

B COM (PROG)

SEM IV

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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TOPIC: REPORT WRITING

This is a topic that you are already familiar with as the writing of reports was a topic you covered as part of the compulsory AECC paper you studied in Sem I. However, we will go over some of the salient points about the writing of a report to refresh your memory. We will be looking at the following:

Introduction

Types of reports - short and long format

Guidelines for writing a report

INTRODUCTION

All of you are familiar with the celebration of your school or college's annual day function. One important item that is an integral part of such a function is the reading out of the school/college's annual report. Such a report details the goals, programmes and achievements of the organisation on a yearly basis. The report usually provides information about the programmes organised by the institution, events held by various societies that are a part of the organisation, inter and intra-school/college events, camps organised, achievements of students as well as teachers, and so on. You may have got a blood test or an x-ray done at the recommendation of your physician in case of a malady. When you collected the report of the test or x-ray, you would have got a report signed by the doctor or the pathologist where he/she details the findings of the test, and advises further follow-up as may be deemed necessary. Another scenario from everyday life in which you may come across this task of report writing is, if god forbids, your wallet gets picked or your vehicle meets with an accident. In such a case, you will need to visit the police station in whose jurisdiction the mishap/incident has occurred and file a First Information Report or F.I.R.

The report depending on the type, the organisation, or its purpose, may be one that one writes just once, for a specific purpose, it could be periodic - daily, monthly, quarterly or annual. For example, hospitals would keep a daily record of many things, such as the number of patients admitted, number of patients discharged, number of deceased patients and so on. A report with these details would be filed on a daily basis. If you hold an account in a bank, you would receive a monthly report detailing your credit and debit amount, as well as the balance that is there in your account. Most companies bring out a quarterly report which is shared amongst not just its employees but with its shareholders. Such a report summarises the goals and achievements of the company and lays out its plans for the future as well. Depending on the scale of the company, such reports could be quarterly or annual. Some reports are compiled because you are asked to, and some maybe voluntary or mandated by the law. Some reports are circulated internally, and the audience for some may be those outside the organisation. Reports may also be short or long, again depending on the purpose for writing them.

TYPES OF REPORTS

1. Solicited and Unsolicited reports: Sometimes you submit a report on your own initiative. Such a report is an unsolicited report. For example, you may want the college authorities to be aware of some of the problems you faced during the period of online teaching during the lockdown. You may choose to do so by writing a report about the same. Teachers on the other hand, may be asked by the Principal to submit a report about e-resources used by a teacher, the ease or difficulty of using the same, the effectiveness of such a method of teaching, the attendance of students and so on. Such a report is called a solicited report, one which you write because you have been asked to.
2. Statutory and Non-statutory reports: Reports which are written and submitted because they are mandated by law, are allied statutory reports. For example, most public places, like a cinema hall or a shopping mall is required by law to submit fire-safety reports at regular intervals. Reports that are not required by law but are written in order to disseminate information, are non-statutory reports.

3. Internal and External reports: reports that are written and circulated within an organisation are called internal reports. For example, the librarian of a college may be asked to prepare a report listing the books the library possesses in a subject-wise manner. He/she may be asked to provide inputs about the percentage of books that were borrowed more or less frequently, collate a report about books that students or teachers may have enquired about in the library which are not in its possession. Such a report would be an internal report. Those reports which are prepared for those belonging to outside the organisation, such as the shareholders of a company, are called external reports.
4. Informational and Analytical report: A report may simply provide the information it has been asked to furnish. For example, the Delhi government may ask an official to prepare a report about the distribution of essentials in certain hotspots. This would be an informational report. However if the same report also furnished details about some of the difficulties faced in delivering essentials, and how they could do a better job, such a report will be an example of an analytical report.
5. Oral and Written report: Any report, given the formality of the exercise, is always a written report. However, some reports are presented and can be termed oral reports; whereas other reports which are printed or published may be termed written reports.

Next time, we will look at the format of the short and long report. Below, is a link to further help you hone your skills in writing reports.

<https://custom-writing.org/blog/report-writing-tips>

