UNIT 15 : MANAGEMENT REPORTING

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15.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to –

- write a report on any event or an experience
- explain different types of report
- interpret your report
- prepare project report for different organization
- explain precis writing

15.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will discuss how to write different types of reports, project report, executive summaries and business presentations etc.

A report is an account of an event or an experience. Reports are of many types, like- news paper reports, scientific reports and business reports. Again, a project report describes the purpose of the project and how it will be organized and managed. When we talk about executive summaries, it provide the essence of the report. And business presentations are basically required to present their project work in a colourful manner.

You will find this unit very interesting and important to study, because all professionals need to write project reports, executive summaries etc in their job. Most business students will have to do this in some form, so making presentations a part of your lesson will be useful and may lead to some worthwhile productive lessons.

15.3 REPORT WRITING

Before going to write a report, let us first define a report.

A report is a formal communication written for a specific purpose which includes description of procedures, analysis of data, their significance, conclusions and recommendations if required.

We can define professional report as an orderly and objective communication of factual information that serves a specific purpose.

Report writing is an essential skill for professionals. A report aims to inform a definite topic or incident as clearly and succinctly as possible.

While writing a report, one should first prepare the rough draft and then with careful revision he/she can gradually improve the quality of the report. Good report writing needs lot of effort. So one should consider the following points before writing a report.

15.3.1 Process of writing a report

- Before writing the report, you should carefully go through the entire topic, and then express it in your own words.

- The report should be in a logical order with accuracy in facts and figures, correlation of illustrations with the text and paper documentation and cross referencing.
- One should include only relevant points leaving out what is considered to be less relevant or less significant.
- After you have prepared a rough draft of the entire report, check the outline and notes once more to ensure that you have not missed any points or facts. Also try to see if you can make necessary additions and alterations.

15.3.2 Determining the purpose of the report

Ones work on a report starts logically with identification of a need (or a problem), for which he/she prepare the report. The need should be logical to prepare a report.

The next step is the preliminary investigation, where the investigator will gather information from different sources. We can gather information either by direct contact with the source (which is known as primary source of data collection) or we can collect information from secondary sources like- earlier published material, books, survey reports and web sites etc.Then we should express the problem clearly, preferably in written form.

15.3.3 Determining the factors

The next task of the investigator is to determine the factors which are responsible for the problem (need). The problem factors may be of three types:

1. First, they may be the subtopic of the overall topic about which the report is concerned. For example; if our report is on the production of any company, then the sub topic will be on the sales, inventory, demand and capacity etc.
2. Another problem factor may be the hypothesis which must be tested. Once formulated, the hypothesis needs to be tested and their applicability to the problem is then either proved or

disproved. Suppose we assume that we have the problem of determining why sales at a certain store have declined. Our task will be to explain the reasons through brainstorming.

3. Another factor is the comparison. In the problems that involve comparison, there may be the bases on which the comparisons are made.

15.3.4 Gathering the information needed

Before preparing the report we need to investigate the problem personally and should collect the necessary information before writing the report. For example, a sales problem might require collecting information through discussions with customers and sales personnel. A computer problem might require talking to both end users and programmers.

15.3.5 Interpreting the findings

After completing the research, the next step is to prepare the findings for the presentation. While preparing the findings it depends on the type of reader to whom you will give the presentation. Some readers may want only facts and some may want more analysis. Based on their preferences we need to prepare our findings.

15.3.6 Organizing the report information

Organizing a report is very important because if the process of organizing is not logical then people will not be able to understand it.The main aim of organizing the report is to communicate the information in the best possible way to the reader. From the introduction to the conclusion, the organization of the report should be in a logical order.

15.3.7 Writing the report

The last step in this process is the writing of the report. While writing the report we need to communicate clearly and what we want to convey. Good report writing presents facts and interprets them logically. It avoids presenting the writer's opinion, biases and attitudes.

A well written report reads as one continuous story, so different parts of the reports need to connect smoothly.

A few model reports are given below. Read it carefully:

1. Write a report on a blast that has occurred recently.

4 killed, 50 hurt in Jonai blast

By A Staff Reporter(source: The Assam Tribune, March-17, 2008)

GUWAHATI, March 16 – In the worst ever incident of militant violence in Dhemaji district since 2004, at least four persons were killed and more than 50 others including women and children were injured in a grenade blast in Jonai last night. Official sources said that about 15,000 people gathered in a field near the Jonai circuit house last night to celebrate Ali-Aye-Ligang, a festival of the Mising community, when suspected militants lobbed a grenade at the crowd. Four persons were killed in the incident

Sources said that at least 50 persons were injured in the incident and 14 of them have been shifted to the Assam Medical College Hospital, Dibrugarh, this morning. Those shifted to Dibrugarh included two children and their condition is stated to be serious. Altogether 36 injured persons have been shifted to Dhemaji town for treatment.

2. Write a report on emerging trends in tourism Management in Assam.

   (Source: The Assam Tribune, March-6, 2008).

   Read them carefully:

IT ENABLED TOURISM MANAGEMENT IN ASSAM

Information Technology (IT), which is a key component of every industry and trade in the present day context, plays a very

important role in the tourism industry. The use of new IT tools and techniques has facilitated the efficient netting of information and communication system in present-day travel and tourism management. The internet, website, e-mail, mobile, tele-text, videotext, telecopy etc have revolutionized the communication system as it has enabled organizations to demonstrate their offerings globally using multimedia interfaces. Consumers are also empowered through the new tools and techniques to search for their required information and to undertake online services like booking of airline/rail/bus tickets, hotel/resort reservations, car rentals, fixing a business meeting in a hotel/resort, participating in a particular festival or event, enjoying a match (cricket/football etc) and also negotiating a price, asking for discount, making online payments, exchanging of queries and ideas, interactions etc. In addition, the use of some of the newly developed management tools and technologies like Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Value Chain Integration Tourism (CVIT), and Knowledge Management System (KMS) etc helps efficient netting of information and communication systems.

Tourism on the other hand is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world with an enormous potential for further growth. It is forecasted that by 2020 the tourism industry would be the single-biggest industry in the world

The North-Eastern region on the other hand has tremendous potential for developing the tourism industry. The rich natural beauty, serenity and exotic flora and fauna of the region serve as invaluable resources for the development of tourism in the region.

ACTIVITY



1. Read the following news story and make a good report with a head line.

GUWAHATI, March 12 – The Opposition today charged the State Government with according little importance to agriculture, industry and employment generation in the Budget, and also said that the budgetary provisions did not address the issue of inflation.

2. Suppose you, are attending a workshop on painting. About 50 prominent artists are participating in it. The place is at Kalakhetra, Guwahati-37.

Write a report of the workshop for the cultural page of a daily paper.

15.4 PROJECT REPORT WRITING

In this section we will discuss how to write a project report. One of the most important aspects of good technical writing is to be concise, yet remain informative. The ability to select what is essential, and to omit what is merely an incidental detail, is a skill every scientist needs.

The following points should be considered while writing a project-

- Concentrate on getting the information over the reader as clearly as possible.
- Do not use unnecessary jargons.
- Don't make the report too lengthy.
- Spelling, punctuation and grammar should be perfect.

15.4.1 Criteria of a Good Project

A good project should follow the following criteria:

Feasible-Capable of being done with means at hand and circumstances as they are.

1. It should be purposeful.

2. It should impart gainful learning experiences.
3. It should cater for the activities of pupils.
4. The students should get full freedom to work according to their own interest and abilities.
5. Project must be selected by the active participation of both pupils and the teacher.
6. It must be economical in term of time and money.
7. It should keep time constraints controlled.
8. It should be challenging.
9. It should be feasible.

15.4.2 Advantages of Project Method

1. It promotes co-operative activity and group interaction.
2. It adopts a democratic way of learning.
3. It supports the theory of correlation among different subjects.
4. It promotes scientific attitudes in students.
5. It supports learning by self- activity.
6. It stimulates creative thinking.
7. It enhances the educational value of the content.
8. It enriches the mental horizons of the students.

15.4.3 Disadvantages of Project Method

1. It is a time consuming method.
2. It over- loads the teacher with work.
3. It believes the teacher to be -a scientist or an encyclopedia having an all-round knowledge of every subject.
4. It is a syllabus- hampering method.
5. It provides superficial knowledge to students.
6. It is an expensive method.

15.4.4 Format of a Project Report

Though there is no specific format of a project report writing applicable for all kinds of projects, there are some sections which need to be present in a project report. These are explained below:

- **Title:** This must contain:

1. the report title which clearly states the purpose of the report
2. full details of the person(s) for whom the report was prepared
3. full details of the person(s) who prepared the report
4. the date of the presentation of the report

- **Table of contents:** This is a list of the headings and appendices of the report. Depending on the complexity and length of the report, you could list tables, figures and appendices separately. Make sure the correct page numbers are shown opposite the contents. Up-to-date word processing packages can generate a table of contents for you.
- **Introduction:** In introduction, give enough background information to provide a context for the report. State the purpose of the report. Clarify key terms and indicate the scope of the report (ie what the report will cover).
- **Experimental techniques and methods**: This section varies depending on the type of the project. Here first we include the methodology we have used for the study followed by the statistical and mathematical techniques to find the result of the project.
- **Results and discussion**: In this section we explain the result of our findings.This findings can be represented either in writing or in graphical representation.
- **Summary/conclusions:** At the end of the report, we sum up the main points of the report based on our observations. The conclusion should clearly relate to the objectives of our report. No surprises please! (that is, don't include new information here.)

- **Recommendations**: These are suggestions for future action. They must be logically derived from the body of your report.
- **Abbreviations and/or glossary:** If necessary, we should provide an alphabetical list of the abbreviations you have used in the report, especially if they may not be familiar to all readers of the report. If we have used a lot of technical terms, we should also provide a glossary (an alphabetical list of the terms, with brief explanations of their meanings).
- **References** : References are the list of books and different sites which reader can access from different sources. With the help of references we can further go in details of the topic.
- **Appendices** (if used) an appendix contains material which is too detailed, technical, or complex to include in the body of the report (for example, specifications, a questionnaire, or a long complex table of figures), but which is referred to in the report. Appendices are put at the very end of the report, after everything else. Each appendix should contain different material. We need to number each appendix clearly.

Generally a project can be segmented into five basic parts including the above mentioned sections, which are described as follows:

The **first part** should contain the title, the name of the author(s) and the date. This should convey the area and scope of the project.

The body part should include the detailed work carried on in the project. The **second part** should consist only of the abstract. The idea of the abstract is to provide a brief summary of the report. The reader should be able to pick up from the abstract what it entailed, how it was undertaken and an indication of what was found out. The **third part** should comprise a **table of contents**, indicating the page numbers of the different sections.

Fourth part onwards the report should include- the introduction, results and discussion, summary and conclusion,

reference etc.

This is where we need to outline the underlying concepts (and if required a brief version of any theory) needed to discuss the project. You need to present your results in a logical sequence, highlighting what is important and how the data you obtained have been analyzed to provide the results you discuss. You should discuss what you infer from the data. **Make sure that all diagrams, graphs etc. are properly labeled and have a caption.**

And the final component or **fifth part** of the project (Summary/ conclusions) must relate closely to the first. In the Summary and conclusion section, you need to put it all together. Coherently you should include a concise version of your discussion, highlighting what you have found out, what problems you had, and what might be done in the future.

Your report should be sufficient to indicate to the reader what you have done, what you have found out and also provide enough information for them to repeat the work if they so wished. You will have made use of information from a variety of sources; in these cases you must include a reference to such sources.

By including a reference to the source others can check your work and reduce the time taken to make further advances.

There are generally three types of reference according to the source- journal article, book, and web site.

how it will benefit the company. If appropriate, you may recommend its purchase.



ACTIVITY

Visit any nearby organization and prepare a project report for the organization as per the given format. (Your project may be in any of this field- IT, Marketing, H.R., Finance etc)

15.5 PRECIS WRITING

In this section we will discuss about precis writing. Precis is a short summary of a paragraph. But writing Precis is more than just making the paragraphs short. A precis is the gist of a passage expressed in as few words as possible. A precis should give all essential points so that anyone reading it will be able to understand the idea expressed in the original passage.

Writing precis requires skill so that the writer do not miss out a point and capture all the main essence in one single small paragraph. Therefore, for writing a precis you need to follow a particular set of rules and that is why it is important to understand the Rules of precis writing.

The motive of writing a precis is to make the reader understand the main essence of the paragraph in a shorter format. For precis writing there are certain do's and dont's which will guide you into writing a better precis. Below are do's and dont's of precis writing.

Do's of Precis Writing

- Start your precis with the main idea so that reader can quickly understand the essence of the precis.
- As a precis is concise, compress it and make sure that the length is available for you to retain the important data, keywords, and the concept.
- Removing the irrelevant data or sentence is as important as writing the relevant points. Thus, identify the superfluous data and facts and keep the core idea of the work only in the precis.
- If you are mentioning anything related to history or any historical data than make sure that it is written in the past tense only.
- Also, remember to put the purpose as to why you are writing a precis in the writing piece.

  This will help the reader understand what you wrote in the precis.

Dont's of Precis Writing :

- A precis writing is a formal way of writing a shorter form of the given paragraph. So, even though you have read and understood the Precis well, do not form your own opinions.
- You cannot insert your own remarks and criticism in a precis.
- Always take the fact and data that is given in the paragraph only.
- Also, during a precis writing, you cannot insert a question. If for any reason you need to insert make it in the form of a statement.
- For a precis writing, avoid using contractions and abbreviations.
- Write the full form of any given words only.
- Avoid being jerky. This will show that you have not understood the passage properly and have started writing a precis.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: State two advantages and disadvantages of Project writing.

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Q 2: What is Precis writing?

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Q 3: What is table of content?

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15.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have learnt about how to write a report. While writing a report we should concentrate on the content. It has to be in a logical order and should include the basic concepts. Then we have learnt how to prepare a project report, which should include the background of the topic. We have also described the procedures used; dentified the major sources of error

and explained how they are dealt with. The final results should be presented clearly and concisely; it should include an analysis of errors, but omit details of arithmetical manipulations. The interpretation of the results must be discussed, and improvements and possible extensions of the work suggested. You should give references to any books, articles or other sources of information (e.g. web sites) that have proved useful in preparing the report, or carrying out the work. At the end of the unit we have discussed about how to write a precis.



15.7 FURTHER READING

1) R.C. Sharma, Krishna Mohan," Business Correspondence and Report Writing," 3rd edition.
2) Lesikar, Flatley "Basic Business Communication" 10th Edition. Web site: www.assamtribune.com



15.8 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No. 1 : Advantages:

1. It promotes co-operative activity and group interaction.
2. It adopts a democratic way of learning.

Disadvantages:

1. It is a time consuming method.
2. It over- loads the teacher with work.

Ans. to Q. No. 2 : A precis is the gist of a passage expressed in as few words as possible.

Ans. to Q. No. 3 : This is a list of the headings and appendices of the report.



15.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: Define report writing.

Q 2: What is project report writing? Mention its advantage and disadvantages.

Q 3: Explain the format of a project report.

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