

FIVE-STAGE REPORT WRITING STRUCTURE

GOOD REPORTS OFTEN CONTAIN A FIVE-STAGE STRUCTURE:

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Background Information**
- 3. Development**
- 4. Discussion**
- 5. Conclusion**

1. INTRODUCTION

In the introduction you can introduce the aim and subject of the report. You tell the reader what to expect, what issue is being explored or evaluated, and if necessary, why. It is often helpful to summarize very briefly the main finding of the report at this point, as this can stimulate the interest of the reader. Grab the attention of the reader and encourage them to read on.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION/ CONTEXT

In this area you would present an overview of the historic, economic, political or social influences and/or the micro factors that enable the reader to put the report discussion issues into context or perspective.

3. DEVELOPMENT

In this broad area of the report, you would outline key issues, ideas, and practices that are the main focus of the report. You might also present relevant data or information to illustrate or explain what has happened. You might also include, the ways a particular model is currently applied, or the way a particular scheme developed.

4. DISCUSSION

The discussion section is the heart of the report – and usually is the most important in terms of the mark you receive! This is where you present your analysis of the issues presented earlier in the report. This is where you interpret, explain and discuss the issues you outlined earlier in the report. In an academic report this is often done by reference to relevant theories, models and practices.

5. CONCLUSIONS or SUMMARY or RECOMMENDATIONS

This section should bring the report to a close by pulling together the main points emerging from the report and by giving a relatively brief resume of the main or overall conclusions or recommendations reached. The reader will be left in no doubt what your position is on the topic discussed in the report.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Read 'Report Writing' (Effective Learning Booklet)