

Writing a Business-Style Report

What is a business-style report?

A business-style report is a form of writing that provides information in a uniquely organized manner for a specific audience. Like the report, it is based on researched facts or on accurate details of a situation or event, not just on the writer's own knowledge. The purpose of a business report is to convey essential information that is accurate, clear and concise. Business writing should be brief and to the point. The business-style report is always dated. Businesses change rapidly; facts and solutions change daily.

The business-style report is prepared to help in decision-making, outline changes needed, give solutions to problems etc. The business-style report defines a problem or issue, presents data to analyze the problem or issue, draws conclusions, and makes recommendations. Business-style reports are organized with the summary at the beginning. The reports are presented to busy people; many executives read only the executive summary or abstract (capsule version) of the report.

Parts of a Business-Style Report

- Executive Summary – three to five sentence summary of the facts
- Problem Statement – summarize the background to the situation
- Analysis – explain the investigative process
- Decision Criteria and Alternatives – the data generated is integrated
- Conclusion – proposed solutions based on data, objective statement of what the report has shown

Executive Summary: an abstract (capsulated version) of the report as a whole, briefly outlining the company's background, the problem, and the recommendations (in broad terms). The executive summary is prepared after all other parts of the report are completed, but appears at the beginning of a business-style report.

Problem Statement: outlines the problem in two or three sentences.

Analysis: includes all the data that has been collected.

Decision Criteria and Alternatives: data generated is integrated into the report in the form of the words, graphics, charts and tables.

Conclusion: is a section outlining what the report has shown with several recommendations that back up the main recommendation given in the executive summary. Remember you are trying to sell the management on your idea.

¹ Adapted from *InsighTs: Succeeding in the Information Age*. Thomson Nelson

Business Report Template: Information Validation

Executive Summary:

Provide a three- to five-sentence summary of your SBC analysis.

Problem Statement (Introduction)

Summarize the background on how hardware and software can be validated and state the resources you analyzed.

Analysis

What criteria was used to validate hardware/software?
What did you find in the review of the hardware/software?
Some of the data gathered can be displayed as a table and incorporated into the report.

Decision Criteria and Alternatives

What key information and facts were discovered?
What comparisons can you make between the different hardware components?
What comparisons can you make between the different Software applications?

What are some of the similarities you found?

Conclusion

Write several recommendations about your findings.