

# R E P O R T

## 1. What it is

A report is a short and concise document, written for a particular purpose and used in business, scientific and technical subjects, and in the workplace. It is a factual paper and needs to be clear and well-structured.

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## 2. What it contains

- **A well written report contains concrete facts and not general information about a topic.**
- It can be a description and interpretation/evaluation/analysis of a given situation or a problem. It can also be a presentation of research or results of a survey that you carried out. It always makes recommendations for future action.
- It is always based on your research and knowledge or a survey/questionnaire you carried out.
- It also contains **recommendations** as to a course of action necessary to successfully deal with the problem that the report concerns/is about.

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## 3. Layout

- **It is the only writing where particular paragraphs are given headings.** This is its characteristic visual feature. The headings are compulsory.
- The first one: **Introduction**, and the final one: **Conclusion** or **Recommendations** are irreplaceable and always expected. The two (or three – in longer reports) middle ones need to be created by the report author.

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- **Introduction**

It is a **short summary** of the problem under discussion with information for the reader why the report is being written.

- **Main part/Body**

This main section of the report is **divided into paragraphs with own headings**. Information here is arranged in the order of importance, with the most important information coming first. Each section relates to one area you consider. The main issue of each section should be **presented (described) briefly and clearly**. **Do not ever write additional and unnecessary information.**

- **Conclusion (=Recommendations)**

It **contains your recommendations** as to any actions that should be taken to improve the situation for the future, or your predictions of future developments and recommendations given in this context. If your recommendations have financial implications, you should mention these clearly, with estimated costs if possible. The **recommendations should be specific, NOT general**, achievable/doable, and presented in the order of priority.

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## 4. The language

### Introduction (how to begin)

1. The aim/purpose of this report is to **examine / describe / present / evaluate / outline / assess / make recommendations about** ..... (the positive and negative features of two different forms of ..... ) (the various options open to people ... ) It will also **include / consider / suggest / recommend / provide some recommendations on/about** .....
2. This/The following report **describes / looks at / evaluates / outlines / presents / suggests ways to** ..... It also **includes / considers / suggests / recommends / provides some recommendations on/about** ...
3. This/The following report **provides a description / an evaluation / a presentation of** ..... It also **includes / considers / suggests / recommends / provides some recommendations on/about** ...

4. In this/the following report **I will describe / present / evaluate / examine / suggest / outline** .....I will also **include / consider / suggest / recommend / provide some recommendations on/about** .....
5. **The report is based on** a survey (that I) conducted among (*college students/our colleagues*).  
**The report is based on** feedback I received/collected from (*our staff*).  
**To prepare this report I** spoke to / interviewed several / conducted a survey among (*members of staff*).

### Describing numbers / proportions

- one **in** five ..... / seven **out of** ten .....
- thirty **percent (per cent)** of the people questioned  
**over / nearly / slightly more than / just over** ..... percent
- **the majority of** the people questioned  
**a great / vast / significant / an overwhelming majority of** .....
- **a small / large / great / significant / low / certain proportion of** .....
- **a considerable / significant / surprising / large / small / an enormous number of** .....
- **a small / tiny minority of** .....
- **some / several** people
- **a third of / a quarter of** .....
- **a quarter (one-fourth) / three fifths / three quarters / just over two thirds**
- **by far the most** (*important, useful, popular*) .....

Do not confuse **amount** with **number**.

An **amount** a quantity of something **uncountable** such as time, money, or a substance.

A **number** is an amount of something that **can be counted**.

### Referring to the respondents and their opinions

**those questioned / those surveyed / people who participated in the survey / the respondents** complained that/agreed that/claimed that/criticised/chose/stated that/mentioned/indicated/referred to/ reported/pointed out/spoke of/suggested

### Making recommendations

**Your recommendations are only suggestions for the addressee, which he may accept or reject. For this reason the expected verbs to use are: should / (strongly) recommend / advise / be a good idea, and not: must / have to / need.**

I would (strongly) recommend that (*the school, the company*) **should** .....

I would suggest/strongly recommend **-ing** ...

I (also) believe we should .....

In the light of the results of the survey/questionnaire, I would (strongly) advise against ...**-ing** ....

It might/would be (highly) advisable to .....

In my view, ..... **should** be .....

In conclusion, ..... / To conclude, ..... / To sum up, ..... / All things considered, ..... would be the best option / choice / solution.

If we do not address (*problems of* ..... *soon*), we are likely to (*lose some of our customers*).

Adopting this solution will have an impact/a positive impact on .....

..... would/could lead to (*further misunderstandings with customers*).

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## 5. Examples

### Report 1

*Your local council has asked you to do some research on sporting activities in the local area with the aim of encouraging more people to take part in sports. You have been asked to write a report summarizing your findings in which you describe the existing level of participation in sporting events in your area including factors which discourage people from taking part in sport, and recommending ways of encouraging more people to take up sport.*

#### Introduction

The aim of this report is to provide an overview of participation in sporting activities in the area of Bolton, indicating factors which discourage people from taking part in sports, and to make recommendations as to how greater participation in sporting activities might be achieved.

#### Current situation

I interviewed people from 13 to 82 years of age living in Bolton. Fewer than a third take part in any sporting activity on a regular basis. Among those who did do sport, football was the most popular, followed by individual keep-fit activities such as jogging, aerobics and swimming. Tennis was popular among older people because of its social nature, while basketball and martial arts were the least popular.

#### Factors preventing fuller participation

There was a clear division between those who already took part in sport and those who did not. The former cited the cost of equipment and lack of facilities, e.g. tennis courts and good football pitches as the main factors preventing them from doing more. Those who did not practice a sport, on the other hand, cited dislike of competitive sports and lack of time as the main reasons. Some described the poor quality of facilities in changing rooms as an off-putting factor.

#### Recommendations

In my opinion, encouraging those who currently take no part in sports should be a priority. I therefore recommend organising an advertising campaign in order to promote keep-fit activities rather than team games. I also think we should introduce new activities such as water aerobics at times when people are free. Finally, it is necessary to upgrade the facilities currently considered to be in poor condition so that those who are already involved in some sporting activities will be encouraged to do even more.

### Report 2

*Your local authority is conducting a survey into language learning habits of the people between 16-45 in the area. They have asked for a report on the types of methods used in state run schools and language centres. They have asked for some suggestions on how to improve their facilities, teaching methods and resources.*

#### Introduction

The main purpose of this report is to analyse the effectiveness of language teaching in the area of Manhattan Island. It will offer a review of what is available and also make some recommendations on how to improve the facilities.

#### Facilities

Due to a lack of funding during the economic recession, the facilities available have not been renovated since more than a decade ago. What is more, because of this scarcity of investment, much of what there is has been overused and/or damaged to some extent. Many modern private language centres have sprung up around the city in recent years but they are both unaffordable and difficult to monitor. What is more, there are a few teachers working who are quite frankly not up to the job.

#### Teaching Methods

The methodology used by most teachers has not changed over the last 15 to 20 years and therefore needs to be improved. Teachers need the correct type of training that is not only theory based but also practical and ready to input into the system. Some teachers see language teaching as an easy ride and seem to be running down the clock to retirement, with disdain for their students.

### Resources

There is a case of follow-the-book syndrome apparent in the local area. Teachers need to be given the freedom to use their creativity and training to be able to implement them in the classroom. In this way resources will be more varied and students will be able to relate to them more easily.

### Recommendations

Taking all the factors of this report into account, the best plan of action would be to increase funding to ensure progress. What is more than just money, it is essential that this funding gets to where it is most needed. I would suggest teacher training and resources to be the priority.