



***Report writing is not about
the art of spin... It is the
writer's responsibility to
ensure that he/she is clearly
understood - Sally Burt***

Presented by:

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	Heading	Context of Heading
1	Background	What gave rise to this report?
		Why does this report exist?
2	Scope & Mandate	Because of (background) ... requested us to investigate ...
		Whether (cover each issue if more than one) – each issue will be addressed in summary of evidence, findings, conclusions and recommendations
3	Methodology (& limitations)	What you did ... / And did not or could not do ... / And why not ...
4	Summary of evidence	Mindmap ... per issue , not methodology
5	Findings	Evaluating the facts and evidence per issue – WITHOUT law / rules / policies <i>Based on the abovementioned evidence, we find ... // The available evidence reflects ...</i>
6	Conclusions	Apply the law / rules to the facts <i>Based on our findings, we conclude ...</i>
7	Recommendations	Structure per issue <i>Based on our conclusions, we recommend ...</i>



Self-test / STRUCTURE ...



Does the reader timeously understand the purpose / goal / objective of the report (the decision to be made)?



Is the reader sensitized on the purpose (relevance) of each 'category / section' of the report (why is this section important and how does it fit in the bigger picture?)

Duplication ?

Is the report structured according to logical relevance of content?



Structure of report should be reflective of logical relevance / mind-map



INSTRUCTIONS

**BREAK
AWAY**

2

The
methodology
report



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STRUCTURE & RELEVANCE



Do not structure per source of
evidence!!

- ✘ Golden thread is lost
- ✘ Relevance of evidence is scattered
(what it proves is scattered)
- ✘ Reader loses track



Structure per event / issue!!

- ✘ All evidence particular to issue is together
- ✘ Reader can follow the collective probative value of all
the evidence
- ✘ More conducive to '*res ipsa loquitur*'



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ✘ Should be exactly what it says – a summary - snapshot of each issue and conclusion
- ✘ Present to reflect logical relevance of issues and sub-issues, and how it fits in bigger picture
- ✘ We draft for the Executive - What is the bottom line!
- ✘ Rule of thumb – 1 sentence per half a page of findings
- ✘ What is the one sentence answer to your mandate?
- ✘ Change perspective – where recommendations were per issue, summary could be per person ...

CLEAR & CONCISE

- ✘ *the best way to be boring is to leave nothing out...Voltaire*
- ✘ Don't use abbreviations without explaining what it stands for
- ✘ Avoid superfluous phrases (at this moment in time / be that as it may)
- ✘ Unambiguous – crisp & clear / "Some of the transactions are irregular" / rather use "Transaction numbers 2, 4, 7 and 13 are irregular"

- ✘ Use active and not passive i.e *We interviewed X NOT X was interviewed by us.*
 - ✘ 1 idea per sentence / 1 topic per paragraph
- ✘ Make clear whether making use of fact, assumption, inference or giving opinion – clearly stated basis
 - ✘ Visualizing (forged images / graphics / tables / trends)
 - ✘ Consistency



ACCURACY – self test

Are findings and conclusions supported by facts?

Do the facts speak for itself?

What is not in the report?

Is the conclusion based on logical reasoning?

Has sufficient weight been attached to the right issues, and is that as such reflected in the report?



IMPARTIAL & OBJECTIVE – what does the concept entail?

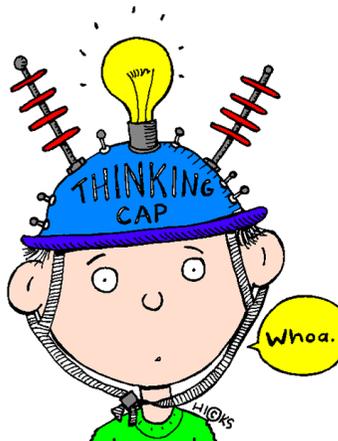
Independence = freedom from the control, influence, support, aid, or the like, of others.

Objectivity means the state or quality of being true even outside of an individual's feelings, imaginings, or interpretations.

A proposition is generally considered to have **objective truth** when its truth conditions are met **and** are "mind-independent"—that is, existing freely or independently from a mind (from the thoughts, feelings, ideas, etc. of a subject).

Objectivity = philosophical concept = related to reality and truth

HOW you say it is as important as **WHAT** you say



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Frustration of investigative efforts may impact impartiality

We also experienced instances where we were deliberately misled and delayed by (client) officials, in that our phone calls were not answered, although these officials were in their offices. Client officials refused to give out cell phone information, and client officials did not honour scheduled appointments and comments such as "Why should I give this information, they are anyway not going to make their deadline", thus deliberately stalling our investigation efforts.

SCENARIO 1



The department appointed Mr Bower (Persal number 123456) as superintendent at ABC in 2003, when the department initiated a school of excellence for disadvantaged learners. On 1 April 2003 Mr Bower moved into the ABC superintendent's quarters. We could not confirm Mr Bower's date of appointment, as:

- The department could not provide us with appointment letter; and*
- Mr Bower's personnel file contains no record of his appointment as superintendent.*

75 words

SCENARIO 2



Conclusions

Mr Boucher:

- *Has not reconciled the receipt books with the bank statements, as required;*
- *Conceded he had not managed the collection of rent, as required; and*
- *Accepted accountability for the deficit of **R 26 666.95** in rentals, not deposited in ABC's bank account.*

The department has not audited ABC's financial records.

55 words

SCENARIO 3



During the course of our investigation, HARD WORKER UNION at first advised their members not to co-operate with us. Later, HARD WORKER UNION declared a dispute against Mr B America (and addressed to Mr Cecil Paul), regarding our investigation. This delayed the conclusion of our investigation.

Subsequently we agreed to HARD WORKER UNION's request of a shop steward attending all our interviews with its members. Thus, Mr John Soap attended the interviews on behalf of HARD WORKER UNION. Mr Soap has not unduly influenced any interviews.

84 words



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SCENARIOS 4 & 5



On 11 December 2009 we interviewed Mr Beuzana. He stated inter alia as follows:

15 words

Deviation from the prescribed tender process is allowed if the accounting officer:

- Approves all relevant acquisitions; and*
- Keeps detailed records.*

Officials must take all reasonable steps to ensure that market related prices are obtained, as stipulated in the SCM policy par 23.

45 words

RELEVANCE / LOGIC

relevant

/ˈrɛlɪv(ə)nt/

adjective

closely connected or appropriate to the matter in hand.

"what small companies need is relevant advice"

synonyms: pertinent, applicable, apposite, material, apropos, to the point, to the purpose, germane, admissible; More

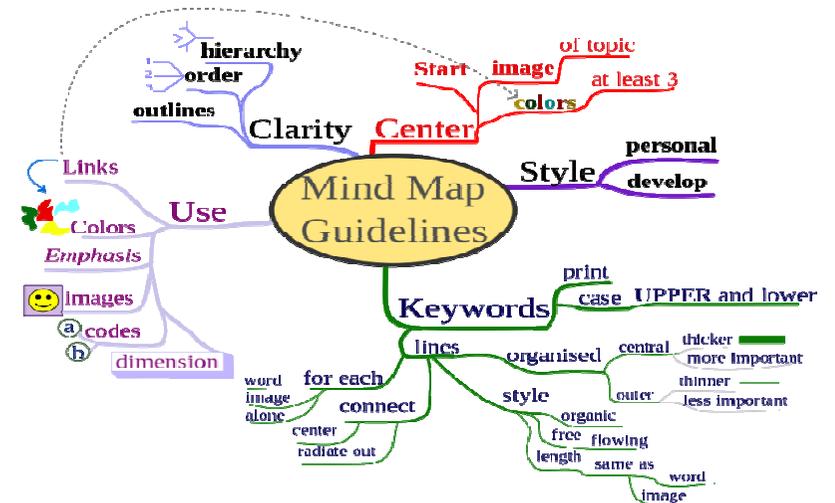
Definitions of logic

reasoning conducted or assessed according to **strict principles of validity**.

Definitions of **valid** (of an argument or point)

having **a sound basis in logic or fact**;

reasonable or cogent.



If X is relevant, it assists to prove or disprove any material fact

Self – Test: RELEVANCE / LOGIC

✘ Irrelevant information confuses the real issues

✘ Relevance ...

- Depends on reasoning
- Blend of logic and experience
- Outside the law

**Ask ... and that
is important
why / so what?**

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