

26 Report structure and key phrases

A Match the different sections of a report (1–5) with their definitions (a–e).

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1 Introduction | a) The 'body' of the report: a presentation of arguments and evidence. |
| 2 Background | b) The subject of the report, who asked for it, why it has been written. |
| 3 Findings | c) Practical suggestions for action, often written as a list or bullet points. |
| 4 Conclusion | d) The context: what has happened up to now and the general situation. |
| 5 Recommendations | e) A judgment or decision based on the discussion in the 'body'. |

Note: a report may not have all these sections, and in an email a 'section' may simply be a single sentence.

B Match the beginnings of the sentences (1–12) with the endings (a–l).

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 As requested at the Board meeting | a) on the figures sent to me by different departments. |
| 2 The purpose of the report is | b) where cost-cutting measures are necessary. |
| 3 The report is based | c) in table 1, demand has been falling. |
| 4 I have divided the report | d) to suggest ways to reduce costs. |
| 5 As can be seen | e) into three sections. |
| 6 This has led to a situation | f) of 18 April, here is my report. |
| 7 As mentioned | g) the full report and let me have your comments. |
| 8 I suggest that the company | h) are as follows: |
| 9 My specific recommendations | i) to contact me if you have any questions. |
| 10 Please have a look at | j) should be able to cut costs significantly. |
| 11 Your comments will be circulated | k) above, sales are going down. |
| 12 Please feel free | l) in time for the next meeting. |

The order of sentences 1–12 follows (more or less) the order in which they would be used. Write the sentence numbers after these section headings:

Introduction/Background:

Findings:

Conclusion/Recommendations:

Closing comments:

C Complete the email with the phrases from the box.

above as follows based on the figures can be seen divided the report
identify opportunities I suggest that investigate the possibility led to a situation
let me have make reductions see section 4.2 purpose of the report shows that

Subject: Cost-cutting measures

As requested at the Board meeting of 18 April, here is my report. The full report is attached as a Word document, but I have written a brief summary below.

Introduction

The ⁽¹⁾..... is to suggest ways to reduce costs across the company.

It is ⁽²⁾..... sent to me by different departments last month. I have

⁽³⁾..... into three sections: background, findings and recommendations.

Background

As ⁽⁴⁾..... in table 1 in the attached document, demand for our products has been falling over the last year, and sales and profits are both down. This has ⁽⁵⁾..... where cost-cutting measures are necessary.

Findings

There are three main areas where cost reductions are possible:

- The marketing budget is very high. As mentioned ⁽⁶⁾....., sales are going down, but we are still spending large sums on magazine advertising and street posters. This is not justified.
- Production costs are also high. Table 2 in the report ⁽⁷⁾..... raw material costs have gone up by 12% over the last year. We must find a way to bring these down.
- We may also have to dismiss a small number of administrative staff, which will be very unpopular. ⁽⁸⁾..... of the full report for suggestions on how to proceed.

Recommendations

In conclusion, ⁽⁹⁾..... the company should be able to cut costs significantly by the end of the year. My specific recommendations are ⁽¹⁰⁾.....:

1 Marketing Dept to ⁽¹¹⁾..... in the advertising budget of 10% or 15%.

2 Production Dept to ⁽¹²⁾..... of using different suppliers to bring down materials costs.

3 Head Office to ⁽¹³⁾..... for cutting a limited number of jobs, in case the situation deteriorates.

Please have a look at the full report and ⁽¹⁴⁾..... your comments by 2 June at the latest. These will then be circulated to all departmental managers in time for the meeting on 16 June.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

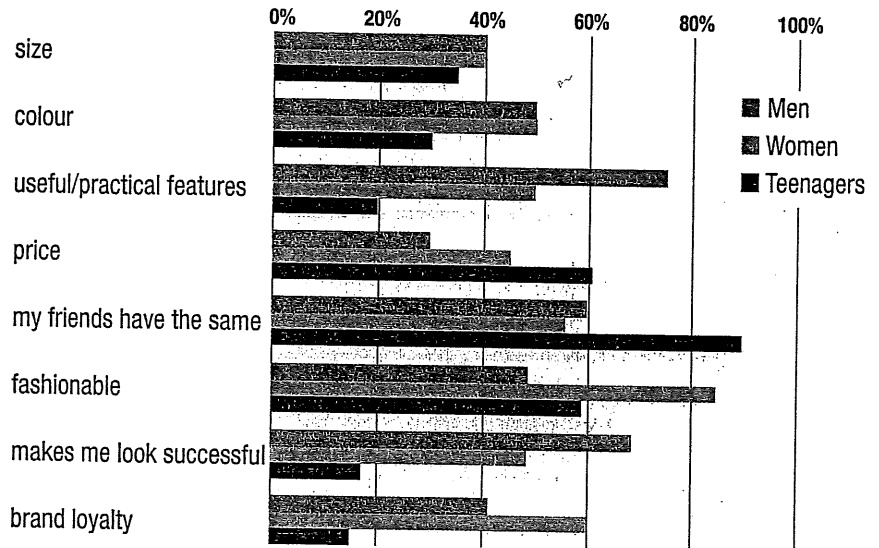
WRITING a report

8A What influences you when you buy a new gadget? Write a list of factors and put them in order of importance.

I always go for the latest model because it makes me look trendy.

B Work in groups and compare your ideas.

9A Look at the chart below which shows the results of a survey on why men, women and teenagers choose a particular smartphone. What is the most and least important factor for each group of people?



B Read the report written by a student on the survey results and answer the questions.

- 1 Which factors are mentioned?
- 2 The student has made one factual error. What is it?
- 3 What is the purpose of each of the first three paragraphs in the report?

The bar chart shows the results of a survey of students and employees in our language school in relation to their reasons for buying a particular mobile phone.

First of all, comparing the results for men and women, it can be seen that some factors affect both groups more or less equally. For example, there is no difference in how much size and colour influence their choice of phone, and the results for 'my friends have the same one' show only a slight variation.

There are, however, significant differences in the results for other factors. The usefulness or practicality of a phone's features is far more important for men than for women, as is the price and how much it makes the owner look successful. On the other hand, women place greater importance on brand loyalty.

The results for teenagers showed an interesting contrast to those for men and women. First of all ...

LEARN TO make written comparisons

10 Read the report again and complete tasks 1–3.

- 1 Circle three phrases for saying that two things are the same or nearly the same.
- 2 Underline four phrases for talking about differences.
- 3 Put a box around four linking phrases

11A Work in pairs. Look at the chart and make notes on five points you could make about teenagers.

B Complete the report by continuing the last paragraph. Write 100–150 words. Include at least six of the phrases in Exercise 10.

