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About   Reading Challenge   Post

🕐 2021.04.29

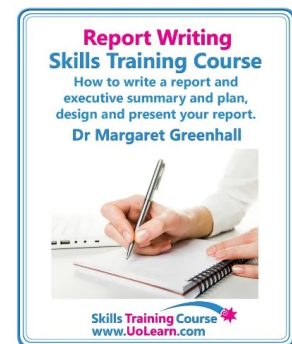# Report Writing: An Easy Format for Writing Business Reports by Dr. Margaret Greenhall

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Category: Communication

(48 von 100)

Why: I want to write a business report more effectively.
Goal: Learn a best practice of business writing.

Action: Brain Write, Edit, and then Proof-read.

3 Key Concepts

1. Dump your brain out onto paper.
2. Evaluate the contact and decide what should go in.
3. Decide how the information should be connected and structured.

Summary

> ## How to brain write? What is brain writing?

Allow your mind to free-wheel and pour out on papers. The key is to write without censorship. This can be extremely hard for most people because we believe that editing later takes too much effort. Therefore, we want to write perfectly from the beginning.

That's right! It is impossible to write perfectly from the first time. Even a professional writer won't achieve that kind of standard.

Margaret suggested that we separate **content** and **structure**.

1. Dump your brain out onto paper.
2. Evaluate the contact and decide what should go in.
3. Decide how the information should be connected and structured.

This book has some workflows that I had naturally adopted throughout the time I write a blog regularly. It also assures how we should approach business writing with a flowchart.

Below is the method I aim to adopt as I already am using a notecard system to organize my writing.

File Card Frenzy Method

Zero: Set a goal

Your mind needs to have objectives for reading. It helps you **sort out what is important.**

> " If there is one single break-through I came across during this reading project, it is this one. With a specific goal in mind, you will read quickly and with better retention.

First: Brain Writing

Once you are clear with the writing objective in mind.

- Take a pile of 10 file cards.
- Write one idea on one card. "Do not worry if you have to put it in report or not"
- After finish the first pile of 10 cards, pick up the next pile and repeat.
- Write until your mind is empty.

If your mind is empty too soon, or at the beginning, that means you have not acquired enough information, to begin with.

> ❝ Go back and do your
> reading!

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Second: Evaluation

Sleep on it. This gives your brain incubation time to process while you are doing other physical activity and sleep. **Amazing!**

The following day, read your notes and answer the following **8 questions** to sort cards into 3 piles rating:
1. Green pile – 100% sure it has to be in a report.
2. Amber pile – Not sure.
3. Red pile – 100% not needed.

8 Questions to ensure objectives for reports

1. Why is this report being written?

2. Who is going to read the report?

3. Who else will read it?

4. Why do they need it?

5. What do they know already?

6. What do they need to know about the topic?

7. What don't they need to know?

8. What are they going to use the information for?

.   .   .

Third: Grouping

List main categories according to the subject, and put cards into groups of categories.

To get the report into the right order, we must keep in mind what kind of report we are about to write.

- **Information reports** – collated information

- **Research reports** – you've collected data and someone has analyzed it.
- **Proposal reports** – **information is presented so that a decision can be made be the reader.**

In my business case, it is most likely a proposal. I need specific information in the form of a report to make a decision.

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To sum up, Margaret wrote a concise book to guide us in writing business reports. It reinforces an objective in reading and writing.

Report guiding a decision

Goal check: I learned a best practice in the business writing routine.

Wasu's Review
(4.0 / 5.0)

Get this book on Amazon here!

Bonus: Executive Summary Checklist

Credit: https://www.smartsheet.com/write-executive-summary-examples

Executive Summary Checklist

- [ ] Update the executive summary with each version of the document so the information is relevant and consistent.

- [ ] Organize the sections of the summary to match the sections of the body copy (formal structure) or in the order of importance based on the objective.

- [ ] Remove jargon, qualifying words (for example, "very"), technical terms, and acronyms.

- [ ] Highlight valuable information and findings with precise, factual data supported in the document.

- [ ] Use active, direct language tailored to the target audience's expertise level and edit for passive writing.

- [ ] Delete repetitive information, recommendations, messages, or data.

- [ ] Format for readability with plenty of space between sections and clear headings that guide the reader.

- [ ] Use bullet points or tables (title and label) to list important points, recommendations, or findings.

- [ ] Adopt the appropriate tone for an internal or external audience (for example, "we" versus "the company").

- [ ] Include the appropriate financial information for the intended audience, including the amount of funding you seek (if that is the objective).

- [ ] Remove cliches, buzzwords, or unnecessary phrases.

- [ ] Include examples from the body of the document and describe research methods and processes.

- [ ] Edit for brevity to keep it short.

- [ ] Include all the must-know information and delete unclear or unsupported content.

- [ ] Verify the headings and subheadings used in the summary match the body copy of the document.

- [ ] Include a conclusion and describe the desired outcomes, solutions, or recommendations.

- [ ] Verify that the summary stands alone and supports the objective if it is the only portion of the document that will be read.

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