**Reports**

**Definition**

Report is a logical presentation of facts and information. It is the result of the researches, analysis, and investigations, which is present in a written form. It is the basic tool on which decisions can be based. All your facts and information presented in the report not only have to be bias-free, but they also have to be a 100% correct.

The information present in the report is needed to evaluate progress and plan future action. Reports provide feedback to an organization to guide future course of action.

According to C. A. Brown, “A report is a communication form of someone who has some information to someone who needs that information.” The purpose of report writing is essential to inform the reader about a topic, minus one’s opinion on the topic. It’s simply a portrayal of facts, as it is. Even if one gives inferences, solid analysis, charts, tables and data is provided.

The goal of making reports is to make the information as clear and convenient and accessible as possible. Reports vary widely in their purpose. They also differ with the type of audience they are written for.

**Kinds of Report**

Depending up on the purpose and the content, the reports can be categorized as:

* **Long Report and Short Reports:** These kinds of reports are quite clear, as the name suggests. A two-page report or sometimes referred to as a memorandum is short, and a thirty-page report is absolutely long. But what makes a clear division of short reports or long reports? Well, usually, notice that longer reports are generally written in a formal manner.
* **Internal and External Reports:** As the name suggests, an internal report stays within a certain organization or group of people. In case of office settings, internal reports are for within the organization. We prepare external reports, such as a news report in the newspaper about an incident or the annual reports of companies for distribution outside the organization. We call these as public reports.
* **Vertical and Lateral Reports:** This is about the hierarchy of the reports’ ultimate target. If the report is for your management or for your mentees, it’s a vertical report. Wherever a direction of upwards or downwards comes into motion, we call it a vertical report. Lateral reports, on the other hand, assist in coordination in the organization.  A report traveling between units of the same organization level (for example, a report among the administration and finance departments) is lateral.
* **Periodic Reports:** Periodic reports are sent out on regularly pre-scheduled dates. In most cases, their direction is upward and serves as management control. Some, like annual reports, is not vertical but is a Government mandate to be periodic in nature.
* **Formal and Informal Reports:** Formal reports are meticulously structured. They focus on objectivity and organization, contain deeper detail, and the writer must write them in a style that eliminates factors like personal pronouns. Informal reports are usually short messages with free-flowing, casual use of language. We generally describe the internal report/memorandum as an informal report. For example, a report among your peers, or a report for your small group of team, etc.
* **Informational and Analytical Reports:** Informational reports (attendance reports, annual budget reports, monthly financial reports, and such) carry objective information from one area of an organization to maybe a larger system. Analytical reports (scientific research, feasibility reports, and employee appraisals) show attempts to solve actual problems. These analytical reports usually require suggestions at the end.
* **Proposal Reports:** These kinds of reports are like an extension to the analytical/problem-solving reports. A proposal is a document one prepares to describe how one organization can provide a solution to a problem they are facing. There’s usually always a need to prepare a report in a business set-up. The end goal is usually very solution-oriented. We call such kinds of reports as proposal reports.
* **Functional Reports:** These kinds of reports include marketing reports, financial reports, accounting reports, and a spectrum of other reports that provide a function specifically. By and large, we can include almost all reports in most of these categories. Furthermore, we can include a single report in several kinds of reports.