Project Reports

Progress reports and final activity reports are common professional documents. The progress report is an interim report which describes activities undertaken to date, problems encountered, and actions taken to overcome them. It ends with a description of the remaining timeframe and steps, assigned responsibilities, or other reflections which need to be conveyed to managers or others who will read the report.

The final report serves to communicate the results of the project to others (46).You should be succinct in your report and avoid providing every detail of the project so as not to make the report too lengthy (46). Be sure to remain neutral (rather than too passive) in your writing, including being professional and direct with your recommendations.

Structure

In general, the structure of a project report should include the following components (46,47). Consider using headings and subheadings, as they may help guide the reader throughout the report and emphasize important topics.

- **Cover Page**. Title, name of organization, name of author of the report or team implementing the project.
- **Abstract or Executive Summary**. Briefly summarize your project and accomplishments. An abstract should be around 150-200 words, while an Executive Summary is no longer than a single page. Visit the Abstract and Executive Summary sections for more information.
- **Introduction**. Introduce your project and its importance. Be sure to emphasize the need for the project and summarize your purpose and the timeframe.
- **Activities**. Describe the activities undertaken. Include information here about your strategy or approach, location, timing, pricing strategy or technology used, etc. Describe any significant barriers to completing the project and actions taken to overcome them.
- **Results**. Report the results of the project, including quantitative results, financial performance, and whether the project achieved its goals and purpose. Include diagrams, figures, tables, and charts that succinctly illustrate the results.
- **Discussion/Conclusions/Recommendations**. Demonstrate that you have a solid understanding of all factors of the project by drawing conclusions and reflecting on the level of success of the project. Describe what worked well, what lessons were learned for others who may tackle a similar issue. If appropriate, you may wish to also include recommendations for replication of the project or to expand or sustain the activities or partnerships started. If the project report is for an external audience, you should try to emphasize positive ways in which you overcame difficulties. If individual staff were a problem, this is generally not the place to raise such issues (a private email to the director, or better yet a phone call, is better).
- **References**. Include any references you utilized to complete the project.
- **Appendices**. If the project involves elaborate diagrams or tables, particularly if they occupy more than half the page, place them in an appendix and refer the reader to them in the main text.

For more information, visit the following resources:

- [University of Exeter Guide to Writing a Project Report](#)
- [Northwestern University Writing Effective Project Reports](#)