

Recommendations

- This part is the action centre of the report.
- State how the conclusions should be acted upon.
- Make clear and definite recommendations.
- If further investigation is required, mention it as a condition for a more comprehensive study of the problem.

You cannot have a report without recommendations, even if you have not been asked to give them. Recommendations flow out of conclusions, as conclusions do from discussion.

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DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSES

This part is the main body of the report. It discusses findings and analyses results. The information is developed in one of the ways given, below.

Chronological Development

- Chronological development — The information is arranged in the order in which the events happened. This is the simplest method of presenting information — in its sequence of occurrence, like a story with a beginning → a middle → the end. Chronological development requires little planning and organising. The writer selects and arranges the major topics in the order of their occurrence. Non-significant events are left out.

This method is usually used for writing short reports, progress reports describing progress of a project and investigative reports that discuss investigations conducted over a long time and involved visits to different places to gather evidence.

By discussing each event step-by-step, the cumulative effect of a variable (factor/thing) can be seen through the conclusions drawn at suitable intervals. The sequencing of information is easy to determine, for the report writer is guided by the order in which the events actually took place.

Chronological development requires little planning and organising.

SUBJECTWISE DEVELOPMENT

- Subject development — The information is arranged according to the subjects. The subjects are grouped in a

predetermined order. This arrangement makes the presentation of information coherent and logical.

When a research involves the study of two or more variables acting upon an event/happening, the writer has to arrange his discussion in subject order. The writer would describe the effect of one variable on a subject and would go on in chronological order to determine the cumulative effect of the variable on the subject of study. Then, in a similar manner he would study and describe the effect of the other variables, and record chronologically its cumulative effect.

The question is in which sequence the effect of each should be presented, if there are several variables. The writer has to choose the sequence according to the variable he wants to recommend. He can move in increasing order of suitability or begin from the most suitable to the least suitable. But before structuring information he should make his choice of order clearly known by stating, whether he is following the ascending or descending order in discussing each variable.

Suppose you want to recommend, as an automobile dealer, the most suitable model of a luxury car to an executive. You will follow the subject method and tell him/her that you have evaluated the price, fuel consumption, speed, automation, seating capacity, space and after-sales services guaranteed (free servicing for a year) for different models of luxury cars. You would then recommend the most suitable model for his/her use.

You have in fact, made a comparative study of the essential parameters that determine a buyer's choice of a car, and presented the information accordingly.

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

- Concept development — The information is organised "concept wise". The writer develops his argument and reasoning on the lines of his thought.

As a report writer, you can arrange the details of your topic by following the logical sequence of your investigation. You can develop the topic by describing each step as a sequence to the step that follows it, in a series of steps, which finally build up your argument (topic). The logic of your argument guides your organisation of the subject. Each part or stage of a project is seen as a well-linked procession of ideas forming a complete concept.

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In the concept method you tell the reader how you arrived at the results and why they are valid.

This method is to be employed when the topic is complex and reasoning is required to explain the reader the various ideas and their careful consideration, in reaching the end result of the investigation. When a selection of the best result can be made, for instance, the choice of a car, or a site for a new house by a simple and direct analysis, the subject development would be appropriate, not the concept method. Whatever be your method of developing the main argument of your report, see that the report is logically organised and the narration is interesting and convincing to the reader.

Distribution list When a report is meant to be sent to several persons, it will contain a list of all the persons who are supposed to receive a copy of report. The distribution list is placed according to its size or the customer's choice or company's practice. However, it seems proper to place it as a separate appendix if the list happens to be long. But a short distribution list can appear at the foot of the table of contents page.

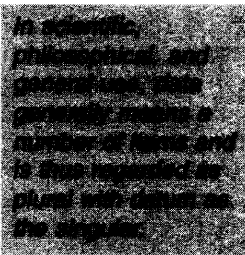
GLOSSARY

Glossary is the list of technical or special terms used in a report/technical paper placed at the end of a report and before the index. It alphabetically lists words or phrases which need special attention. It explains the usage of technical terms peculiar to industry. A glossary of usage includes rules for forming compound words, abbreviating technical terms, and writing unusual or difficult words. A glossary also acts as a dictionary of some select words, which often get confused, misused or wrongly spelt. These are:

- Words often are confused because they are similar in meaning; for example diplex and duplex, ground floor and first floor, postpone and cancel or imply and infer.
- Common unnoticed errors of grammar, such as many a times (should be many a time), one of the best option (in place of one of the best options), comprised of (for comprises)
- Words that tend to be wrongly spelt; e.g. agism (correct ageism), accomodation (for accommodation), seprate (should be separate).

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- Words having more than one acceptable spelling; for example, program, programme. In case of words like symposiums and symposia where both versions are in use, both are given in the glossary and a choice is indicated for one of them.
- Words like data, often wrongly used as singular or used as datas in the plural, are specially entered in the glossary and their usage is fully explained. Data is plural, (also treated as singular, although the singular form is datum). In scientific philosophical and general use, data generally means a number of items and is thus regarded as plural with datum as the singular. But in computing and related subjects, it is taken to denote a mass or collective noun and therefore used with words like this, that, and much, with singular verbs, for example, useful data has been gathered. The glossary, like the Oxford Dictionary, will draw our attention to the usage of the word data and point out that although some people consider the use of data with a singular verb incorrect, it is now in common use. It will also point out that data is not a singular countable noun and should not be preceded by words such as 'a', 'every', 'each', 'either' or 'neither' or be given a plural form datas.



APPENDIX

The appendix is used to give a variety of information separately, as its inclusion in the main body could interfere with the smooth reading of the report. It usually includes the text of questionnaires or other instruments of survey. Tables, flow charts, maps, summaries of raw data, and details of mathematical formulation are generally included in the appendix. Each appendix is numbered Appendix A, Appendix B and so on to help the reader identify the material given in appendix. Sometimes a descriptive title is given. Sometimes, the word Annexure is used for Appendix.

Bibliography All published and unpublished sources of information used in preparing the report are listed under Bibliography. All reference documents, previous reports, books, periodicals, and even letters written and received by the writer are mentioned in it.

INDEX

Index (plural indexes or indices) is the alphabetical list of subjects, names and so on with references to page numbers where they occur in the report or a book. It is usually placed at the end. It should not be confused with the contents which always appears at the beginning of a report or book.

In long reports and voluminous works, index helps the reader locate a subject easily in the text of the report wherever it has been mentioned or discussed. For example, order refusals 115 entered in a report's index means we can find it mentioned on p. 115. In a book's index, an entry like Research question 34 a — 675 would mean it appears on p. 675 discussed under section 34 a.

Normally an author's note about the symbols used in indexing subjects appears at the beginning of index entries, which helps the reader follow the way entries are made. For example, see Lynn Quitman Troyka's note on indexing in *Handbook of Writers* (1987) Simon & Schuster, USA.

A degree symbol (°) after an index entry signals that the term is defined in the glossary of Grammatical and selected terms. All entries in boldface italics (*advice*, *advise*, for example) are discussed in the usage glossary; in any other place listed section numbers are in boldface type and page numbers in regular type. The listing 6 a 160 thus refers you to page 160, which is in section 6 a.

THE PROCESS OF INVESTIGATION

A report involves three things —

1. Research (investigation)
2. Analysis
3. Presentation

The reader's interest in the report is primarily in its well documented presentation of facts and conclusions. But a report can never meet the expectations or needs of the reader, unless the writer labours through careful research and makes a critical analysis of the data collected through research.

Therefore, to write reports (for decision makers in business) you should first understand some research methods and acquire analytical ability.

WHAT IS RESEARCH?

In simple words research means a search for facts – answers to questions and solutions to problems. Business research can be defined as a systematic inquiry that offers information to guide business decisions.

There are two ways of searching for facts —

1. Arbitrary, based on personal judgment, and hunch
2. Scientific

The scientific approach to research is a logical and systematic study of a problem, issue or phenomenon in a step-by-step manner, following a logical process of reasoning.

Research conducted in scientific manner involves the following process of investigations —

- Defining the problem
- Formulating hypothesis
- Selecting/proposing a method
- Collecting, organising and analysing data
- Making deductions and arriving at conclusions

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

The problem or the subject of our investigation should be outlined well, so that the solution is correct. We should narrow down the problem to specifics — what exactly is required to be done. By delimiting the problem from general to particular and to more specific problems, you can recognise the real problem that needs to be answered. The well-known set of “what, why, who, where and when” questions will help analyse the general problem into specific problems. To know why something is wanted, we should first know what is wanted. So, we should first separate these two questions, the “why”, and the “what”. Once these two basic questions are isolated, we should note them down. The process of solution finding has begun. At this point, you have to assume a tentative solution of

the problem. The hypothetical solution will be subsequently tested for its validity and correctness. But the search for solution has been given direction toward solution.

NARROWING DOWN THE PROBLEM

Let us see an example of how we narrow down a problem from the general to the specific.

Suppose we want to study the wages of women labourers. It is a vast subject. Millions of women workers, all over the country, fall within the scope of this problem. It will not be possible to study such a wide problem. Therefore, we should limit its scope by asking the questions — “What, why, where, when, who?” Assume you are at TISCO and are required to give a report on this problem. To study the wages of women workers at TISCO, Jamshedpur, this is how you can approach your investigation of the problem —

What	To study the wages of women workers
Why	To determine whether their wages in our company are fair and uniform
When	Present
Where	In TISCO Jamshedpur
Who	Women workers

You have now limited the proposed problem of your study to the present wages of women workers at TISCO Jamshedpur. The limiting of the problem has been possible by asking the “why” question – the purpose of study. And once the purpose is well defined, the problem will accordingly become specific and exact.

Still, the subject/problem needs to be further clarified. The terms fair and uniform are vague. Women may be doing different work at different sites of work at TISCO. Their work at TISCO may be different from their work in Jamshedpur as a whole, say, at TELCO. So, when we talk of wages being fair and uniform, do we mean the wages of women workers within TISCO or compared to the wages of women/workers elsewhere? Also, we enter another question of fairness. Are the wages of women and men equal? Is the principle of fairness (equality) applied to all women and all men for their wages for doing the same type of work at all sites in TISCO and TELCO?



CONCEPTUALISATION

This process of clarifying our concepts and terms is known as conceptualisation.

We conceptualise by defining our terms by stating them in specific terms of their meaning, with regard to the specific context of use. For instance, the term wages is vague unless we specify it by considering 'hourly', 'daily', 'weekly'; if daily, then how many hours make a day; if 'weekly', then, how many days make a week (is Sunday included?) or if 'monthly', then, whether a month is the calendar month. Such questions would help us to be exact in our concepts involved in our research.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

After clarifying all these questions, we can now state our problem thus — "This study proposes to survey the wages of women workers in TISCO, Jamshedpur, to determine whether the company wages are fair and uniform."

The problem phrased in this way is limited in its scope.

Formulating Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a tentative statement about the possible cause and solution of a phenomenon. It is a tentative answer to the present question. It is called tentative because it is assumed to be true but its validity is to be tested. Hypothesis is based on supposition and is to be proved or disproved as a result of research. For example, we may be interested in studying the percentage of savings in families with changes in family income. We may assume that the percentage of saving will increase if the income of families increases. It is just our supposition, not a proved fact. We can use a hypothesis "An increase in the income of the family leads to a rise in the percentage of income saved." This hypothesis is positive. Its validity is to be proved by testing it through the results of our research.

Null Hypothesis

Many researchers think that a positive hypothesis is framed by expecting a favourable "yes" result of the study. Therefore, they prefer to use a neutral hypothesis, called Null hypothesis, that is

Hypothesis is based on supposition and is to be proved or disproved as a result of research.

required to be disproved to prove what is valid. The null hypothesis is stated in terms that show no prejudice to the result of research. We can state the above problem of family income in the following null hypothesis —

“No increase in percentage of the income saved will result if the family income increases.”

In business research we prefer to use the null hypothesis as it indicates an objective and unbiased attitude towards the result.

SELECTING A SUITABLE METHOD OF SOLUTION

The next step after defining the problem and postulating a hypothesis is to select a proper method of collecting the required information from the following commonly used methods of research —

1. Library research
2. Survey research
3. Observation research
4. Experimental research

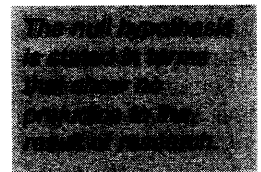
The main concerns of business research in social sciences and management research are about finding solutions to problems such as unemployment, poverty, social unrest, human relations, and problems in organisations. Research attempts to establish factual data on prevailing plans and schedules for development on a realistic basis. Research studies bring out necessary facts for making sound decisions before committing resources.

Research studies seek to help planners evaluate alternative strategies and select the most suited strategy for development of different sectors, such as education, agriculture, industry, health, and social welfare.

Evaluation studies of ongoing projects and schemes such as lead bank schemes and integrated rural development programmes, are undertaken to indicate whether the plans need any modifications or new implementation strategies.

Keeping in mind the basic purpose, the researcher selects usually one or two of the four research methods mentioned above.

Library research In every research we need to know what others have already done. For collecting this information and



knowing other views related to our investigation, we consult the existing literature. This kind of collection of information is known as library research, which is a part of all other forms of research. It constitutes study of the background and involves the survey of all existing body of knowledge in the field of the proposed study of research.

Library research helps us in the following ways —

- It avoids unnecessary repetition and duplication of effort and waste of valuable research time and funds.
- It establishes points of departure for new research work.
- It sets out direction and areas for doing research in the field proposed for study.

Library research is done for solving problems in business and it relates to the study of an organisation's records, annual reports, periodicals, account books or other documents recording the business policies, decisions, and previous studies of the same or similar problems.

Because library research provides us with material already contributed by others, it is known as "secondary source" and the information collected is called "secondary data". Primary data is what we gather through our own observations, surveys and experiments.

In using library research for collecting data, we should be careful not to create a heap of information. Collect only relevant material. Also avoid piling up the entire data at one place. It will be better to note and record information on separate sheets/cards under different headings with exact details of their source — a book, journal, news bulletin, company's specific file and so on. This will help you use the collected material properly at the appropriate places in your report. You will be helped also in preparing your bibliography.

Normative survey research In business research this method is frequently used to know the actual status of the thing at the time of our study. It uses survey tools — questionnaires, interviews, checklists, and opinionnaires to obtain information that may add to information already collected through secondary sources or validate the finding obtained from the library research.

Library research is done for solving problems in business and it relates to the study of an organisation's records, annual reports, periodicals, account books or any other documents recording the business policies, decisions, and previous studies of the same or similar problems.

The surveys are called “normative” because they lay down “norms” or “standards” or “what is”, or determine the present status of a thing, or establish customary behaviour. The normative survey method is descriptive in nature. The limitation of this research method is that findings through such surveys are to be considered valid only for the present and not for the future, because the state of mind, attitude, or situation of the subject of study may change.

For example, suppose we want to conduct a study of the attitude of employees towards the voluntary retirement scheme (VRS) in a company. The only way to do this is to conduct a survey (through personal interviews or questionnaires) of all those employees, who, at the time of study, fall within the age group indicated for VRS eligibility. The findings, based on the responses given by this group of employees, will be valid about the present employees only. The management of the company will not be deciding wisely if these findings were held valid and applied to the employees after, say, five years during which the Company’s economy may have dramatically changed or employees’ attitude towards work may have drastically altered.

Reliability and validity of survey results The survey may be done through personal interviews or questionnaires. The findings are considered reliable when they are found close to what is generally accepted as true. And they are held valid, if they measure what they are supposed to measure.

Reliability also results from consistency in findings. A simple example of a situation in which a result may be valid but not reliable is measuring a person’s temperature with a thermometer. We get a reading of fever which is valid because it is done with an instrument that measures what it should measure. A thermometer is meant to record human temperature. But suppose we doubt the correctness of the reading and we again at that very moment record the temperature with some other thermometer. We may get either the same reading or a different reading. Now we are confused. We do not know which reading is true. In order to determine which thermometer is reliable, we should again take temperature with the first thermometer, first for one minute, again for 2 minutes, and finally for say 3–5 minutes. If the readings are not the same then the thermometer is not reliable in its calibration. If it lacks consistency, which is the basic principle of the calibration of thermometers, the particular thermometer is unreliable.

The surveys are called “normative” because they lay down norms or standards or what is, or determine the present status of a thing, or establish customary behaviour.

The principle of validity assumes that the results are true of not a specific group interviewed or questioned but of the total, say, employees.

Similarly, the principle of validity assumes that the results are true of not a specific group interviewed or questioned but of the total, say, employees supposed to be covered by the study. In order that the results are both reliable and valid we have to adopt the method of selecting a fairly true representative sample or group (to continue our VRS example) of the company's employees. **Population** is the total number of individuals (items) to be surveyed – interviewed or questioned through mailed questionnaires. But the whole (the population) may be in thousands (something unmanageable); hence we select a smaller number of employees as representing the whole population (all the employees in VRS age). This process is called sampling.

In order to make the sampling reliable and valid we follow the techniques given below —

Random sampling We need to do sampling to ensure that each and every individual member of the concerned population is studied by us. For making it possible, we use random sampling in which there is no-zero chance for every individual to be included in the sample. This is, of course, a very difficult task. In order to achieve it, we should take a fairly large number at random from a population so that persons representing varying characteristics of the population get included in the sample proportionately. That is to say, the sampling group and the total population will possess the same characteristics in the same proportions. To illustrate this point, let us carry on with our VRS employees example. Our sampling is valid if our sampling group has the same percentage of different age groups, different salary groups, different years of service, different ranks as the total population of employees has.

As the term 'random' suggests, we do not choose, but allow an equal chance to all the members in a population to be chosen. One of the ways to do it is to first determine the size of the sample we want. Write down each name (of the population) on a piece of paper and mix them under a cover. Now, you draw from it the number of slips you want for your sample group. The name thus drawn from the whole lot will be representative of the total population.

Stratified random sampling But it is possible that the sample thus formed does not reflect the same percentage of various characteristics belonging to the population. Therefore, we do what is called stratified random sampling. That is to say, we will go on

drawing the lots so long as we do not get from each category, the sample group, in the same percentage as exists in the total population.

Systematic random sampling Random sampling becomes systematic random sampling if we apply a system of picking out names in a definite sequence. For example, we write names from 1–10 and pick at random a name which is listed at 8. Then we write down that number 8 name and choose every tenth name on that list; 8th, 18th, 28th, 38th, 48th and so on till we complete the required number for our sample group. This method ensures the ‘no-zero’ chance for every individual in the population to get picked up for the sample. Such techniques of sampling are useful to survey the preferences, habits, attitudes of buyers for determining market trends, or consumer behaviour.

Instruments of survey The survey is usually done with the instruments of written questionnaire or personal interview.

Questionnaire is a set of questions which are written in order to collect maximum factual information from the respondents about their habits, attitudes, views, rating, liking, and so on of the object under study.

The questions may be grouped and sequenced according to the nature of the data. For example, if personal data is important for the analysis of the information gathered, then questions on age, sex, family, size, number of earning members, and number of dependents may be grouped together for easy analysis of the data. Usually the name is left out. A questionnaire is generally treated as anonymous.

Questions should be worded in simple, clear and exact language. Enough space should be left between the questions if we ask open-ended questions, such as “What effect will the attrition policy/ VRS scheme have on the economy of the steel plant?” The questions can be objective type with a number of options given in which case the respondent has just to write “yes” or “no” or just put marks as directed. For example, a question can be put in the following form —

Questionnaire is a set of questions which are written in order to collect maximum factual information from the respondents about their habits, attitudes, views, rating, liking, and so on of the object under study.

Your company should have a five-day week for all its employees to motivate them for better production.	Yes	No	No opinion
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Guidelines for Creating an Effective Questionnaire

1. Ask objective and factual information. Opinions, likes, and so on cannot be avoided, but they should be inferred from the objective information.
For example, instead of asking whether a person likes to buy a particular brand of soap, you can get to know about his/her preference by knowing how many times she/he has bought that soap.
Rule — Do not base your conclusions on opinions, because they often change from time to time. Rely on facts, not opinions.
2. Do not ask questions that would embarrass or bother the respondent either to answer or to recall.
For example, when did you last go to be with your parents for more than a few hours? Or, have you stopped whistle blowing or inside trading? Or Have you stopped beating your mother?
3. Do not ask contradictory questions.
4. Avoid loaded questions which suggest built-in answers. For example,
Would you like your wages to be increased? Obviously, the answer cannot be "No".
5. Keep the number of questions to a reasonable limit. Normally, 10–15 questions should be set. Long questionnaires are usually ignored as they take the respondent's time.
6. Assure the respondent that the information given by him/her will be treated confidential if you are asking questions on secretive matters.
7. Sequence the questions from simple to difficult. Put easy-to-answer questions before the difficult ones.
8. Write a brief letter to be sent with the questionnaire. The respondent should know why he/she is selected to answer the questionnaire. Also he/she should be persuaded to answer each question freely. Instructions for answering the questions may also be given in the covering letter itself. Otherwise, the instructions may be briefly written on the top of the questionnaire.
9. If the questionnaire is mailed, it should be accompanied with a self-addressed duly stamped envelope. This would communicate your serious desire to receive the filled-up questionnaire.

10. Promise the respondents that the findings of the survey research will be shared with them.
11. Mention the probable date by which you have to submit your study report or indicate the date by which the questionnaire may be returned. Remember that normally it takes time to respond and often the questionnaire remains unanswered. Hence, choose your respondents carefully and wisely.

Sample questionnaire and letter

Reader's Digest

Music Products

Dear Friend of Reader's Digest

Will you do us a favor?

In the past, Reader's Digest has been able to produce many music collections, books and other products related to our reader's special interests only because friends like you have told us in advance what their preferences are.

This survey is being mailed to a small, select group of Reader's Digest customers. To ensure that replies truly reflect the opinions of all, it is important we hear from you. Your reply to this survey will help us plan future music collections designed to satisfy your particular tastes.

If the music collections described on the following pages are more likely to interest someone else in your household, please pass along this questionnaire to that family member. Kindly spend a few minutes to consider each collection in turn. Then answer the questionnaire attached.

A pre-addressed postpaid envelope has been provided for your convenience. Your reply involves absolutely no commitment or decision to buy.

Many thanks for your help in this important project.

Yours sincerely,

Bobby Thomas

For Reader's Digest

P.S. As a token of our appreciation, we will send you a FREE Mystery Gift when we receive your reply.

How to Answer This Questionnaire

Enclosed you will find descriptions of four recorded music collections that Reader's Digest is considering producing in the near future. Would you be kind enough to tell us if you would be likely to send for each of these music collections, if it were offered to you through the mail, with its repertoire as described here? Please consider each collection separately, and indicate your interest by ticking a box in the appropriate space below each description:

1	2	3	4
Definitely would order	Probably would order	Probably would not order	Definitely would not order
1. Great Music Greatest Hits			
2. Indian Film Song Collection			
3. Melodies, Moods, and Memories			
4. The World's Greatest Love Songs			

About You and Your Family

For purpose of tabulation, kindly indicate the following —

Q 1. The following is a list of types of Music available. Please indicate which types of Music you are interested in buying in the next 12 months. (Please tick as many boxes as apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broadway Shows/Movie Soundtracks (13.1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Jazz (13.11) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian Classical Music (13.2) | <input type="checkbox"/> New Age (13.12) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hindi Mainstream Music (13.3) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pop (13.13) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas/Holiday (13.4) | <input type="checkbox"/> R&B/Soul/Blues (13.14) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Country (13.5) | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock'n Roll (13.15) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dance (13.6) | <input type="checkbox"/> Songs/Hits of the 50s
and 60s (13.16) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easy-Listening (13.7) | <input type="checkbox"/> Songs/Hits of the 70s,
80s and 90s (13.17) |

Folk (13.8) Western Classical/
Light Classical/Opera
(13.18)

Inspirational/Religious/Gospel (13.9) Western Vocal (13.19)

Instrumental/ Mood Music (13.10) Others (13.20)

Q 2. Have you ever bought music from Reader's Digest to give as a gift?

Yes (14.1)

No (14.2)

Q 3. As a whole, how do you rate Reader's Digest music on value for money? Is it....

Excellent Value (15.1)

Fair Value (15.3)

Good Value (15.2)

Poor Value (15.4)

Q 4. Where did you purchase your music recordings, tapes or CDs in the past 12 months?

(Please tick as many boxes as apply)

Retail Store (16.1)

Through Television
Advertisement (16.4)

Over the Internet (16.2)

Direct Mail Offer (e.g.
Reader's Digest) (16.5)

Music Club (16.3)

Through Telemarketing
(16.6)

Q 5. Do you have access to the following? (Please tick as many boxes as apply)

Personal Computer (17.1)

CD player (17.5)

CD-ROM (17.2)

Cassette Player (17.6)

The Internet (17.3)

MD player (17.7)

DVD player (17.4)

MP3 player (17.8)

Q 6. Your Sex

Male (18.1)

Female (18.2)

Q 7. Your Approximate Age

19 years or below (19.1)

45-49 years (19.7)

20-24 years (19.2)

50-54 years (19.8)

25-29 years (19.3)

55-59 years (19.9)

30-34 years (19.4)

60-64 years (19.10)

- 35-39 years (19.5)

 65-69 years (19.11)
 40-44 years (19.6)

 70 years or above (19.12)

Q 8. Your Education

- Matriculate (20.1)

 Undergraduate (20.3)
 Graduate (20.2)

 Post Graduate (20.4)

Q 9. Have you consulted with your family when you completed this questionnaire?

- Yes (21.1)

 No (21.2)

Q 10. Are there any children in the following age groups living in your household?

- Up to 2 years (22.1)

 8-10 years (22.5)
 2-3 years (22.2)

 11-12 years (22.6)
 4-5 years (22.3)

 13-17 years (22.7)
 6-7 years (22.4)

Q 11. If you have any comments on our music, please tell us (23.1)

Observation research In the observational method of collecting information, the receiver observes (inspects/monitors) the activities of a subject or a group of persons or a phenomenon or the nature of a thing without communicating with anyone. It differs from the survey method that involves an interrogation and response process, and is a method based on communication. The observational study uses the process of monitoring. The researcher notes and records the results obtained from his observations of each case. This is why the observational research is also called statistical research that involves statistical analysis of one or more sets of data.

Suppose we want to know if there is any correlation between

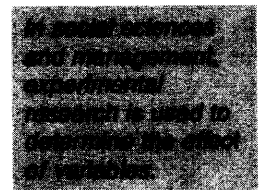
time and traffic jams at a traffic intersection on a particular road, we will monitor the flow of traffic and record the count of traffic flow in different directions at different hours of the day and determine the statistical correlations between the two sets of data; the count of traffic flow and the hours of day.

Usually, in business, we use both observational and survey methods to answer problems. For example, a market researcher may first use the survey method to understand the buying behaviour of certain income groups. Then he would employ statistical analysis to observe/determine the correlation between buying habits and income levels. A combination of the two methods helps us identify the right markets for products.

Experimental research We are familiar with experimental research since our school days. We took two test tubes and filled them with exactly the same liquid. Then we added a new material to only one of them. The content in the other tube was kept as it was (original). After adding the new material to one tube, we noticed changes in that tube. It was obvious to us that any change that had taken place was due to the new ingredient. We noted our observations. The experiment explained the phenomenon of cause and effect.

A laboratory experiment is done under controlled conditions. The two samples are identical. The addition of a variable to one of the two samples causes certain changes in that sample. We conclude that the change is due to the variable. Thus, we can determine the causal relation between a variable and the change in the state of something. Accordingly, if we wish to bring about a particular change in the state of something, we can take help of the related variable.

Although in social sciences and management, experimental research is used to determine the effect of variables, there are limitations to its applicability to social sciences. Unlike in physical sciences, the study of social behaviour and human nature cannot be controlled. Motivation, efficiency, or tastes and choices cannot be subjected to controlled observation of the effect induced by a variable in one of the two otherwise identical groups of people. Although we keep on repeating the phrase, "other things remaining the same", as an essential condition for conducting experimental research in social sciences, it is largely an assumption and may not be, in fact, true.



Planning your message before writing it in the form of reports will make our communication ordered and clear.

Experimental research is, however, commonly used in agriculture to determine the effectiveness of fertilizers or pesticides on crops. The study takes two plots of identical size, soil, fertility, quality of seeds, irrigation facilities, and adds a different quality of fertilizer to one of them or leaves it without manure. Then we record the yields of both plots of land. The difference between the yields of two plots is due to the use of fertilizer.

Analysis Choose your method of data collection from the above discussed research methods according to the nature and purpose of your proposed study. And before you write the report, evaluate the information collected for its relevance and usefulness. Plan and organise the information. Group the findings to form an outline of the report.

Organising Planning your message before writing it in the form of reports will make the communication ordered and clear. Planning involves organising the ideas already collected and identified to be communicated.

Ideas In case of a short and simple piece of writing such as a letter/memo, organise the material by deciding what points to include and how to arrange them. When the material to be covered is vast and complex, like long reports, plan not just the sequence of presentation, but also subordination and coordination of ideas and facts in relation to each other and to the text as a whole.

Organising involves two things —

- Sequencing
- Outlining

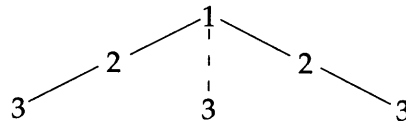
Sequencing Information can be arranged in three different ways —

- Randomly
- Sequentially
- Hierarchically

Random Random organisation as the term suggests, has no visible relation among the ideas/facts presented. The communicator (writer/speaker) keeps expressing thoughts/ideas as they keep coming into his/her mind. It is just a string, not a pattern of ideas.

Sequence Sequence is a set of things belonging to one another in sequential order. Each item has the same relationship to each of the other items. For example alphabetical, numerical, or chronological ordering.

Hierarchical Hierarchical organisation is an ordering of items according to their relative importance. It is based on multi-level relationships. In this pattern items have other items placed under them. The hierarchical organisation is best shown as a tree-structure given below —



This hierarchical relation among ideas/items is what an outline shows. And this is the form of organisation which helps a reader understand the information easily. The other two methods, random and sequential, which are used in computer theory, are not so well suited for the purpose of the reader. A reader would feel lost in the maze of unarranged and unpatterned ideas. Hence, you should put related ideas in separate groups. This is known as grouping ideas.

Grouping ideas by levels of generality Grouping of material for writing is done by considering levels of generality. One idea is more general than another if it represents a larger category. For example, 'literature' is more general than 'novel' or 'communication' is less specific than 'report'. Again 'report' is more general than 'progress report' and in turn it is more general than 'Third Term Progress Report' which is again less specific than 'Third term Progress Report of XYZ'. So, generality is a relative concept. Each idea is to be viewed in the context of a whole relationship of ideas.

Considering levels of generality is useful as both general statements and specific details are included in effective communication. For example, in informative and persuasive writing, general statements have to be developed with specific facts, reasons, arguments, and examples.

Outline as a structuring device

An outline is a shape-giving device. It is a valuable planning strategy. By making an outline, we structure the ideas gathered and grouped together in terms of their generality. It can be used at different stages of writing a report. For instance, before a written version of a report or its oral presentation, an outline helps arrange and organise material; or when revising, it can be used to see how far the first draft is logically arranged and organised. An outline also points out any weakness in the written document – missing points or digressions from the main point.

Hierarchical organisation is based on multi-level relationships

An outline is just a tentative plan or projection of what the final draft of a subject is going to say. It is possible that your outline may get changed somewhat during the actual writing of the subject. In that case, get back to your outline and change it accordingly. And then check, if the changes made do not disturb the logic and order of your argument and ideas.

Formal outline In a formal outline the content and format are arranged according to conventions formed to show relationships among ideas clearly.

A formal outline can be a topic outline or a sentence outline. A topic outline consists of a word or a phrase, whereas in a sentence outline each item is a complete sentence. But the two methods are never used together in the same formal outline. However a sentence outline is found more helpful for writing purposes. For example, "differences in arts" in a topic outline would have more details in a sentence outline — "arts differ in terms of objects, manner and mode of imitation!"

In a formal outline the content and format are arranged according to conventions formed to show relationships among ideas clearly.

Framing an Outline

1. Introductory and concluding sentences do not form part of a formal outline. The *thesis* or the topic statement is placed before the Roman numeral 1 sentence entry.
2. **Numbers, letters, and indentations** The formal outline begins with capital roman numeral I to number the first main idea, then roman numerals (capital/II, III, so on) are used to indicate major subdivisions of the topic.

Indented capital letters (A, B, C ----) are used to mark the next level of generality, similarly, small letters (a,b,c, ----) indicate the further level of generality, if any.

This arrangement is based on the principle that each subdivision is placed above the next level of specific detail given by the outline. It may be noted that in a sentence outline if an entry is longer than one line, the second line is indented by one word. That is the line will begin under the second word of the first line.

3. **At least two entries at each level** In an outline of all points, there can be I only if there is II, and A only when there is a b, and like that in all cases. Without having at least two parts, no category can be divided.

Where a category has only one subdivision, it is to be either left out or to be expanded to at least two subdivisions by adding more material to it.

For example —

Incorrect

- A. Working women leaving children alone
 - 1. Going to work place
- B. Couples getting separated

Correct

- A. Working women leaving children alone
- B. Couples getting separated

Correct

- A. Working women leaving children alone
 - 1. Going to workplace
 - 2. Joining kitty parties
- B. Couples getting separated

4. **Levels of generality** All subdivisions have the same level of generality. A main idea and a supporting detail cannot be placed at the same level of generality.

Incorrect

- A. Starting an IT Centre
- B. Conducting Computer courses

Correct

- A. Starting an IT Centre
- B. Opening a health resort

5. **No Overlap** Under each heading give a fresh point. Do not repeat the same idea. Hence, what is said in 1 should be quite different from what is mentioned in 2.

Incorrect

- A. People moving away from villages
 - 1. Going in search of jobs
 - 2. Going to seek livelihood

Correct

- A. People moving away from villages
 - 1. Going in search of jobs

2. Changing outlook

6. **Parallelism** All statements (divisions and sub-divisions) are written in parallel construction (grammatically). For example, if one item begins with the - ing form of verb, other following items will also begin with verb + ing.

Incorrect

- A. Negotiating peace
- B. Promote understanding

Correct

- A. Negotiating peace
- B. Promoting understanding

7. **Punctuation and capitalisation** Only the first word or a proper noun is capitalised in each entry. Please note that you should use full stop (.) at the end of each entry only when it is a sentence outline. But no punctuation mark is put at the ends of entries in a topic outline.

Layout for formal outline of a dissertation

<p>Statement of Thesis _____</p> <p>I. First Main idea _____</p> <p> A. First Subordinate idea _____</p> <p> 1. First reason or illustration _____</p> <p> 2. Second reason or example _____</p> <p> a. First supporting detail _____</p> <p> b. Second supporting detail _____</p> <p> B. Second Subordinate idea _____</p> <p>II. Second Main idea _____</p>

As already shown, outlining is the key to the organisation, it is essential for writing any form of business communication, such as letters or reports. In order to determine the sequence of ideas in any piece of writing (or presentation), we have to consider the level of importance of information and also the order in which it is

required to be known. For instance, while writing a report mention the problem and then—the method used to solve it, followed by findings and conclusions.

Since the reader of a report is more interested in knowing the findings and the conclusions, give more importance to these elements in your report. The details of the problem and the nature of methodology used receive less attention as they are of less interest to the reader of the report. However, they provide necessary background for the findings and conclusions. We could have an outline including all the four elements of report in the following form —

I Introduction

A. Definition of the problem

B. Description of the methods used

II Findings

III Conclusions

As the statement of the problem and description of research methodology carry less interest for the reader, they are put together as two elements under the same entry Introduction, at I. But the other two elements – Findings and Conclusions are of major interest, hence they are entered on the outline separately as item II and item III.

The effort and time devoted to the forming of an outline of the proposed draft are rewarded by the writer's gain in clarity and logical understanding of the interrelated levels of significance of different elements in his composition.

Avoid plagiarism In using written material from secondary sources, we must mention the source of information. Cite the source of the material as a footnote. Failing to document sources will amount to cheating. Though each organisation usually has its own standard format of documenting sources of information used in the report, the general form followed is either APA or MLA System of citing sources.

Bibliography

There are different systems for a Bibliography. In a report, the bibliography should conform to the style of documentation followed by the concerned company, just as a technical article/paper

The effort and time devoted to the forming of an outline of the proposed draft are rewarded by the writer's gain in clarity and logical understanding of the interrelated levels of significance of different elements in his composition.

conforms to the form of bibliography followed by a Journal or Society that wants to publish the material.

Footnotes and Endnotes

Documentation of cross-references may sometimes have to be done in such a way that the references do not disturb the flow of argument and reading. The writer can give reference as the footnote or can describe all references as endnotes in a list of references at the end of the report. In both cases, the reader finds all details about sources mentioned in the report, and he can check the correctness of the statements by consulting the original sources.

Both footnotes or endnotes may be used in documenting sources. Endnotes are usually preferred, as they are easy to refer to when desired. Also, footnotes create the problem of spacing the material on a page.

It is to be noted that each reference to be cited in the list of references in the endnotes is numbered consecutively as 1, 2, 3, ... and so on. And they are mentioned in the same number that each reference has in the body of the discussion. The information on the source is documented as shown below.

"The marketing strategist described by Lovatt³ uses a computer to design his concepts of virtual market for products".

The superscript "3" refers to the third endnote mentioned in the list of references as given below —

³ Lovatt, Frederick G. et al. *Management is No Mystery*, 2nd Edn, ed. Robt B Arpin, Trent, Ariz., Bonus Books in, 1975.

Some Guidelines for Bibliography Entries

1. **Reference to a book by one author** Mention author's name, Book Title (in italics, hence to be underlined), city of publication, publisher's name, date of publication (to be given in the same order).
2. **Reference to a particular Chapter in a book written by two authors** Authors' names (name of the main author entered with surname first, and those of other authors written with given name or initials, first), "Chapter Title" (in quotes), book title, city of publication, publisher's name, date of publication.
3. **Magazine article** Author's name, title of article, magazine name, volume and issue numbers, date of issue, relevant page numbers.

Documentation of cross-references may sometimes have to be done in such a way that the references do not disturb the flow of argument and reading.

4. **Report or technical paper** Author's name, title of report, report number, name of company or organisation publishing the report, date of report.
5. **Correspondence** Names of sender and receiver, details of their respective organisation, and date of letter.
6. **A second edition of a book by more than two authors** Enter only primary author's name and publisher's name.

(Note: "et al" means "and others".)

Parenthetical method of references The APA style in social sciences follows the method of indicating the source of information within the body of the report/paper by using parenthetical references, mentioning the author, date, page number in the brackets placed immediately after the matter quoted or referred to. This running method is now generally used in making references, as it allows smooth reading. A list of sources arranged in alphabetical order, is given at the end of the report or paper or chapter. The entries are sequenced by author name. If author's name is not given in the original source of information, the entry is put in alphabetical order according to the first significant word of the title, leaving out A, An or The. This method is called APA style. It was developed by the American Psychological Association (APA). In quoting material, we must show the page number with p. for one page or pp. for more than one page, immediately after the quotation. We should do it even if the sentence in which the quotation occurs does not end. If the sentence mentions the name of the author and year, we give only the page number within brackets at the end of the sentence. We should include all three points of information in parenthetical reference. (Example Schindler, 1998, p. 120). Put a comma after author name and after the year of publication. If our sentence has author's name already mentioned, then only year and page number are to be given immediately after the name. Like, Schindler (1998, p. 120). The page number can appear separately also. For example, Schindler (1998) considers research "too narrowly defined if it restricted to the basic research variety" (p. 12).

If the sentence includes author and year, then only page number is to be given. For example, Schindler in Business Research Methods, 1998, says "-----" (p. 14).

The purpose of mentioning all three details – author, year and page, at the end of our quoted or referred to material is to help the

reader locate the material in the original source of our information if required. Many times, in survey reports, figures are just cooked up. In such cases specific reference to source of information helps check the information given in the report.

We can follow any one method — MLA style (Modern Language Association) or APA style. Form a list of references at the end either in APA style and call it references if you have used parenthetical references, or in MLA style if you have followed the number method to indicate the quoted matter in the text, and call the list Works Cited. The two styles arrange the details of information differently.

APA lists sources alphabetically by the author's name. MLA sequences the sources by number, the numerical order in which the matter has been cited and indicated in the text.

Further, in APA style the **References** mention books in the following manner.

Name	Date	Title	Publishing Information
Bunch, Meribeth.	(2000)	Creating Confidence.	New Delhi: Kogan Page

In MLA style in the list of sources books are mentioned as given below:

Name	Title	Publishing Information
Bunch, Meribeth.	Creating Confidence.	New Delhi: Kogan Page, 2000.

Citing Articles in APA Style

Articles quoted from periodicals, such as journals, magazines, and newspapers are mentioned in the list of references by giving details of four things : author, date, title of article and publication information. The publication information in the case of articles gives periodical title, volume number and page number.

Name	Date	Article Title
Singh, Pritam.	(2000)	Transformational Leadership
Periodical title	Volume number	Page Number
Vision	12	64-78

In MLA style the order of information will be

Name	Article Title	Periodical title no.	Year	Page number
Author.	Leadership	Vision 44	2000	64-78

Digrams in Reports

Report writers use tables and graphics such as bar charts, line charts, pictograms to tell things briefly and vividly. Diagrams, like all visual modes, communicate information clearly and effectively. For example, consider the effectiveness of written instructions for opening Eye-Drops and putting them into eyes supported with figures that illustrate the process of opening the phial and squeezing drops into our eyes.

Use of Tables

A table presents numerical or topical data in rows and columns. Suppose we say, 3 plus 5 plus 6 plus 7 plus 9 would equal 30. This is more simply presented as:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 3 \\
 5 \\
 6 \\
 7 \\
 9 \\
 \hline
 30
 \end{array}$$

Diagrams, like all visual modes, communicate information clearly and effectively.

Preparing Tables

We should know some of the techniques of preparing tables in which the content is presented clearly. The most important

technique is to label each table in a way that the reader can easily get to the desired table. You may practise some of the techniques given below —

1. Numbering all tables — You should number all tables in your report consecutively by calling them. “Table 1”, “Table 2”, “Table 3” and so on, and while referring to them, simply say given on the next page or the following table. This practice will make your reference brief and simple. Write the number over the table centering it.
2. Labeling each table — Write a complete heading on each title, which clearly describes the contents of table for the reader. As headings, the table titles can be long but they should completely describe the table’s presentation. The title can even run into two lines. It may mention sources of data, numbers included in the figures given in the table and the subject of the table, for example, “Segmentation of market (5-20 kg) – on the basis of the usage of bags in the total market size of 3150 crores”. For emphasis the title of the table can be written in bold letters.
3. Use the caption head when many columns, such as names of several trains/cities are given. “North East” on each column of data as short heading to indicate the item, for example, “City” “Max” “Min” Rain”.
4. Similarly, indicate the subject of the line (horizontal) columns by identifying its content as, “4033 Janta Mail”, “2724 AP Exp”.
5. Use footnotes to explain items given in columns, if required.
6. Keep sufficient space between columns so that the data remain well separated.

An example of a table with parts described by labels is given to illustrate the layout, title placement, and captions for the vertical columns and horizontal rows effectively.

Table 6.2 Choke Points: Highest Pollutant Levels in Various Parts of Delhi on Diwali Day (2003)

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Permissible (mg/m³)</i>	<i>Actual (mg/m³)</i>
SPM	Meera Bagh	100	2292
Respirable SPM	Meera Bagh	200	4772
Carbon Monoxide	Karawal Nagar	100	8000
Sulphur Dioxide	Vasant kunj	80	201
Nitrogen Dioxide	Meera Bagh	80	174.8

Source: Delhi Pollution Control Committee

Notice that if the table is taken exactly from some other source, the source is mentioned.

Graphics Used in Reports

In reports, the following forms of graphics are commonly used —

- Bar charts
- Line charts
- Pie charts
- Pictograms
- Actual pictures
- Maps

These graphics are used also in oral presentation of reports. While using graphic presentation of information, the writer or presenter of report considers how the use of graphic presentation helps in grasping the information conveyed through words. Sometimes, reports use graphics as a source of embellishment by making the presentation colourful.

Bar Charts

A bar chart can be simple or complex. A simple bar chart is used to compare quantities which can be depicted on a scale. A bar chart can be broken when the quantities are too large to be covered

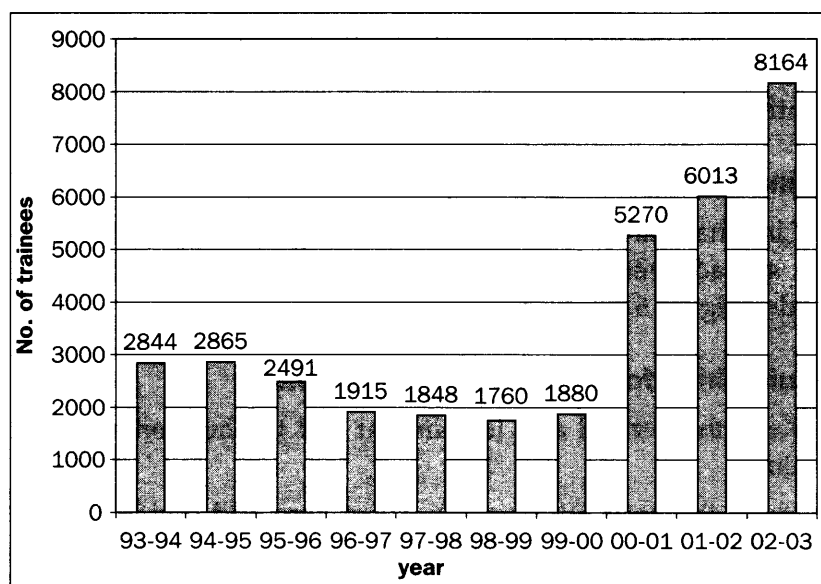


Figure 6.1
Growth in the number
of trainees at NPTI
Faridabad (1993-94
to 2002-03).

by the chart. In such a case, the chart is broken to show that some parts of quantities are not shown in the diagram.

A simple bar chart is always found most effective in presenting comparative quantitative data.

In a simple bar chart, the layout for vertical and horizontal bars is shown in Figure 6.1. The length of the bars, whether they are horizontal or vertical, shows quantity. The quantitative scale should always begin with zero. The graduation space must be equal. And so also, the width of the bar to be equal.

Different colours, shadings, variations, and cross-hatchings are usually used to bring out differences in bars.

Segmented bar chart (also called component bar chart) Sometimes bar charts represent more than one item. They include several components, which are depicted by segmenting the bars into different parts shown in different colours or cross-hatchings. The labels to identify different parts can be given separately in the bar chart, if there is little space along the bars. The segmented bar chart is also known as Component bar chart or subdivided bar chart. For example, consider the segmented bar chart (Figure 6.2) given on the facing page that presents the creation of hundreds of thousands of jobs in Indian IT sector since 2000, the fastest growth is in call-centres, not software.

Positive and negative bar charts — when negative quantities also are included in our data, we place the zero at the midpoint on the scale, and not at the axis point on the beginning of the quantities scale. By doing so, we are also able to present both positive and negative bars as shown in figures below —

Line Charts

Line charts are found useful for showing changes in quantitative data spread over some time. Line charts also help in projecting trends. (Figure 6.3)

Guidelines for Constructing Line Charts

1. Keep the vertical axis for amount and the horizontal axis for time.
2. Begin the vertical (amount) axis at zero and divide the scale with white space according to the size of the amount to be shown on the scale.

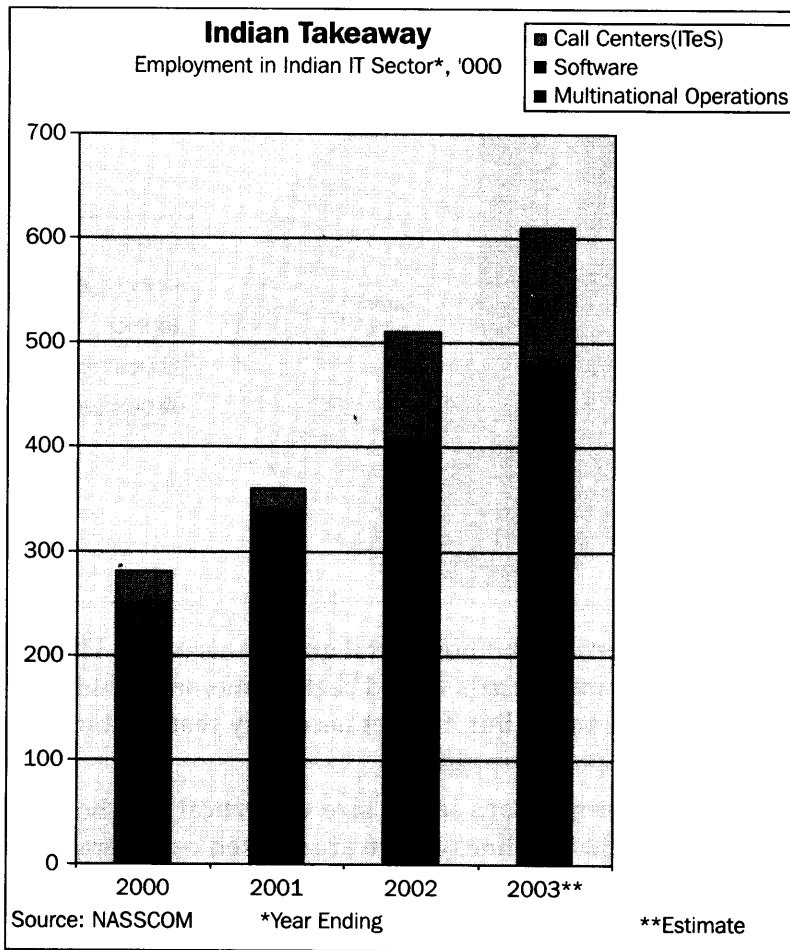


Figure 6.2

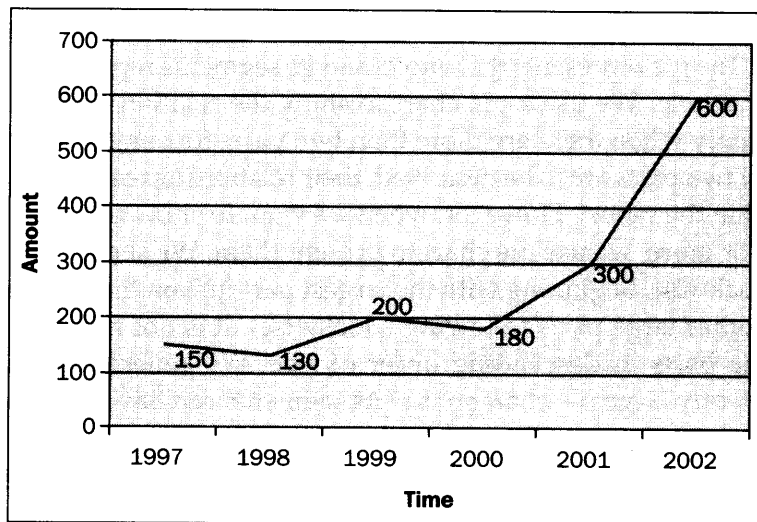
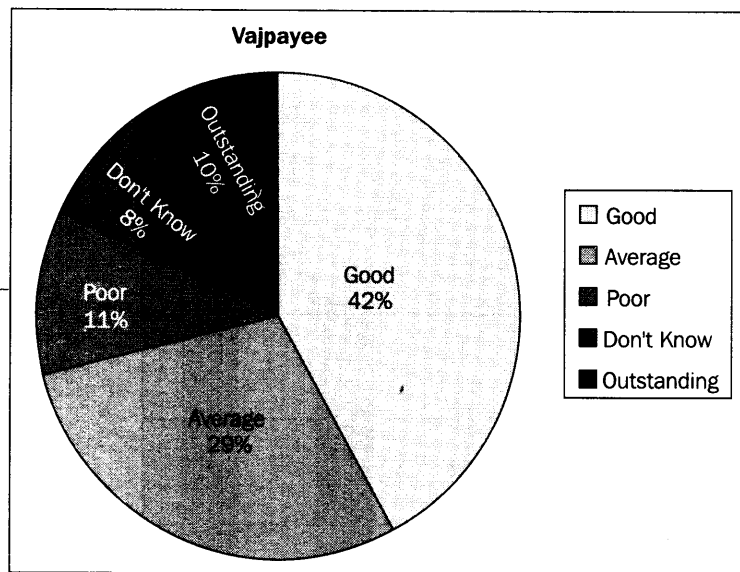


Figure 6.3

Figure 6.4



3. Make both vertical and horizontal gradations equal. That is, all spaces on the amount axis should be the same, and all time scales should be the same. But it is not necessary that the time space and amount spaces are equal.
4. Use proper proportions in the size of vertical and horizontal measures so that the lines drawn are marked by natural slopes. See the figure of a line chart drawn above —

Pie Charts

A pie chart presents the way a whole is distributed into various parts. The pie represents the whole, and its segments represent parts of the whole. We use a pie chart to show the relationship among parts only when there are more than two parts forming the whole. If only two parts are to be described, their relationship can be simply stated in the report. However, when we want to show at least three parts or more, we use pie chart to present them. We should cut the pie clockwise, beginning with the largest part first on the right side, with other large parts following (clockwise). It is not necessary to cut the parts in descending order of size. We generally draw a sufficiently large pie chart so that its segments can have labels and unit values clearly written over them. Different colours are often used to emphasise and contrast the relationship among the parts

A pie chart presents the way a whole is distributed into various parts.

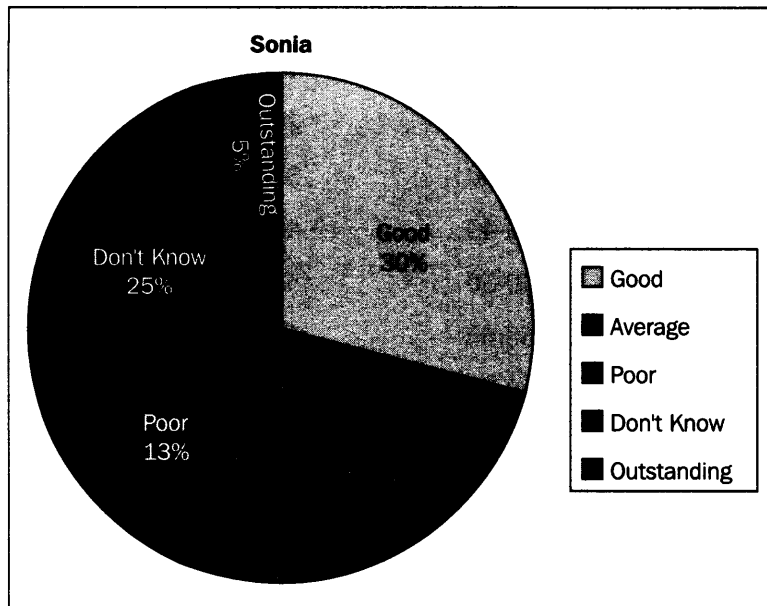


Figure 6.5

forming the whole. For example, see the pie chart presentation of the popularity of the Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Congress President Mrs Sonia Gandhi. (Figure 6.4 and 6.5 in 2003.)

Histogram

Histogram is a graph of frequency distribution. A histogram consists of a series of rectangles, each rectangle is proportional in width to the range of values within a class and proportional in height to the number of items covered by the class, that is frequency. If the class size is the same, then each rectangle will be of the same width.

In drawing a histogram the variable is always shown on the X-axis and the frequency is determined on the Y-axis. A histogram consists of a series of adjacent rectangles each having a class-interval distance as its width and the frequency distance as its height. The area of the histogram represents the total frequency distribution across the classes.

It is important to understand that histogram is not just a bar diagram. In a bar diagram only the length of the bar matters, not its width. But in a histogram both the length and the width are important. See the histogram given below showing the marks-wise distribution of 320 students. (Figure 6.6)

Histogram is a graph of frequency distribution.

Marks	Students
0-10	15
10-20	25
20-30	35
30-40	40
40-50	55
50-60	60
60-70	50
70-80	25
80-90	10
90-100	5

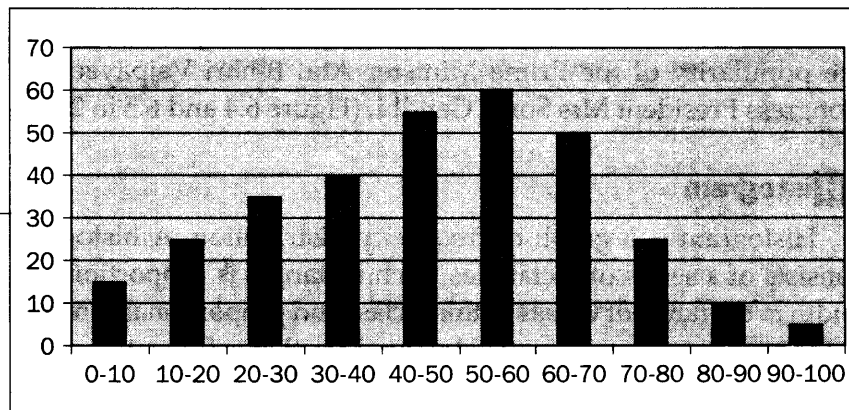


Figure 6.6

Pictogram

Pictograms illustrate numerical relationships by using pictures to represent quantities. In a pictogram, the same size figures should be used to represent amounts and relationships clearly. For example, we want to represent merchant tonnage of four different countries, say USA, USSR, Japan, and India. We can use the picture of a ship to symbolise merchant tonnage. We can assign the value of 1,000,000 tons to each ship and accordingly depict the difference in the amounts of tonnage using different numbers of ships in relation to

different countries. For example, if the merchant tonnage of USA is 4 times greater than that of India, we can illustrate the numerical relationship between India's and United States' tonnage by using 4 same size pictures of ships for USA and one picture of ship for India vertically. And suppose Japan's and USSR's amounts of tonnage double India's, then we use 2 ships each against both Japan and USSR. Remember that we do not show the four times increase in amount by doubling the height and width of a picture of ship. Changes in size of the picture of ship would be misleading. The pictures of ship are placed along Y-axis and the names of countries are labeled on X-axis.

See the pictogram representing the merchant tonnage of 4 countries; India, USSR, Japan, USA given here. (Figure 6.7)

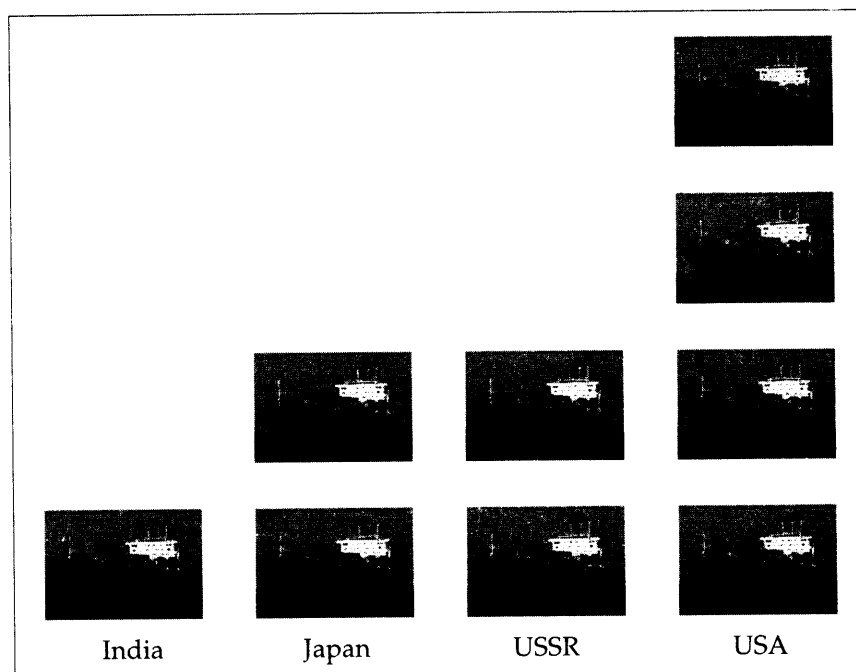


Figure 6.7
Merchant tonnage.

How to Use Figures and Diagrams in Reports

We would use figures and diagrams in the text of the report if they are not very large. If they can be accommodated on a page within the running text without breaking the continuity of reading

of the text, they should be kept as part of the text. Otherwise, tables, charts and other diagrammatic representations should be placed as appendix. Each figure should be serially numbered throughout the report continuously. We should first introduce data and give interpretation of the diagram used, and then draw the reader's attention to the diagram by specifying the number of the figure (given in the text/or number of appendix/annexure).

Case Study

Developing an Integrated Marketing Communication Plan for Memory Plus

An actual project report submitted by a student of *Faculty of Business, Developing an Integrated Marketing Communication Plan for Memory Plus* follows.

The report has a cover that gives details of the organization, author's name, place of study, name of the project guide, and date of submission. Study the whole report and answer the questions that follow it.

Developing an Integrated Marketing Communication plan for Memory Plus

Prepared for

Profad Ltd., Chennai

by

K.Gurudath.Kamath

1 April, 2004

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List of Abbreviations

CDRI	Central drug research Institute.
CSIR	Council of scientific and industrial research.
DAGMAR	Defined advertising goals & measured advertising results.
HIP	High involvement product.
IMC	Integrated Marketing communications.
LIP	Low involvement product.
MIP	Medium involvement product.
NIMHANS	National institute of mental health & neuro surgery.
OTC	Over the counter.
P-O-P	Point of purchase.
PEST	Political, Environmental, Social & Technological.
PLC	Product life cycle.
PR	Public relations.
SEC	Socio-economic classification.
SWOT	Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat.
T-PLAN	Target-Plan.
VALS	Values, Attitudes, Lifestyles.
WOM	Word of mouth.

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Preface

Remember Memory Plus the advertisement in which our homegrown grandmaster Vishwanathan Anand used to appear. If you do not, just contact any of the couch potatoes you know and they are sure to tell you that they remember it well. If they do not, then I suggest that they better go on a crash diet of Memory Plus.

To continue with the argument, if you also ask him/her how they felt about the advertisement, he/she is sure to tell you that V. Anand looked out of place among those molecular structures, old sadhu along with a background voice which sounded as though someone was speaking on a phone with a squeaky voice. They would also probably say "if only we could help." But I, on the other hand, have been lucky to actually propose an improvement on the marketing communication angle and this is what the action research project is all about.

First I had to do a market survey in Bangalore, Chennai, and Delhi. I had approached several schools and various organisation to locate people who had tried out Memory Plus. Convincing the school headmaster/principal was tough going. But once through, I could catch 60-odd students, whom I bored to death with a six-page long questionnaire. While the school kids fancied doses of Memory Plus, the executives were averse to try out the product. I could not find more than two persons who said they had tried out Memory Plus.

After doing the rounds, I sat down to prepare a marketing communication plan using the hot-shot, state-of-art Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). For the IMC, I had also developed a positioning statement "PROVEN".

If you are by now inquisitive of all the details, please read on. The report has three full chapters and an equally thick set of machine language numbers.

Introduction

Marketing Communication is information, benefits, attributes, perceptual image/ persona, feelings, attitudes all bundled into one. Any product or service is available as such but marketing communication is what puts all the ingredients of life to it. Hence it is both an interesting and fascinating subject.

"The most fun you can have with your pants on"-Jerry Della Femina

In an era of fast changes and cut-throat competition, where new products are launched everyday as other products die even faster, keeping your nose upfront is becoming a bewildering task. The field of Marketing communications is no exception. The advertising world in India has shown a growth of a dismal 14% but are optimistic to grow at a 20% average over the years.

As product differences begin to narrow with faster responses by the competition and the competition hottens the most effective way to sustain through the times is through Marketing communication. It is though not as it seems as the consumer is being continuously bombarded with advertising messages-meaningful, effective communication becomes imperative for business success.

Media Clutter

Gone are the days when Doordarshan was the only TV media and held sway in TV viewership with a reach of 80% during primetime. All this has changed with liberalization being introduced in India. Today we have a range of local, regional, national as well as global networks entering our drawing room. This has caused a media clutter making it next to impossible task in achieving goals on advertising effectiveness. With diminishing readerships in magazines, publishers have resorted to niche marketing thus reducing the range and the coverage of target audience. Radio has lost its original glamour but for FM band trying to make an impact in select cities.

These changes have been accompanied by a spiraling cost in media advertising. Media rates for TV have risen by about 50% dailies and magazines by 45% and hoardings in select cities by about 33.3%.

All these factors of media clutter and belying cost has made it increasingly tough to ensure that your message cuts across effectively through the noise to reach your target customer. Integrated marketing communication (IMC) is one such concept which has been the rage of the nineties and increasingly used as a tool to counter such an effect.

What is IMC?

IMC is a comprehensive plan of marketing communication that evaluates strategic roles of varieties of communication disciplines and combines them to provide clarity, consistency and maximum impact, to develop communication with an ability to reach the right customers with the right message at the right time and in the right place.

This Action Research Project is an attempt being made in developing an IMC for Memory Plus, is an advertising account being held by Profad Ltd., Chennai. Their client (manufacturer of Memory Plus) is Velvette International Pharma Ltd., also in Chennai.

Profad Ltd., is a medium-sized Advertising agency with its corporate office in Chennai. It belongs to the M.A. Chidambaram group and is an affiliate of Wakefeild Chegwin Advertising Ltd., of United Kingdom. It has its branches in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Bombay and Delhi. A respectable agency predominantly catering to south based clients.

The agency follows the T-Plan while drawing out their analysis, planning, control and decision making activities. This research is based on the T-Plan and ideas and concepts from various other authors.

In developing the IMC-market research, expert opinions and interviews had been conducted to collect primary data. Secondary data was collected from the library at Profad and MDI.

The purpose of the project is to develop an IMC by synthesizing with the T-Plan such that:

- It can find direct application and is of relevance for Profad.
- Apply a systematic approach to planning IMC.
- A perfect reflection for a real time situation.
- Developing a position statement for Memory Plus.

What is T-Plan?

It is a planning cycle and is general adopted in most advertising agencies. It consists of answering four basic questions:

Planning Cycle

- Where are we?
& Why?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?
- Are we getting there?

These four basic questions are answered at two levels:

- in the market
- in the mind

Each of these questions are accompanied by several parameters and the whole cycle is an iterative process. The project hence attempts to answer the first three simple questions for Memory Plus and conclude by suggesting what are the strategies to be applied.

The chapters in this dissertation are arranged according to the three questions. Where are we in the market any why? deals with the macro environment factors affecting the brand, nature of the market, products in the market and the people in the market segment.

Where are we in the mind and why? deals with the consumer's attitude and buying behavior. Where do we want to be in the market? deals with the marketing objective, while Where do we want to be in the mind? deals with the brand positioning and brand personality aspects. How do we get there in the market? deals with strategies to identify, develop or retain market segments. How do we get there in the mind? deals with developing strategies to position the brand and building the IMC plan.

In marketing communication there are only two real points to stay ahead-speed of response and power of communication. This is what is attempted in this project through developing an IMC for Memory Plus.