

TO: English 305T – Technical Writing
FROM: Ms. Singleton
DATE: April 4, 2018
SUBJECT: Long Recommendation Report Assignment Guidelines

Assignment

For the final major writing project of the semester, you will write a long report (12-15 pages and a bibliography; double-spaced in 12 point Times New Roman font) in which you will attempt to persuade a general on-the-job audience that your recommendation of a recent development (device, mechanism, system, program, process, method, procedure, etc.) is the most viable solution to the problem that you have been studying. You will accomplish this by discussing the background of your problem and recommendation (solution), examining the feasibility and implementation of your solution, analyzing alternative solutions, and investigating the forthcoming developments and future benefits associated with your chosen solution. Thus, this writing project will require you to combine all of the skills you have honed through your previous assignments with the knowledge you gain about the techniques and conventions of long formal reports to develop one final, professional product. To help you achieve this goal, this memo will detail the requirements for the Long Recommendation Report you must submit on Friday, May 4.

Audience and the Writer's Role

Remember that you are recommending a recent development (device, mechanism, system, program, process, method, procedure, etc.) in your field to the group of on-the-job professionals who would be responsible for implementing your solution in their workplace in order to address the problem that you have identified and that you have proven is of immediate concern to this audience. Your audience should be a general type (e.g., automotive company executives, owners of small construction firms, electronics manufacturers, pharmaceutical lab technicians, airline pilots, healthcare providers, financial consultants, etc.), not me, a specific individual, or your hypothetical employer.

However, realistically, I must be able to understand your discussion in order to grade your long report. So, if there are basic terms, concepts, or explanations that I will need in order to understand your discussion, you must include those details in your long report even if the group of professionals to whom you are writing would already be familiar with them.

As you are crafting the long report, do not assume an imaginary role. Just be yourself, and write as an advanced student in that field who has researched the topic, has reached an educated conclusion, and is reporting the information for the benefit of the profession and society.

The only exception to writing for an on-the-job audience will come in the Letter of Transmittal. The Letter of Transmittal should be addressed to me, your technical writing instructor, since I am the immediate audience to whom you are submitting the long report.

Content Considerations

Over the course of the Research Project Proposal Memo and Short Report Memo units, you have been studying the basic components of this Long Recommendation Report. Therefore, some of what you have

written on your topic thus far will be revised and incorporated into your long report, but you will also add further information.

You have already crafted the following materials for your previous writing projects, so you can revise, extend, and reuse them where they are applicable: a description of the current situation and problem, one sentence that clearly states your recommendation, a visual aid, and the discussion of the various benefits of the proposed solution.

In order to flesh out your Long Recommendation Report and properly persuade your audience that the problem you are discussing needs immediate attention through the application of your recommended solution, you should add or explore the following concepts: a historical/contextual overview of your problem and/or recommendation, feasibility considerations, some implementation instructions, a projection of forthcoming developments, an analysis of alternative solutions based on certain criteria, and whatever else your individual topic requires for a comprehensive and convincing recommendation.

Organization of the Report

Front Matter

The front matter should include a Letter of Transmittal, Title Page, Table of Contents, List of Illustrations, and Abstract (in this order). Each of these components should begin on a separate page, and the Table of Contents, List of Illustrations, and Abstract should each start with a centered heading. Use lower case Roman numerals (i, ii) to paginate the front matter. Since the Letter of Transmittal is meant to present the long report rather than being a specific component of it, you should not paginate it. Additionally, you should not list a page number on the Title Page, even though it is considered to be page i of the document. So, the Table of Contents will be the first page to have the page number displayed, and it should be labeled as page ii. (See pages 366-368 in *Successful Writing at Work* to solidify these concepts.) Place all of the page numbers in the header in the top right corner.

Text of the Report

The text of the report should include the Introduction, Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendation sections. Any of these sections can be divided into subsections with informative subheadings, but the Discussion section is the only section in which you are required to subdivide the material. For example, you might choose to subdivide your Introduction by including separate subsections to discuss the problem or current situation, the history of the recommendation, and the recommendation itself. However, your topic not might require such detailed development in the Introduction; if this is the case, you would condense the Introduction to two to three paragraphs under this general heading and then move on to the Discussion section.

While the Introduction, Conclusion, and Recommendation sections may be brief enough that they do not require subdivisions, the Discussion section (which should constitute the bulk of the text of the report) must be subdivided in order to make the material more accessible for the reader. The way you subdivide the Discussion section will be dependent upon the topic that you are writing about and the concepts that you need to cover in order to convince your audience of on-the-job professionals to enact your recommendation. Therefore, you might include sections regarding the components, implementation, operation, or cost analysis of your recommendation. (Please note that these categories are very general and should be adapted or replaced according to the needs of

your topic.) However, no matter what your topic is, your Discussion section must include a subsection that discusses the benefits or future positive consequences that will result from your recommendation being enacted as well as a subsection that provides some basic, technical information about the solution and/or its implementation that professionals in your field will need to know in order to make an educated decision about whether or not to adopt the solution.

The text of the report should total seven to nine, typed, double-spaced pages in 12 point Times New Roman font. As you are formatting the text of the report, remember that the Introduction should begin on a new page (rather than being on the same page with the Abstract). However, you **SHOULD NOT** start new pages for the Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendation sections. See the sample long report on pages 366-380 of *Successful Writing at Work* for a clearer picture of this formatting.

Back Matter

The back matter should include your lists of sources. You **MUST** have a Works Cited (MLA) or References page (APA), and this bibliography should **ONLY** list the sources that have been cited in the long report. You also have the option of including a Works Consulted page if you have sources that you read for background research but have not chosen to cite within the text of the long report. Remember that the Works Consulted page is not required, but it will create a more complete report. Each bibliography that is included should begin on a new page.

Visuals

Visual aids should be integrated into the text of your long report to clarify, support, and elaborate upon complex and crucial points. Your long report must include at least one helpful visual aid. As you incorporate this visual into your discussion, remember to follow the guidelines for identifying, citing, inserting, introducing, and interpreting visuals that we discussed during the Short Report Memo unit. See the PowerPoint on Blackboard if you need to refresh your memory about these considerations.

Source Requirements

You must incorporate relevant and useful information **from at least eight sources** into this report, and **at least two of these eight sources must come from the ISU Library databases**. As you incorporate your source material into the text of the report, remember that you must summarize and paraphrase the material thoroughly and document your quotes fully to avoid plagiarism. If you are unsure what this entails, review my “Brief Review of Paraphrases and Direct Quotations” document in the Long Recommendation Report section of our Blackboard course.

Additionally, you must carefully document your source material using proper parenthetical citations within the text as well as full bibliographic entries on your Works Cited (MLA) or References (APA) page. Your parenthetical citations and bibliographic entries should be formatted using the current guidelines for either MLA or APA format. Use the *Purdue OWL* website or my “MLA and APA Bibliographic Entries Quick Reference Guide” in the Long Recommendation Report section of our Blackboard course to guide you as you create your bibliographic entries.

Formatting Requirements

1. Use Times New Roman 12 point font and 1" margins.
2. Your Letter of Transmittal should be formatted as a standard business letter using full-block, modified-block, or semi-block format. Additionally, it should include the following components: a heading, date line, inside address, salutation, body, complimentary close, signature, and enclosure line. As you craft these components, be sure to develop and format them according to the conventions we discussed in class and that are discussed in your textbook on pages 102-105.
3. All of the pages of your Long Recommendation Report (except for the Letter of Transmittal) should be double-spaced.
4. Provide appropriate headings and subheadings throughout the document. Additionally, be sure to leave one empty line between the paragraphs and between the sections. You should not indent the paragraphs.
5. Insert the page number in the header in the top right corner of the page on every page except for the Letter of Transmittal and the Title Page. Remember that the other front matter materials (Table of Contents, List of Illustrations, and Abstract) should be numbered using lower case Roman numerals (i, ii, etc.). The rest of the report should be numbered with Arabic numerals (1, 2, etc.), beginning with the Introduction as page 1.
6. Think about document design. Clearly designate sections and subsections using whatever format you see fit. You will be graded in part on the ease of access to the information.
7. Print on only one side of the page, and use all black ink.

Due Dates for the Project Components

As we move through our class discussions of the various elements of the Long Recommendation Report, you should finish gathering, reading, and taking notes from the sources that you need in order to discuss your recommendation fully and to persuade your audience members to implement it in their workplace. You will have to develop your own research and writing schedule that allows you to complete your research, plan your long report, and write the long report over the course of the next three weeks. Be careful to give yourself enough time to write the report. Don't try to write it all in one sitting; break up the work to give yourself a chance to rest and reflect at various points throughout the writing process. In other words, **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE NIGHT BEFORE THE ROUGH DRAFT IS DUE TO BEGIN WRITING THIS REPORT.**

The first formal assignment that you submit for the Long Recommendation Report itself will be your rough draft. Your rough draft must be submitted to the Long Recommendation Report - Rough Draft Turn It In link in the Long Recommendation Report section of our Blackboard course by 10:15 pm on **Tuesday, April 24**. For class on **Wednesday, April 25**, you will print a copy of this Turn It In report as well as a copy of your long report from Microsoft Word and bring them to class for peer editing.

Once you have had the opportunity to revise your long report based on your peer's feedback, you will submit the final draft to the Long Recommendation Report – Final Draft Turn It In link in the Long Recommendation Report section of our Blackboard course by 10:15 pm on **Thursday, May 3**. Finally, after checking the Turn It In report and making any necessary changes, you will print a copy of the final draft of your long report and submit it in your writing folder at the beginning of class on **Friday, May 4**.