
UNIT 13: Drafting Business Reports

Structure

- 13.0 Objectives
- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Feasibility Reports
- 13.3 Project Reports
- 13.4 Grammar: Spotting the Errors
- 13.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 13.6 Answers

13.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit you will learn about:

- ... the steps to be followed in writing reports
- ... appropriate sectioning of reports.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

In the last unit we looked at the basic features and formats of reports. We also examined the process of writing in-house reports for the management to take decisions based on the recommendations.

Sometimes we may be asked by an external agency to study a proposal and submit a feasibility report. A feasibility report is a document which indicates whether a project is worth undertaking or not. A project is undertaken on the basis of a feasibility report. A feasibility report may recommend or not recommend a project to be undertaken

A project report is a document that is written after the completion of the project.

We will now study a sample feasibility report and a project completion report.

13.2 FEASIBILITY REPORT

Scenario:

AZN Group, a private transport company has been asked to study the feasibility of introducing auto rickshaws in the small town of Manigunj by the Municipal Transport Corporation. AZN Group studies the proposal and submits a feasibility report to the Director, Municipal Transport Corporation.

You are a representative of AZN group. How will you begin the study?

You will find out about

- Step 1:
- the area of the town
 - the population of the town
 - the kinds of movements of the people
 - the factories, banks, offices, schools, educational institutions in the town
 - the commuters' needs for local transport

- Step 2: the existing local transport facilities available in Manigunj
- Step 3: the condition of the roads in the town
- Step 4: the number of auto rickshaws that can be introduced for it to be worth the investment
- Step 5: the number of drivers who will be willing to take this up as a viable occupation
- Step 6: the number of petrol/diesel outlets in the town
- Step 7: the problems that may be encountered in introducing auto rickshaws
- Step 8: other advantages that may accrue from the introduction

Any other points you find relevant to the study.

After you have collected the information you will be ready to write a report on the feasibility of introducing auto rickshaws.

It might include points like the following:

- Manigunj is a developing semi-urban center. 7 factories and 11 schools and 5 colleges have come up in the last five years. The factories and the educational institutions are located at a radius of 12 km from the center of the town. The urban limits of the town which earlier measured about 254 sq. km are now expanding to include the neighbouring villages to about 452 sq km.
- The population of Manigunj has risen from 75,000 in 2006 to 1,55,000 in the current year. People from neighbouring villages are moving to Manigunj because of the increasing number of employment and educational facilities. There are 5 branches of major Indian banks in the town. Many people commute from their original locations and travel 10-15 km.
- Major trains on the Bhilpur –Mandha route stop at Manigunj which has become a junction for several villages and towns in the region.
- All buses on this route also stop at Manigunj.
- Local conveyance from the bus and train stations is horse driven jatkas and cycle rickshaws. These ply long distances up to 15 km often taking an hour or so. Public transport buses along the ring-route are at a frequency of 15 minutes. They are very crowded as this is the sole means of local transport.
- Most roads in Manigunj are just about 15 feet wide and are lined by open sewers leaving much less moving space. There are two main roads running North-South and East-West, intersecting the town at the center. All the other roads branch off from the two main roads. Widening of at least 11 side roads will be necessary before they become fit for auto rickshaws.
- On an experimental basis, 20 auto rickshaws may be introduced for a month to assess the demand.
- There are a large number of youngsters in the age-group 20 to 30 who are willing to take up driving as an occupation, if auto rickshaws are introduced. Quite a number of cycle rickshaw pullers are also willing to try their hand at driving auto rickshaws.
- At present the number of private car-owners in Manigunj is about 35 only. Many Manigunj natives are employed in other major cities and come down for a vacation or on some personal work in their cars/scooters.
- There are five petrol/diesel outlets in the town at present. If auto rickshaws are introduced there would be a need for at least 20 more outlets.

Proposals and reports

- Jatka and cycle rickshaw owners may see the introduction of auto rickshaws as a threat to their livelihood. They may be persuaded to learn driving and given concessions and incentives to change their mode of operation to sustain their livelihood.
- Introduction of auto rickshaws may facilitate greater mobility for the inhabitants of Manigunj and the economic face of the town might get a lift. They may be introduced gradually and jatkas and cycle rickshaws may continue with auto rickshaws and phased out eventually

Now that you have the points, you can put it in the framework that you are already familiar with in the previous unit on reports.

- ... Letter of Transmittal
- ... Title page
- ... Table of Contents
- ... Executive Summary
- ... Terms of Reference: members of the committee
- ... Procedure
- ... Findings
- ... Feasibility statement
- ... Recommendations

Activity 1

Write the feasibility report. You may write in your note book and merely jot down the points here.

The feasibility statement should contain an emphatic statement that it is possible (or it is not possible) to introduce auto rickshaws in Manigunj. Compare your report with what is given at the end of this unit.

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Language:

A report is written mainly in the past tense. Passive constructions are used when mention of the agent is not required.

For events in the recent past which have relevance to the present the present perfect is used.

The tone is formal and impersonal.

13.3 PROJECT REPORTS

A feasibility report is written before a project is undertaken. After the project has been completed, a completion report has to be submitted. When submitting the completion report references to the original proposal and the modifications that were necessary during the implementation will have to be made.

The format remains the same. Make sure that the report has all the relevant information.

As for all other business writing these four principles must be adhered to:

- ... Completeness
- ... Clarity
- ... Conciseness and
- ... Correctness

The Writing Process entails the following:

Collection of data
Compiling data
Checking for accuracy: dates, facts, etc.

Audience analysis
Audience expectations
Anticipating audience queries

Introducing the subject: (providing background)
Stating purpose
Delimiting scope

Describing procedure
Stating problems
Stating how problems were countered
Stating proposal specifications
Stating actual achievement
Explaining mismatches

Sectioning
Subtitling
Preparing charts, graphs, etc.
Commenting
Concluding

Activity 2

Given below are parts of a draft project report that are not in the right order. Arrange them coherently. State the function that each part performs. Notice the tense forms and explain why that tense form is appropriate. Add more details and improve on the report to make it more complete. Write the transmittal letter. The beginning of the transmittal letter is given:

I am enclosing a report on the completion of the road extension project on the S.P Road stretch.

The project was undertaken by Stresscrete Consultants for the Municipal Corporation of Nikhilabad

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Report on the road extension project undertaken on S.P Road Nikhilabad.

The six kilometre stretch on S.P. Road between Greenlands and S.Q. Chowk was to be extended. The project was assigned to Stresscrete Consultants to be completed within a period of six months beginning November 2...

Cost of demolition escalated the project expenditure. Leasing of cranes became problematic because of heightened construction work in the city. This also increased the costs. Labour problems had to be countered. Wages had to be increased by 20% for night labour. The costs overshoot the initial budget estimate by 10 lakh.

Legal notices were issued to the owners of properties adjoining the roads seeking cooperation. Adequate compensation @ Rs.1000 per sq.ft. was offered. Negotiation with reluctant owners delayed the land acquisition process by 3 months. Further trouble was encountered by religious groups who staged violent protests against the relocation of wayside shrines. This added to the delay.

A revised expenditure statement is enclosed.

Traffic on S.P Road has increased in the last 5 years because it directly connects the eastern and western parts of the city. This has been compounded by the fact that the number of cars and two wheelers has increased three-fold during this period. There were many bottlenecks caused by uneven array of showrooms interspersed by small wayside shrines and bus-bays encroaching upon the road space. The extension of the roads became imperative to ensure smooth flow of traffic.

The Mayor drove through the stretch and expressed his satisfaction. He has suggested traffic islands at 3 points and pedestrian crossings at 6 points at 1m distances

All the problems were overcome and the acquired stretches have been concrete surfaced and tarred. Traffic on the thoroughfare has eased reducing the movement time across the stretch to 10 minutes. The roads look very neat.

The project was undertaken in a phased manner. In the first phase the extent of the road space required on both sides of the road was measured. Bottlenecks were identified. The buildings that had to be demolished or taken in were identified. Markings were made on the walls indicating the extent of space required.

Activity 3

Reproduced below is part of a report by the Chairperson of an Airline addressed to the guests on board taken from a Travel magazine. Fill in the blanks with suitable verbs.

Dear Guest,
The global economic environment is challenging for all industries including civil aviation. In India, in the past year, the airline industry's situation by an unprecedented escalation in fuel prices and several other factors such as double-digit inflation.

The airline industry to tackle the difficult environment through alliances aimed at enhancing connectivity. Inkeeping with these international trends we a number of measures to reduce costs even while continuing to strive towards delivering excellence in customer services.

Consequently we into code-share arrangements with several airlines.

13.4 GRAMMAR

Activity 4

We have come to the end of the book, so let us play a game. These sentences have something wrong with them – spot the errors and correct them. First one has been done for you.

Sl. No.	Incorrect sentence	Correct sentence
1	Neha is happy and neither is Nisha.	Neha isn't happy and neither is Nisha.
2	I met Shobha on Monday in the morning at 6'o clock.	
3	When you will come to my office?	
4	Fauzia wrote the presentation themselves.	
5	Mary is late always.	
6	Since last year I have spoken to Salil hardly.	
7	I asked Mohit where does he work.	
8	We have visited Nainital last summer.	
9	I've left London last year.	
10	Sonu is working at this company for the last seven years.	
11	Don't buy more bread, there are many breads in the breadbox.	

Proposals and reports

12	Both her sister-in-laws live close by.	
13	I'm in this new town for two months, but I have not making any friends yet.	
14	This is more better then I expected.	
15	The manager who deal with sales is on leave for a month.	
16	Housing is a problem in many large cities. There are a few good apartments available at reasonable prices.	
17	Sunil failed his driving test three times because he doesn't know how to park the car.	
18	My friend just bought a new cell phone.	
19	Does many countries have a pollution problem?	
20	Rajiv will play a badminton match to night. He planned it a week ago.	
21	I have talked to my parents every weak.	
22	I will talk to the boss three days ago.	
23	By this time next month, I am living in Pune.	
24	The phone rang, yet someone knocked on the door.	
25	You must neither tell the truth or be penalized.	
26	We must clean up our rivers and lakes, therefore the fish will die.	
27	Ram Prashad took instructions in English before he went to America.	
28	The accommodation available here are very expensive.	
29	I love at Kolkata.	
30	It is more cooler today isn't it?	

13.5 LET US SUM UP

You have worked on two reports in this unit. The first is a report on whether a project can be undertaken or not. The second is on the completion of a project. The writing process and the genre features have been discussed. You have worked on the tasks. This would have given you an understanding of how to write reports in the contexts in which you will work in future. These were samples created for your understanding. Actual workplace reports may require suitable adjustments to this basic framework.

13.6 ANSWERS

Activity 1

Feasibility Report

Report on the feasibility of introducing auto rickshaws in the Municipal Town of Manigunj

Executive Summary:

AZN Group is a private Transport company running tempos and vans for local conveyance of goods as well as passengers for travel to short distances within a radius of 25 km of Manigunj. The company was assigned the task of assessing the feasibility of introducing auto rickshaws within the town. It was found that in view of the expanding industrial, economic and educational growth of the town, local transport at affordable fares needs to be augmented. The local bus service does not reach all the corners of the town and is not adequate to meet the commuter demands. Introduction of auto rickshaws will solve the transport problems of the local population both within the city and the outskirts where a number of institutions are coming up.

Terms of reference:

A committee of 5 senior officials was appointed by the AZN group to study the feasibility of introducing auto rickshaws in the town of Manigunj. The committee was asked to submit the report by 5 September 2... .

Background:

Until recently, Manigunj was a small sleepy town. In the last five years there has been an increase in the town's activities due to new industries being set up. The local population has almost doubled in the last two years. Schools and colleges have come up in response to local demands. The town is expanding and its limits are extending to a number of villages up to a radius of 20 km of the town.

Local conveyance is by horse-driven jatkas and cycle-rickshaws. There is a local bus service which covers the two main roads crisscrossing the city. People have to walk long distances from the bus-stop to their residences in the interior. The younger generation has begun to invest in two-wheelers but a large segment of the population still does not own vehicles. Tempos and vans meet the needs of transport of goods and group conveyance for outings outside the town. Public transport facilities are not adequate.

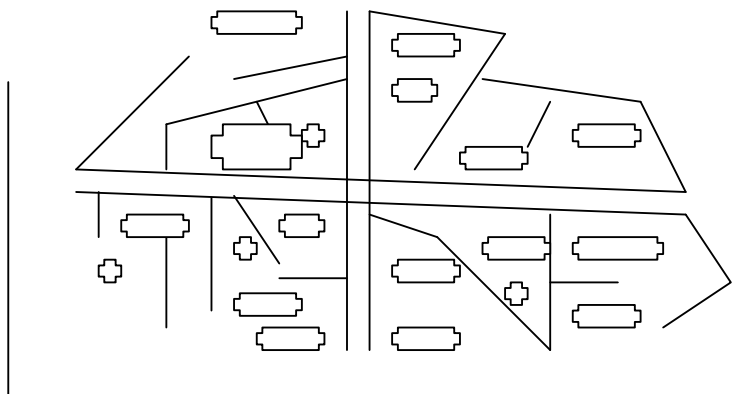
Procedure of the Study:

The committee met twice before the launch of the study to discuss the *modus operandi*. It was decided to divide the responsibilities among the team members. It was decided that:

- a. Ms. Oza and Mr. Pundalik would study the road layout of the town.
- b. Mr. Vasan and Ms. Pestonji would study the existing transport system and the local mobility needs.
- c. Ms. Vasudha will study public opinion and responses.

a. Road Layout of Manigunj

Map of Manigunj



As can be seen from the map two main roads criss-cross through the town North-South and East-West. These are the two roads that connect to other neighbouring towns. The length of the N-S Road within the town limits is about 15 km. The length of the E-W Road is 20 km. We can see that these are the only two main thoroughfares through which buses can pass.

Residential areas with independent single-storeyed and double-storeyed houses lie in a haphazard, unplanned manner. Throwing open the side roads for bus transport is not feasible.

The residential areas spill into the outskirts of the town limits. Outer ring-roads may be laid encircling the entire area. Within the town limits, however there is very little maneuverability.

The inner roads branching off irregularly from the two main roads are less than 15 feet wide in most places.

Emmar factory is right at the center of the city. The other 10 factories are pushed more to the outer limits of the town on all sides.

2 old schools and 1 college are within the town limits. The others are spread on the outskirts. The Government Hospital is in the south-central part of the town and occupies about 300 sq. feet space. 2 more hospitals are located in the North-east and South-east regions.

One or two large maidans are unoccupied and may be considered for road-laying, although this would involve compensating for demolitions of market space.

Small canals cut across the town at various points. Small ponds are also seen as a perennial feature at 3 locations. These will have to be negotiated by building small culverts across them.

b. Existing transport system and local mobility needs

Buses ply across the two main roads of the city. For small distances and the interior streets, people depend upon horse-driven jatkas and cycle-rickshaws. These are not convenient when people have to travel more than five kilometers.

There is a fleet of four public transport buses and these connect the areas across the two main roads at half-hour intervals. The running time of each bus is 35-40 minutes. The services begin at 7am and stop at 9pm.

People now need to travel more than 10 km to reach newly setup hospitals and educational institutions. People arriving at the railway station also find it difficult to reach the destinations.

c. Public Opinion

A survey was conducted and interviews were held with 1500 respondents. Survey questionnaires were distributed among employees working in institutions and business establishments.

Citizens waiting at bus-stops were interviewed over a four-week period. The data-collector also traveled by the local transport vehicles to gain first-hand experience of the problems faced by the commuters.

Interviews were held with the municipal transport authorities.

Opinion was also gathered from cycle-rickshaw and jatka drivers.

Findings

It was found that:

- a The present transport services are not adequate to meet the needs of the local population.
- b Extensive road laying and extensions of existing roads needs to be undertaken.
- c Auto rickshaws will prove to be a boon to the citizens.
- d 70% of the cycle-rickshaw and jatka pullers were positive to the introduction of auto rickshaws provided they were given concessions in hiring the new vehicles and were given free driving lessons.
- e Many citizens who were concerned about the increase in pollution of auto rickshaws were brought in and suggested that at the introduction stage itself, measures should be taken to make the fuel pollution-free.

Recommendations

20 auto rickshaws may be introduced initially to assess public response. Depending on the response, the number may be gradually increased in subsequent months.

Cycle-rickshaws may be allowed to continue along with auto-rickshaws. Jatkas may be withdrawn after two months so that they do not interfere with the three-wheeler traffic. The time is just right for the introduction of auto-rickshaws.

An evaluation of the performance will be undertaken after two months and a report submitted to the authorities

Activity 2:

Report on the road extension project undertaken on S.P Road, Nikhilabad.

The six kilometre stretch on S.P. Road between Greenlands and S.Q. Chowk **was to be** extended. The project **was assigned** to Stresscrete Consultants **to be completed** within a period of six months beginning November 2... .

Traffic on S.P Road *has increased* in the last 5 years because it directly connects the eastern and western parts of the city. This *has been compounded* by the fact that the number of cars and two-wheelers *has increased* three-fold during this period. There were many bottlenecks caused by uneven array of showrooms interspersed by small wayside shrines and bus-bays encroaching upon the road space. The extension of the roads became imperative to ensure smooth flow of traffic.

Title: Verbless sentence

Task assigned. Purpose. Past passive with infinitive

Background Present perfect and past

The project **was undertaken** in a phased manner. In the first phase, the extent of the road space required on both sides of the road was measured. Bottlenecks **were identified**.

The buildings that **had to be demolished** or taken in were identified. Markings **were made** on the walls indicating the extent of space required.

Procedure
Steps
Adopted

Legal notices **were issued** to the owners of properties adjoining the roads seeking cooperation.

Adequate compensation @ Rs. 1000 per sq.ft. **was offered**.

Negotiation with reluctant owners delayed the land acquisition process by 3 months.

Problems

Further trouble **was encountered** by religious groups who staged violent protests against the relocation of wayside shrines. This added to the delay.

Cost of demolition escalated the project expenditure. Leasing of cranes became problematic because of heightened construction work in the city. This also increased the costs. Labour problems **had to be countered**. Wages **had to be increased** by 20% for night labour. The costs overshot the initial budget estimate by 10 lakh.

A revised expenditure statement **is enclosed**.

All the problems were overcome and the acquired stretches **have been concrete surfaced** and tarred. Traffic on the thoroughfare *has eased* reducing the movement time across the stretch to 10 minutes. The roads look very neat and easily navigable.

Effects

The Mayor drove through the stretch and expressed his satisfaction. He *has suggested* traffic islands at 3 points and pedestrian crossings at 6 points at 1km distances. Work on this is scheduled to begin next week

Conclusion

Note on language points:

The report for the most part is in the past tense except towards the end. "A revised expenditure statement is enclosed" and the last sentence which is indicative of the future are in the present tense form.

The passive voice is used quite frequently. This places the focus on the action rather than on the people doing the action. Public works are generally reported in the passive voice.

Note on the moves:

- 1 Title
- 2 Terms of reference
- 3 Background
- 4 Procedure
- 5 Problems
- 6 Effects
- 7 Conclusion

Transmittal Letter**Sub: Completion of the Road Extension Project on the S. P. Road**

Dear Sir,

I am enclosing a report on the completion of the road project on the S.P. Road stretch. The project was undertaken by Stresscrete Consultants for the Municipal Corporation of Nikhilabad.

An assessment was made to check the need for the extension of the road. After a feasibility report justified that such an extension was necessary, the project was undertaken in a phased manner. Details of these are given in the report. The report also lists the reasons for the delay in the completion of the project. A revised expenditure statement is also enclosed.

Thank you

Abhilash Mehta
DTS Builders Ltd.

Activity 3

has been further impacted (affected)
has tried
have taken
have entered

Activity 4

Sl.	Correct sentences
1	Neha isn't happy and neither is Nisha.
2	I met Shobha at 6 in the morning on Monday.
3	When will you come to my office?
4	Fauzia wrote the presentation herself.
5	Mary is always late.
6	Since last year I have hardly spoken to Salil.
7	I asked Mohit where he works.
8	We visited Nainital last summer.
9	I left London last year.
10	Sonu is working in this company for the last seven years.
11	Don't buy more bread, there is a lot of bread in the breadbox.
12	Both her sisters-in-law live close by.
13	I have been in this new town for two months, but I've not made any friends.
14	This is better than I expected.
15	The manager who deals with sales is on leave for a month.

Proposals and reports

16	Housing is a problem in many large cities. There are few good apartments available at reasonable prices.
17	Sunil failed his driving test three times because he didn't know how to park the car.
18	My friend has just bought a new cell phone.
19	Do many countries have a pollution problem?
20	Rajiv will play a badminton match to night. He had planned it a week ago.
21	I talk to my parents every week.
22	I talked to the boss three days ago.
23	By this time next month, I will be living in Pune.
24	The phone rang, as someone knocked on the door.
25	You must tell the truth or you will be penalized.
26	We must clean up our rivers and lakes, otherwise the fish will die.
27	Ram Prashad attended classes in English before going to America.
28	The accommodation available here is very expensive.
29	I live in Kolkata.
30	It is cooler today, isn't it?

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear students,

We are including a questionnaire in the last block of this Programme and we would be very grateful if you take out time to fill it and send it to us. It will be very useful feedback and help us in continuously revising the material. You must therefore give us your frank views.

1. Your favourite units are.....(give reasons)

2. The units you did not like are.....(give reasons)

3. The level of language in the courses: Tick the right option

- ... Easy to understand
- ... Can manage some units
- ... O.K.
- ... Couldn't understand most of the units
- ... Very difficult

4. Topics covered: Tick the right option

- ... Very interesting and useful
- ... Interesting and useful
- ... O.K
- ... Not very useful and interesting
- ... Not useful at all

5. Activity Types: Tick the right option

- ... Very interesting and useful
- ... Interesting and useful
- ... O.K
- ... Not very useful and interesting
- ... Not useful at all

6. Any other comments:

Please send this questionnaire to:

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