

WEEK 3: WRITING YOUR REPORT

A BUSINESS REPORT IS A CLEARLY STRUCTURED DOCUMENT THAT PRESENTS INFORMATION ON THE FINDINGS OR OUTCOMES OF AN INVESTIGATION... USUALLY A REPORT WILL MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE. In all cases, reports should be well structured and concisely written with the essential information included so that the reader can understand your report findings, conclusions and recommendations.

PEST ANALYSIS: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND LEGAL, SOCIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL environments

REPORT STRUCTURE: (ONLY HAVE 3-4 MAIN IDEAS)

-EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The purpose of the Executive Summary is to sum up the entire report

This needs to be written in paragraph form (no bullet points)

-What is the purpose of the report, i.e. why has it been written?

-The problem or scenario you are investigating.

-What you found out and what you are concluded.

-Your recommendations.

The executive summary must be able to give the reader a snapshot of the whole report; they need to be able to gather from **the summary** (mini-report, can stand on its own), what the report is about. Need to be enticed and want to read the report.

-INTRODUCTION: The purpose of the Introduction is to introduce the topic and the objectives for the report.

It must:

-Set the scene and provide the background information to the topic.

This report will discuss....it will..... forms a roadmap for the reader as to what the report will discuss.

-Scope your report out/set parameters

This is where you make 'promises' as to what your report will deliver WITHOUT discussing what these are.

INTRODUCTION IS NOT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. It introduces the topic, provides the background and sets the scope for what your report promises to discuss. Does your introduction lead into your discussion of those main ideas?

-BODY OF REPORT/DISCUSSION: The purpose of the body of the report or the discussion is to discuss the information that has been gathered from your research, in relation to the purpose of your report.

-You must write in paragraphs with appropriate headings. Discussions must be prioritised in relevant sections, analysis in this section is VERY IMPORTANT (depth and not breadth).

-Discuss the points that you want to make (3-4 main ideas)

-Use examples to illustrate

-Make reference to what you 'found' on each main issue during your research.

-Relate each point back to the purpose of the report/scenario.

-CONCLUSION: The purpose of your conclusion is to summarise the body/discussion of your report AND to state the significance of your findings. Does your conclusions-conclude your findings in each?

-Sum up what has been achieved in your discussion and the significance of your findings.

-Bring everything together and wrap up.

THERE SHOULD BE NO NEW FINDINGS or information in your conclusion. Your conclusion should be in paragraph form.

-RECOMMENDATIONS: The purpose of your recommendations is to provide actions based in the findings of your report.

You need to suggest what the course of action should be in light of your findings. These should align with your conclusions. They should flow naturally from these. They should be appropriate to the level of analysis in your report.

-REFERENCES: Your reference section should contain a list of correctly cited sources that you used in your report. It should contain ONLY the sources used in your report-not everything you have read while researching. Does your recommendations lead on from each?

Your reference list must list your sources in correct APA format. See the Business Students APA Referencing Tool.

-ADDENDUM: Your addendum needs to include your RESEARCH ANNOTATIONS

This must include a research annotation for the two sources that you consider to be the most important and that have been retrieved from the Business Source Premier or ANZ reference Centre.

EXAMPLE : Prepare some general advice for a wealthy overseas client who is thinking of investing in a winery venture in New Zealand and would like to get a good general sense of the current situation of the New Zealand wine industry. You will need to analyse the current business environment of the New Zealand wine industry to assist your client's decision making.

What are the criteria that a business report might be marked against?

A marker would assess a number of key areas including:

Content - Is the content relevant to the purpose of the report? Have ideas been analysed and explained clearly? Some reports draw conclusions, some make formal recommendations. With this report you may come to some conclusions which will assist your client.

Research - Were relevant quality information sources used to support ideas in the report? Are information sources correctly referenced using APA format both in the text of the report and in the [reference list](#)?

Organisation - Are the main ideas presented in the report clear and easy for a busy manager to read and follow? Is a report structure adhered to using headings and a logical order?

Writing mechanics - Are there any errors in spelling, grammar etc. that the client may see as sloppy or unprofessional? When you read your report aloud, does it flow well? Does it appear professional?

Business reports are commonly used to help people make decisions. They provide comprehensive information and expert opinion that aims to be objective, accurate and complete. A report might help someone decide
-Whether or not to invest in a business venture, whether there is consumer potential for a particular product.
and if a business idea is viable.

Writing a business report gives the opportunity to apply business theory to a real life business situation. Your writing must be directed to the needs of the recipient. What information do they need to enable them to make the best business decision?

You need to ask yourself some questions:

What is the report about? Write ideas for an outline structure.

This scope and outline will help shape your research, your writing, and your time frame. What research needs to be done? Make sure you give yourself plenty of time.

Mapping out your ideas in a diagram form can be a useful way of organising your thoughts.

-Business requirements for the report.

-Position of authority.

-Knowledge base on the intended topic.

