

Introduction to Report Writing:

Purpose of Report

Definition:

- ❖ The introduction begins by clearly stating the purpose of the report. This should answer the question: Why was this report written?
- ❖ The purpose sets the direction for the entire document and helps the reader understand what to expect.
- ❖ For example, the purpose might be to analyze financial performance, evaluate market trends, propose a new strategy, or report findings from a research study.

Background and Context

- ❖ Next, the introduction provides background information and contextual details relevant to the report.
- ❖ This section helps the reader understand the circumstances that led to the report being written.
- ❖ It may include:

Contextual Information:

Overview of the project, initiative, or problem being addressed.

Historical Background:

Previous events or developments leading up to the current situation.

Scope and Limitations:

Defines what the report will cover and what it will not cover, setting boundaries for the analysis or findings.

Objectives and Scope

- ❖ After establishing the purpose and context, the introduction outlines the specific objectives of the report.
- ❖ Objectives are the specific goals the report aims to achieve.
- ❖ These objectives should be clear, measurable, and directly related to the purpose stated earlier.
- ❖ For instance, objectives could include analyzing data, recommending actions, or providing insights into a specific issue.

Structure of the Report

- ❖ Lastly, the introduction briefly outlines the structure of the report.
- ❖ This serves as a roadmap for the reader, guiding them through the main sections and sub-sections.
- ❖ Typical elements included in this section are:

Main Sections:

Overview of the major parts of the report, such as introduction, methodology, findings, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations.

Sub-sections:

Mentioning any significant sub-sections or appendices that are part of the report.

Key Considerations

When writing the introduction to a report, consider the following key points to ensure clarity and effectiveness:

Audience:

Tailor the introduction to the specific audience who will be reading the report, ensuring that the level of detail and technical language used is appropriate.

Conciseness:

While providing necessary background and context, avoid unnecessary details that do not directly contribute to the understanding of the report's purpose and objectives.

Accuracy:

Ensure that all information provided in the introduction is accurate and supported by reliable sources or data.

Engagement:

Aim to engage the reader from the outset.

A well-written introduction sets a positive tone and encourages the reader to continue reading with interest.

Example

Here's an example structure of an introduction to a report:

Purpose:

"This report aims to analyze the financial performance of Company X over the past fiscal year".

Background and Context:

"Company X has been experiencing declining profitability despite increasing market share in the tech industry.

This report explores the factors contributing to these trends".

Objectives:

"The objectives of this report are to identify key drivers of financial performance, assess cost management strategies, and recommend actions to improve profitability".

Structure:

"The report begins with an overview of Company X's financial performance, followed by an analysis of cost structures and strategic recommendations".