restructuring to alter the layout of the building to suit our specifications will cost no more than Rs. 40,000/-.

The Directors may like to inspect the building before any decision is taken.

sd/

C.Rao

The above is an example of what a report is. Reports are a form of written communication. In a business organisation reports provide information regarding progress, implementation of plans and programmes. These are sent to senior officers.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- write various types of short reports using different formats.

29.1 HOW TO WRITE A REPORT?

Before you begin to write a report you must ask yourself a few questions. What is the purpose of the report? Are you expected to present facts only? Are you expected to provide an analysis and make recommendation as well? When is the report due?

Once you have answers to such questions you can start writing the report. The process of writing a report involves the following stages:-

- (i) investigating the sources of information



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- (ii) taking notes
- (iii) interpreting and analysing the facts
- (iv) writing the outline of the report
- (v) editing and revising the report
- (vi) Submitting the report

Now consider this example. Mr. Ramesh works in a firm in Delhi. He has been asked to visit the firm's Allahabad office and submit a report on how that office is functioning.

Here is Mr. Ramesh's tour report.

11.03.2004

To : Mr. J.P. Singh (Joint Director)

From : P. Ramesh (Assistant Director)

Subject : Report on the working of our Allahabad office.

As per instructions I left for Allahabad on the 7th March and arrived there on the 8th, I spent two days at Allahabad. My report is as follows:-

- (i) Attendance: Although staff is required to reach office by 9.00 a.m. Generally, no one observes the timing and members of the staff arrive after 9.30 a.m.
- (ii) Leave Record: The leave record is not maintained as per company manual.
- (iii) Cash Book: The Cash Book has not been updated since 28.02.2001. It was behind by about two weeks.
- (iv) Inward/ outward mail register and postage register: These are not being maintained and therefore there is no record of expenses incurred on postage.
- (v) Office maintenance: The office was generally well maintained.

Recommendations: Regional incharge and some senior associates should be called to the Head Office and given a briefing on office procedures and norms as per company manual.

Sd/-

P. Ramesh



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You must keep in mind the following points while writing a tour report.

- A tour report is generally written in the form of a memo.
- It is addressed to one's superior.
- In the subject line give the destination and dates of the tour.
- In the body of the report you should explain why you made the tour and what you achieved.
- Each major piece of information may be listed under a separate heading.

Here is another example of a report.

This is an accident report:

To : Mr. H. Gonsalves (Manager)

From : Mr. S. Abida (Supervisor)

Date: 25 February, 2000

Subject: Fire at the Lucknow office Warehouse.

On 22nd February 2000, at approximately 4.15 p.m. there was a fire at the Lucknow office warehouse, resulting in loss of company's property worth 25 lacs.

We got the information in the Delhi office by fax at 5.10 p.m., the same day. I proceeded to Lucknow by train that evening, and was there on the morning of 23 rd February.

Company's Instructions Flouted

While it is difficult to ascertain the cause of the fire, my enquiries revealed that many of the Company's standing instructions had been flouted. For example:

- i) Smoking is strictly prohibited in the warehouse, but this rule is never followed.
- ii) During lunch hour, it is common practice to switch on an electric stove to heat food.
- iii) Visitors/dealers are often allowed to enter the warehouse, and they can even smoke if they wish.
- iv) There were four fire-extinguishers in the warehouse, besides the eight in the office, but not a single fire-extinguisher was in proper working condition. Fire-extinguishers must be 'charged' every year, but in the case of the Lucknow office, these had not been 'charged' for nearly four years.



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Extent of Damage

No member of the staff was hurt, but the total damage to the company's stock in trade amounts to Rs. 25 lacs. This includes Rs. 5 lac worth of goods damaged by water.

Explanation Asked For

I have called for a written explanation from the storekeepers, which I expect to get by tomorrow. Action will be taken after I receive their explanations.

Sd/-

S. Abida

While writing an accident report keep in mind the following points:-

- Get immediately to the point.
- Describe in detail any physical injury to any person or damage in property. This is required to settle insurance claims or compensations.
- Mention what caused the accident.
- Present your recommendations.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 29.1**

You have made a surprise visit to a hospital. Write a report on the working of the hospital. You may address your report to your senior supervisor. Use your exercise book to write this report.

You may use the following points.

Cleanliness and hygienic condition of the hospital, stock of medicines, number of doctors and nurses on duty, Cash book etc.

**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**

While writing reports you should keep in mind the following do's and dont's.

Dont's

- don't let your personal feelings interfere while writing the report
- don't base your analysis on a single piece of evidence

Do's

- be objective
- provide substantial evidence

- don't generalise without proper and logical evidence
- don't jump to conclusions
- use valid arguments



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Here is something interesting.....

'Brevity' Memo to the War Cabinet

To do our work, we all have to read a mass of papers. Nearly all of them are far too long. This wastes time, while energy has to be spent in looking for the essential points.

I ask my colleagues and their staff to see to it that their reports are shorter.

1. The aim should be reports which set out the main points in a series of short, crisp paragraphs.
2. If a report relies on detailed analysis of some complicated factors, or on statistics, these should be set out in an Appendix.
3. Often the occasion is best met by submitting not a **full-dress report**, but an '**Aidememoire**' consisting of headings only, which can be expanded orally if needed.
4. Let us have an end of such phrases as these: 'It is also of importance to bear in mind the following considerations' or 'Consideration should be given to the possibility of carrying into effect'. Most of these woolly phrases are mere padding, which can be **cut out altogether** or replaced by a single word. Let us not shrink from using the short expressive phrase, even if it is conversational.

Reports drawn up on the lines I propose may at first seem rough as compared with the flat surface of official jargon. But the saving in time will be great, while the discipline of setting out the real points concisely will prove an aid to clearer thinking.'

Sir Winston Churchill, 9 August 1940

Source: How to write reports in plain English pg. 42-43. Published by Book for Change, Bangalore, for the Plain English Campaign, UK.



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**OVERALL QUESTION**

Given below is an incomplete report. Fill up the blanks with the words given in the box:

suggestions, casualties, offered, extent, rebuilding, satisfactorily, accident, unloading, approximately, collapsed, information, immediately

To : Mr. S.N. Kulakarni (General Manager)
 From : S.K. Singh (Regional Manager)
 Date : 7 July 2000

Subject: Godown Collapse at the Pune Office.

On 5th July, 2000 at _____ 2.20 p.m., the back wall of the godown at the Pune office _____ suddenly due to heavy rain. This was the third day of continuous rain in the city. On receipt of _____ I rushed to Pune.

At the time of the _____ the workers were _____ the goods that had arrived from the factory. Unfortunately, three of the loaders were working close to the back wall when it collapsed.

The others _____ rushed to their aid, and took them to Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial Hospital, which is a kilometre away. One of the loaders, Ram, was already dead on arrival there. Doctors say that he must have died on arrival there. The other two are progressing _____ and should return to duty within a month.

We have given Rs. 20,000 from the Employees' Relief Fund to the family of the dead loader. We have _____ the same job to his son, who is 18 years of age.

The other loaders, Jay Singh and Salim have been given Rs. 5,000 each.

I have sent information regarding the accident, the _____ of damage and the _____ to the Insurance Company.

Our regular architect was called to inspect the site. He said that the beams were considerably decayed, and there was the danger of the godown collapsing anytime. He advised _____ of the godown. The total cost of rebuilding is estimated to be Rs. 5 lac. Meanwhile temporary scaffolding have been put up to support the structure.

We would like your _____ in the light of this report.

Sd-
S.K.Singh



CHECK YOUR ANSWERS

Overall Question

The sequence of words is as follows.

approximately, collapsed, information, accident, unloading, immediately, satisfactorily, offered, extent, casualties, rebuilding, suggestions.



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