Lecture 06

Report Structure

6.1 Sections

A report has the following sections:

   i.   Title Page

   ii.   Executive Summary

  iii.   Table of Contents

  iv.   Introduction

   v.   **Discussion**

  vi.   **Conclusion**

 vii.   **Recommendations**

viii.   **Bibliography**

  ix.   **Appendices**

In Lecture 03, we finished discussing the Introduction section. In this Lecture 04, we are going to start with the **Discussion section.**

6.2 Discussion

This section goes into the detail of the process through which you have collected your data. When you structure this section, provide all the details of your results and findings. The discussion section varies according to the type of report

6.2.1 Status Report

In the discussion part of a Status Report, discuss the problems that were encountered while conducting the study.

6.2.2 Trip report

Record your observation and course of action when you are required to compose a trip report in which a survey has been conducted.

6.2.3 Lab report

After performing an experiment in lab, state all findings and overall learning in detail here.

6.2.4 Proposal

When composing a proposal report, discuss in detail all the feasible solutions of the problem that are going to be investigated in the study.

The overall design of research, the **methodology**, and tools should be discussed in detail in this section, as it was just touched upon in the Introduction section. In the end, provide recommendations on the basis of findings.

Moving on to the second part of Discussion section, reflections and insight on the subject matter can now be included along with the problem that was investigated. However, opinion as a writer of the report should be well-informed, logical and should show in-depth understanding of the solution and problem that was posed in the study.

Lucid and comprehensive prose style should be observed while composing this section.

If findings include any generalizations, be cautious to support them with facts and statistics of the findings.

6.2.5 Characteristics of Discussion Section

The following features must be present in your write-up of Discussion section:

   i.   Critical thinking about a problem
  ii.   Creative solutions of the problem
 iii.   In-depth understanding of the problem

6.3 Findings

The findings section can be composed by answering the following two questions:

- How *reliable* are the findings?

- How *significant* are the findings?

Findings that are factual, deduced after authentic research survey and are statistically sound are considered reliable. Moreover, the scope of the study and its utility in real-life human setting determines its significance.

6.4 Conclusion

Conclusions are logical deductions based on the data in the findings section. They are a comprehensive summary of the findings and sum up the main points of the report along with highlighting the significant elements. They relate to the objectives and end with a statement which will lead to the recommendations section.

> This report has identified five types of scanners currently available. Some are primarily used for professional purposes such as the drum scanner; others are used more broadly in the workplace and home such as flatbed scanners and, to a lesser extent, sheet fed scanners.
>
> Specialized scanners are currently being incorporated into other types of technologies such as digital cameras, printers and photocopiers

Example

6.5   Recommendations

Recommendations are useful for researchers who want to work in the same area as the author. Thus, the author should ensure to give only those recommendations that can be implemented by researchers in a practical way. Purely imaginative recommendations are just a waste of space. Moreover, they should be based on the findings. For instance, what more could be done in the same area may be stated from a certain point of view. Do not give general recommendations; it only shows you want to fill space. Rather, suggest topics for further research so that others may benefit from them.

6.5.1   How to write Recommendations?

Brief – write concisely; any reason for recommendation should only be given if necessary.

Clear – do not be ambiguous as to how the suggestion should be implemented.

Precise – vague recommendations usually result from insufficient research/analysis.

6.6   Bibliography or Work Cited

Keep in mind the following points while composing bibliography:

  i.   All the sources of information are included in the report.
  ii.   Use the standard format: APA/MLA or whichever style the work demands
 iii.   Ensure that all the work cited in the body of the report is listed in the reference list.

6.7   Appendices

An appendix contains material which is too detailed, technical, or complex to include in the body of the report. That is why it is placed at the very end of your report. Specifications, questionnaires and Long complex tables of figures are usually included in the report as appendices.