

## UNIT 2

# FORMAL REPORT WRITING

A formal report is the amalgamation of all of the information of an important circumstance or happening that needs to be communicated formally. Learn more about formatting, the different parts and their usage, importance and effectiveness. *Updated: 11/03/2021*

## Formal Report

A **formal report** is an official report that contains detailed information, research, and data necessary to make business decisions. This report is generally written for the purpose of solving a problem.

Some examples of formal reports include:

- Inspection Report
- Safety Report
- Compliance Report
- Audit
- Incident Report
- Annual Report
- Situational Report

There are two categories of formal reports: informational and analytical reports. The **informational report** gathers data and facts used to draw conclusions. The **analytical report** contains the same information as the informational report, but it also offers recommendations to solve a problem.

Now let's take a look at the format and parts of a formal report. Think of the formal report as divided into three sections: front section, main section, and back section.

## Front Section of a Formal Report

The front section contains the title page, transmittal letter, and the table of contents. The title page should contain:

1. Company name
2. Name and title of the party for whom the report was prepared
3. Name and title of the preparer
4. Date

The **transmittal letter** is a letter informing the recipient that a report has been included in the packet. It may also state the purpose of the report. The letter also identifies any other documents that may be included.

The last part of the front section is the table of contents so that the reader can locate information by page number.

## Main Section of a Formal Report

The main section contains an executive summary, introduction to the problem, analysis of findings, and conclusions and/or recommendations:

The **executive summary** is a summary of the formal report. It should contain the basic facts without being too wordy. Think of it as a condensed version of the entire report.

The **introduction statement** states the purpose of the report, identifies the problem, its scope, and the method the writer plans to employ to solve the problem. The method may be to provide conclusions only as with an informational report, or it may be to provide conclusions and recommendations as with an analytical report.

An **analysis of findings** is probably the longest section. This section will reveal what facts you discovered and the details of the investigation. When drafting this section, remember to present information in the easiest and clearest way that points your reader to your conclusions or recommendations.

At the end of the main section, you will include a conclusions section in an informational report or a conclusions and recommendations section in an analytical report. **Conclusions** are findings based on your research data, such as emerging trends or patterns. **Recommendations** are directives or advice based on the research and conclusions. Remember, only an analytical report contains this section.

## **Back Section of a Formal Report**

We end the formal report with the back section. Here you will place references and the appendix.

**References** are any document that you believe strengthens the findings, conclusions, or recommendations. These can be citations from journals, periodicals, websites, and studies.