

Worksheet 8: A formal report

1 Discuss in groups. Imagine a company wanted reports on the following items. Which reports would need to be very formal? Which could be less formal?

- 1 A report on an overseas trade visit
- 2 A report on the board of director's annual meeting
- 3 A report on a visit to an existing client
- 4 A report on bad behavior by a member of staff
- 5 A report for the head of administration on stationery costs
- 6 A report on staff plans to introduce after-work sports activities

2 Read five extracts (A–E) from different parts of a very formal report. Match the extracts to the headings (1–4) taken from the report.

- 1 Introduction ____
- 2 Findings ____, ____
- 3 Conclusions ____
- 4 Recommendations ____

Unsurprisingly, the sales and marketing departments reported the highest travel costs per year within the company. Over 70% of their budget is currently spent on travel. Following interviews with heads of these two departments, it was concluded that video-conferencing equipment could significantly reduce travel expenditure, not to mention the environmental impact. A

I recommend purchasing video-conferencing equipment costing \$30,000, with two years' guaranteed servicing and support. On approval of this by the board, I also propose that managers should prepare detailed plans on how they will integrate the equipment into the communication needs of their department. B

One supplier said that video-conference equipment capable of fulfilling our needs would cost in the region of between \$15,000 and \$30,000. While this initial cost is high, the same supplier also claimed that costs are recouped within twelve months of purchase. C

The aim of this report is to assess ways in which the company's travel budget can be reduced in the next financial year. It was requested as a result of a discussion at the most recent management board meeting. The information is based upon data which was provided by heads of department and accounts. D

In summary, the following points should be noted: E

- Video-conferencing equipment is expected to reduce travel costs by somewhere in the region of 30%.
- Initial training is needed to operate the equipment, so time will need to be allocated for staff training.

3 Find useful expressions in the report to complete this list.

The purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to look at ...

1 _____

Who asked for the report

It was commissioned by ...

2 _____

Concluding

In conclusion, this report notes that ... ,

3 _____

Making recommendations

4 _____

5 _____

4 Read these direct speech sentences, then look back at the report in Exercise 2 to find who said each one. Underline the matching information in the extracts.

- 1 “We think it’ll save significant amounts of money.” _____
- 2 “We should purchase video-conference equipment costing \$30,000 with two years’ guaranteed servicing and support.” _____
- 3 “Managers need to write reports on how they’ll integrate the equipment.”

- 4 “It’ll cost somewhere between fifteen to twenty thousand dollars.” _____
- 5 “You’ll get that money back within a year.” _____
- 6 “Staff will need training with the new equipment.” _____

5 Work in pairs. Look at the extracts again and underline the passive verbs. For each one, discuss these questions.

- 1 Is the agent (the person who did the action) known or unknown?
- 2 Why do you think the writer uses the passive instead of the active form?

6 The head of your company has asked you to write a report on ways to reduce spending in your department without losing productivity. Write a one-page report with the following headings: *Introduction, Findings, Conclusion, and/or Recommendations*. You can either invent or research information for the section on *Findings*, including interviews with some people in your department about ways to reduce spending.

I CAN

write a formal report	<input type="checkbox"/>
use expressions for introducing different parts of a formal report	<input type="checkbox"/>
use formal passive reporting verbs	<input type="checkbox"/>