

# **THAKUR COLLEGE OF SCIENCE & COMMERCE**

## **Autonomous**

### **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

#### **BUSINESS REPORT**

##### **Introduction:**

##### **What is a Business Report?**

A report is a document which presents an account or a statement of a plan of action, a course of action adopted, or an event that has taken place. A report provides information— either sets of facts or result of an investigation— that assists decision making. While preparing a report, information, data, procedures adopted for bringing about a course of action etc. have to be processed and presented with a particular perspective. A report generally presents the desired outcome about the future course of action. In short, a report studies a problem or a situation and offers a solution to the problem.

For example:

A report on the declining number of admissions to Arts courses. A report on how to increase client base in the Borivali West area. Reports, generally, are of two types: informative and analytical.

Informative reports generally do not offer analysis or recommendations. They describe routine matters. They can be of various types.

For example:

- Periodic reports that inform the management of operations and activities
- Situational reports that cover routine situations such as field visits, guest lectures, seminars, conferences etc.
- Progress reports that describe ongoing projects
- Compliance reports that report action taken in compliance to instructions from various authorities.

##### **Drafting an Analytical or Investigative Report**

This type of report is prepared to present findings after a scientific study or sample analysis. The report presents an objective analysis of the data with logical conclusions that derive from it, and is submitted with a view to facilitate the decision making process.

According to Lesikar, Petit and Irwin, [Reports: Business Communication Theory and Application] —A business report is an orderly, objective communication of factual information that serves some business purpose.¶

Report writing involves data collection, objective analysis of the data, and an organized statement of observations and conclusions derived from the analysis.

## ▪ **Structure of an Analytical Report:**

1. **Terms of Reference:** This part provides the frame of reference to the report. It describes the subject, the author/s, the period of study, and details about the authority of the author/s, and about the instructions received from the authority under which the report is prepared.

For example:

**Terms of Reference:** A committee of the following teachers was constituted in the light of the resolution no..... passed by the Management Committee in its meeting held on ..... to investigate why the enrolment in the Arts section of the college was on the decline, and to suggest ways to improve enrolment. The committee was asked to submit its report in 30 days from the date of the meeting held on March 20, 2008.

2. **Procedure:** Following a pre-approved methodology is an important part of any investigation. Without this, the results may not be universally acceptable. This process may involve field visits, interviews, sample surveys or getting supporting evidence from secondary sources like the Internet.

3. **Findings:** This section will explain the data obtained to derive conclusions. [This section may have a table of contents, as the data can be represented visually through diagrams like pie charts or bar charts.]

For example, out of 15,000 respondents in an exit poll 10 per cent said they voted for the local candidate 10 per cent said they did not care about the candidate or his credentials 50 per cent said they voted for the candidate who redressed their complaints 10 per cent said they voted along Party lines 10 per cent said they were first time voters and did not care who they voted for 10 per cent said they did not care who won, as the situation would never improve

4. **Conclusion:** This section will present the predominant trends among voters. For example, in the data given above, the dominant trend observed is to vote for the candidate who is accountable. It can also be concluded that only half of the voters took voting seriously. Conclusion, therefore, is a summarised statement of the data collected.

The conclusion, in the above example, may read:

—From the findings, the committee concludes that the majority [50 per cent] voters voted for the candidate who had worked for their cause.¶

5. **Recommendations:** A recommendation is a suggestion made for a future course action. Since it is evident that half the voters did not take voting seriously, there is a need to take up an awareness raising campaign to educate the voters.

The recommendations, therefore, could be

1. Citizens 'Forums should spread awareness about the importance of casting votes
2. Media should disseminate the same message.

3. A chapter on importance of voting and why it is the national duty of every citizen to vote should be included in every school curriculum, as well as in the Foundation Course at college level

4. celebrities should be roped in to promote voting as a national duty.

5 .procedures of enrolment and voting should be simplified

▪ **Individual or Committee/Sub-committee Report :**

An organisation may appoint an individual or a committee to prepare a report and the format of the report will depend on that.

Example 1: **Subcommittee / Committee Report.**

[Problem: Depletion in traditional client base. A nationalized bank wishes to find out why its clients, who were banking with them for years, have suddenly switched over to relatively new private banks. The bank needs to know how this downward trend can be arrested or even reversed.]

Enclosed: Report

Date:

Covering Letter:

The Managing Director,

Bank of.....,

Nariman Point

Mumbai 400 021

Submission of Report on Decreasing Client Base in .....

Dear Sir,

On the recommendations of ....., a committee comprising of the following members was constituted on 5 Sept 200—, to conduct an inquiry into the sudden withdrawal of accounts from the customers of the bank and to make positive suggestions. The committee was asked to submit its report within one month. The committee has investigated the matter and the report is ready for your consideration. In case of any clarification, please feel free to contact us.

Yours truly

Title: Inquiry report on shrinking client base and recommendations to overcome the crisis

**1. Terms of Reference:**

A committee was appointed to investigate the problem of fast depleting client base and suggest solutions to arrest the downward trend. The committee was given a month's time to submit its findings and recommendations from the date of appointment on 5 September, 200-- . The committee comprised of the following members:

.....

**2. Procedure:**

The committee met on 10 September 200—and finalized the following methodology to collect the data:

- i. to find out about facilities offered by other banks
- ii. to interview clients to find out their impression about the service and facilities
- iii. to compare this bank with the other private banks, scheme by scheme, facility by facility.

**3. Findings:**

- i. Private Banks have better infrastructure. Waiting time in the queues is lesser, and seating arrangements are comfortable, which make banking a leisurely exercise.
- ii. Private banks are more customer-friendly
- iii. The interiors, ease of operation, timely service, ready availability of any information, higher levels of automation, assistance provided with even the simplest procedures, make banking more comfortable in private banks.

**4. Conclusion:**

Services at private banks are far more satisfying than the nationalised banks like ours and this is the main reason for our clients opting for these private banks.

**5. Recommendations:**

The situation is indeed serious and the following recommendations need to be adopted to retain our client base and to survive the competition which currently is a threat to our existence.

- The bank must have better infrastructure
- Use of latest electronic tools along with introduction of facilities like ATM is essential.
- Staff needs to be trained to be customer-friendly
- Business hours should be increased
- Appointment of a Customer Relations Personnel is necessary to improve rapport with the customers

Focusing on students as future customers, lowering the minimum deposit amount to open a savings accounts, simplifying procedures and cutting down the processing time is the need of the hour.

Signed/-

.....

Date: 30 September 200—

Example 2: Individual Report

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Marketing Manager

Date.

The Managing Director

.....

Subject: Report on the causes of decline in the sales of CBT Washing Machine

Dear Sir,

This is in response to your letter dated ..... asking me to find out the reasons for the decline in the sales of the Company's washing machine. I am happy to inform you that I have probed into the matter and compiled this report for your perusal. I interviewed 25 customers who had purchased washing machines in the month of March and also studied the complaint letters received from the customers. The customers were found to be unhappy mainly for the following reasons:

- The machine made a lot of noise
- The outlet pipe became loose too often, spilling water all over.
- Only one programme was fully functional and customers could run it; other programmes did not run.
- The steel body of the machine rusted in a short period of time.

In order to find out if these complaints were specific to machines produced under a specific batch, I looked at all the complaint letters received by the company and realised that that was not the case. Complaints against machines purchased within the last six months were similar in nature. It seems that the product design is defective and needs urgent rectification. Once the product design is improved, the Company will have to focus on an advertising and publicity campaign to regain its lost image, as well as the trust of the customers. Giving additional incentives to retailers can help promote the machine and improve sales.

With regards,

.....

Example 3: Sub-Committee Report

Report of the Sub-Committee on Students 'Participation in

### **Co-Curricular Activities.**

#### **1. Terms of Reference:**

A Sub-Committee was appointed following the resolution passed by the Local Managing Committee in its meeting held on 26th December. .... —Resolved that a subcommittee be and is hereby formed to look into the reasons behind lack of participation in various extra-curricular activities organized by the college. The committee would submit its report to the Principal of the college by the 26th of January. The sub-committee would comprise of the following members:

## **2. Procedure:**

The sub-committee met twice to formalize the procedure. A questionnaire was formulated to be administered to the students. The Committee collected the exact number of students who participated in each of the various extra-curricular activities organised by the college during this year and the previous year.

## **3. Findings:**

After collecting the data, and comparing the figures obtained over two years, the committee arrived at the following conclusions:

- a) Students interest in these activities was decreasing
- b) Majority of the students had enrolled either for professional courses, or tuition classes, or had jobs.

### Example 4: Sub-Committee Report

Report of the subcommittee on feasibility of a Smart Card service by BEST for regular commuters.

#### **1. Terms of Reference:**

A committee comprising of the following members was formed in accordance with the resolution passed in the Annual General Meeting of BEST held on....., to look into the feasibility of introduction of smart cards for commuters availing themselves of BEST services. The subcommittee was asked to present its report by 28 February 200—

- c) Students were more keen on participating in activities that were perceived as glamorous and that promised exposure on visual media, or offered cash prizes
- d) Participation in sport meant rigorous practice, for which they had no time
- e) Students did not seem keen on participating in any team events

#### **4. Conclusion:**

Students are not interested in extra-curricular activities. They have neither the time nor the inclination to participate in such activities.

5. Recommendations: Considering that extra-curricular activities are necessary for overall personality development, the sub-committee recommended the following measures:

- a. Creating awareness among students about the importance of extra-curricular activities
- b. Projecting such activities as stress-busters
- c. Teaching students the importance of team work and development of team spirit against competitive spirit and individuality
- d. Linking group project work and project marks with such activities in order to enforce better participation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The names of the committee members are as follows:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

## **2. Procedure:**

The subcommittee met on 3rd, 4th and 5th March and decided to adopt the following course of action:

- a. Get feedback from commuters
- b. Identify routes that would be covered under the scheme
- c. Decide on the modalities — amount to be charged, the schemes to be offered, outlets for the distribution of cards, and the details for application.

## **3. Findings:**

I. Most commuters welcomed the idea of having a smart card, it was perceived as a convenient alternative for daily payment.

- I. The BEST employees like conductors and depot-managers welcomed the move and showed willingness to adapt to this new way of transaction.
- II. They felt that this move will help BEST to project an image as a commuter-friendly service.
- III. Administration showed willingness to make smart cards available to commuters in a month's time.

**4. Conclusion:** The committee concluded that the move to introduce smart cards would benefit both the public as well as the BEST services, and that such a scheme should be introduced without further delay.

Example 5: Individual Report

## **5. Recommendations:**

- Proper publicity of the scheme before its introduction.
- Organizing proper training to depot-managers to be able to provide information to commuters.
- simple procedure for availing of the card

Sd/-

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,

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25 March 200—

The Principal

Xxxxx College

Mumbai

Dear Madam,

Submission of Report on Students 'Grievances as the General Secretary of the Students 'Council, I

was asked, in the meeting held on 20 March 200— to study complaints from the students and submit a report within 15 days, making suggestions to the Grievance Committee. I am glad to inform you that I have successfully completed the scrutiny of complaints and here is the report. There were 30 complaints in July and August, which were sorted and categorized as follows:

(i) A majority of the complaints, fifteen in all, were about the functioning of the library. Since there were only two computers in the library, majority of the students could not avail themselves of the internet facility.

(ii)The complaints were also about the space available in the library. According to the complainants, the reading room in the library could not accommodate more than 150 students at a time. More space was needed to accommodate larger number of students.

(iii)Five complainants specifically said that the library staff was unnecessarily hostile towards the students.

(iv)Ten complaints were against the office staff, pointing to delays in the processing applications or responding to queries.

(v)Remaining five complaints were about the examination committee. Students were dissatisfied with the marks given to them in the subject of Economics.

**Conclusion:**

Students were dissatisfied largely with the library services, functioning of the office and the examination committee.

As a representative of students I would like to suggest the following:

1. Management should take note of the complaints and act on them.
2. College should make provision for more computers.
3. The office staff should be more efficient and student-friendly.
4. Students who have serious grievances regarding examinations should be called personally, and an interactive session between the teachers of Economics, The chairman of the examination committee and the students should be organized to resolve the matter. I sincerely thank you for giving me this opportunity to look into the matters that concern students.

Yours faithfully,

### **What is a Business Proposal?**

A Business Proposal, unlike a business report, offers a proposition buttressed by supporting evidence, data, analysis and spells out benefits for the parties concerned, along with specific recommendations about the course of action to be adopted in order to achieve the goal.

### **What is An Executive Summary?**

As the name suggests, an executive summary is a compilation of the most important aspects, data, and findings of a report. It offers a quick view of the highlights of the report.