

REPORT WRITING SKILLS: ACCELERATING FIDA ACTIVITIES

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A REPORT...

- an account given of a particular matter, especially in the form of an official document, after thorough investigation or consideration by an appointed person or body.
- a document that presents information in an organized format for a specific audience and purpose. Although summaries of reports may be delivered orally, complete reports are almost always in the form of written documents. (Wikipedia)

A REPORT

- For the purpose of this presentation will not include legal reports as I lack the competence for legal parlance and may not do well in contest with the legal luminaries who make up FIDA as an association.
- It will also not include verbal or spoken account of something that one has observed, heard, done, or investigated as this may not provide empirical basis for future actions and stands the chance of loss of veritable material
- The focus will be on reporting for social dissemination and maintenance of organization journal for various purposes

REPORTS ARE USED TO

- disseminate information
- as compendium of past activities
- to reflect the association culture and mission
- as tool for resource mobilization
- compendium of memories
- as repertoire for future references.

TYPES OF REPORT

- Informational report
- Analytical report
- Operational report
- Product report
- Industry report
- Departmental report
- Progress report
- Internal reports
- External reports
- Vertical and lateral reports
- Strategic report
- Research reports
- Project reports
- Statutory report

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

- While departmental reports are specific to a unit, research reports expose the findings of a survey or research, operational reports give accounts of project being implemented, informational reports are less formal and give wide range of information.
- **Informational reports** are less formal in writing style usually deductive or personal , such reports aim at reaching wide range of people hence language used is less technical while acronyms are fully explained. It is a factual text which provides information in an organized and objective way, without analysis or recommendations.
- Informational reports could also be entertaining in nature, containing bits of information from various sectors apart from the core sector being reported. This is the type of reporting required for FIDA activities as a window to the world.

REPORT WRITING STYLES

- Writing styles are the ways that an author expresses their ideas and communicates with their audience
There are different types of writing styles, each with a specific purpose and structure. Some of the main writing styles are:
- Expository: to inform or explain
- Persuasive: to convince or persuade
- Descriptive: to create a vivid picture or impression
- Narrative: to tell a story or an event
- Personal: to express personal feelings or opinions
- Reflective: to analyze or evaluate one's own experiences or thoughts

ELEMENTS OF INFORMATIONAL REPORT

- Title page.
- Table of contents.
- Executive summary.
- Introduction.
- Discussion.
- Conclusion.
- Recommendations.
- References.

BENEFITS OF INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

- I. Medium Of Communication

- In big companies, there is often a huge workflow that deals with multiple branches, departments, and teams. Any form of verbal communication often gets lost in that chain or network of people, which is why written reports are a crucial medium of communication for all.
- Their main purpose is to communicate information to people and that is exactly what informational reports do because they aim to provide facts and details to all their readers. These are passed on from one person to another; thus, everyone is equipped with first-hand data.



BENEFITS OF REPORTS

- 2. Gathers and Organizes Data
- An information report helps gather information about your company's growth history, project details, and many other important areas. All of this information will be stored in a single place concisely and understandably for the people to access. It ensures that all data will be organized and designed in a standard format.
- 3. Accurate and Objective
- Nobody writes their personal opinion or views in an informational report because they are purely based on facts and accurate information or data which are taken at face value. They are always neutral in their approach, which is why they do not contain any arguments and remain free from bias. Thus, these information reports always provide an accurate and objective picture of the subject or topic.

BENEFITS OF REPORTS

- 4. Facilitates Decision-Making

Since information reports provide a full factual picture of the subject or topics they present, it makes it easy for businesses to keep track of their revenues, expenses, operations, and other activities. All these data help management make decisions for the company.

- There is communication, the flow of information, and interaction, all of which facilitate or pave way for decision-making within a company.
- Now that you know the importance of informational reports, let's take a look at the steps involved in making one!

TEN EASY STEPS TO IMPROVE YOUR REPORT WRITING

- 1. Find a good role model or mentor

To be a good writer, you should surround yourself with good writing. Learn from the best and regularly read a good mix of writing in books, newspapers, trade magazines and online articles. Your colleagues' reports may also provide inspiration and creative muse and give you an idea of what's been done before.

- 2. Decide what you're going to write

Don't start writing too soon. Consider what you'll say and why (your aim, purpose and objectives in writing). Identify who your typical reader is (e.g. novice or expert, what they need to get from your report, whether colleagues or outside your company, etc.). This information helps you pitch your writing at the right level.



TEN EASY STEPS TO IMPROVE YOUR REPORT WRITING

- 3. Plan the structure of your report

Decide what heading and/or key sections to include. Use internal templates (if available), mind-mapping software, or document outline tools to plan the flow and structure.

- 4. Gather & sift any source information

Only use data, statistics and background information from reliable and established sources to maintain credibility. Sense check any data you use by checking for a second source for validation.



TEN EASY STEPS TO IMPROVE YOUR REPORT WRITING

- 5. Respect intellectual property rights

Uphold the principles of good writing by respecting others' IP; acknowledge sources and references to improve credibility and allow reader follow-up. When quoting from a source, be mindful of any republication limitations.

- 6. Create a draft report

Don't expect to produce a masterpiece straight off. Most writing goes through several edits before final approval. It is a good opportunity to spot anything you may have missed too.



TEN EASY STEPS TO IMPROVE YOUR REPORT WRITING

- 7. Engage readers by using writing techniques

Use real-world examples, anecdotes, and storytelling to bring your report to life. A picture really can be a thousand words. Sometimes your message is clearer and stronger when presented in visual form. So add data tables, charts and images to add interest and improve understanding.

- 8. Assess & review your draft

Once you have a draft, assess and review what you've written. Is it too long or too short? Are sections missing? Should you remove anything? Can you improve readability? Enlist the help of your peers to offer further insight and identify improvements.



TEN EASY STEPS TO IMPROVE YOUR REPORT WRITING

- 9. Final proofing of the report

Pay attention to detail. Focus on spelling, grammar, punctuation, format, spacing, professionalism, logic, look and feel. It's worth taking more time here so your writing isn't remembered for all the wrong reasons.

- 10. Peer review & sign-off

Once your report is complete, it is worth getting a colleague to proof it. If they are happy with the report, it is time to get managerial approval before distribution.



FORBES HOW TO WRITE A NEWSLETTER THAT WILL HELP A BRAND GROW

- 1. Choose One Key Goal
- 2. Leverage Creative Content
- 3. Be Truthful
- 4. Show That You Care
- 5. Deliver Valuable Content Regularly
- 6. Make It Professional And Visually Appealing
- 7. Keep Your Audience In Mind
- 8. Make It Short, Crisp, Clear And Purposeful
- 9. Keep It Conversational And Personal
- 10. Know What Inspires And Motivates Readers
- 11. Set Your Publishing Schedule
- 12. Make It Story-Rich Content
- 13. Address Your Community's Cares
- 14. Stick To A Consistent Cadence
- 15. Provide Compelling, Relevant Content

DISEMINATION

- Currently, various news media exists through which activities of associations such as FIDA can be publicised, issues can also be amplified through same means.
- Online news media, social media platforms can be used to disseminate soft copies of news letter and activity reports such as FIDA Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn page. Pages of associate organizations can also be tagged to enhance visibility of the association.
- Hard copies of same reports and periodicals can be shared through distribution channels, news vendors, and mailing list of offices and MDAs
- Print media can also be used to reach wide audience with communique and other very important information to be disseminated.
- Dissemination should target both internal and external communities from which patronage may be expected.

FINALLY, ITS TIME TO WRITE **GREAT** FIDA REPORTS

- **G**et the context right
- **R**each the right audience
- **E**xpress your content right away
- **A**ffect the mood of your audience positively
- **T**ake audience engagement to next level

**THANKS FOR LISTENING AND WISH
YOU AN EVENTFUL FIDA NEC
MEETING**

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