



# BUSINESS WRITING SKILLS



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## About the Tutorial

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**Business Writing Skills** addresses the need to convey concise and clear communication in professional life — while dealing with colleagues, seniors, and representatives of other organizations. Clear and concise professional writing is vital in many fields – for example, Law, Engineering, Medicine, etc. – where a small misunderstanding could lead to serious consequences.

## Audience

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This tutorial is designed primarily for young professionals who need assistance in writing emails, designing presentations, and putting their thoughts in words.

## Prerequisites

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Before proceeding with this tutorial, you are expected to be open to asking questions and resolving any further queries on the topic by contacting us.

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# 1. Introduction

Business Writing addresses the need to convey clear and concise communication in professional life – while dealing with colleagues, seniors, and representatives of other organizations. Business writing plays a vital role in big organizations where clear and transparent communication is absolutely essential to their functioning. The messages sent, hence, need to be clear, precise, facts-based and unambiguous.

Clear and concise professional writing is vital in many fields, such as in law, engineering, technical manuals and product labels, where misunderstanding could have serious consequences.

## Why Effective Writing?

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Many professionals today, especially at the beginning of their career, seek guidance on the skills needed for formal business writing, as they struggle with basic grammar, spelling, and punctuation. This is a serious limitation that lowers their confidence and makes them hold back when asked to document and present information.

With Effective Writing Skills, they can improve their written communication and manage to present points and ideas that they always used to have but never managed to present. This will increase their confidence and future prospects in the company too.

## How Your Messages Portray You

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Readers always generate an impression of you and your company depending on how they interpret your emails. The purpose of Business Writing is to provide concise communication keeping the reader(s), your company's image, and your image in mind. The words we use and the sentences we write are all crucial in building our perception in the reader's mind.

## Common Errors in Business Writing

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When it comes to business writing, the mandate is – “less is enough”. Many people either use too much content in their writing or supply too less and incomplete information. It is quite a challenge to strike a balance between the two. Let's discuss the most commonly found errors that writers make:

- Many use big, difficult words like “**loggerheads, cumbersome**” for describing things that can easily be explained using much simpler words like “**quarrel, clumsy**”. Not only do these words confuse, they are also vague, in that they don't explain anything clearly.
- Excessively formal style — Sentences like “We would desire it to the best of my intentions that you make your presence felt” have come and gone with the colonial rulers. “**We will be pleased if you come.**” does the same job with half the words and none of the confusion.
- Now, let's come down to the main culprit – typing and spelling errors, like “**sprite, meat, usher**” instead of “**spirit, meet, user**” not only changes the

entire meaning of the sentence but also causes embarrassment. Imagine someone writing – “I will saw you soon”?

- Some professionals go to the other extreme and write very short sentences, and at times, phrases which neither explain complete meaning nor give clear instructions. Examples of such writing are – “**See u today@5, Meeting tomorrow at 10.**”

## The AIA Formula of Persuasive Writing

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If you ever observe the advertisements closely enough, you would notice an interesting pattern – something very eye-catching or interesting happens that immediately grabs your attention. The background description adds to the features and benefits of the product that start to build your interest. Before you know it, the attractive presentation and persuasive style would have created a desire inside you of giving the product at least one try which then leads you towards the action of obtaining the product.

If you have had a similar experience, or know someone who did, you would realize the power of AIDA. In that case, it won't come as a big surprise that it was invented by the marketing industry to attract the customers.

Today, AIDA techniques are used in Business Writing for the same purpose – to draw and impress the reader with your presentation and persuasion. The four steps of AIDA are:

1. **Attention** – Hook the reader with an attention-grabbing sentence.
2. **Interest** – Create interest by mentioning benefits of what the reader likes.
3. **Desire** – Use middle paragraphs to prompt the reader towards action.
4. **Action** – Actions the reader is needed to take to get what he desires.

## Purposeful Writing

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Many people shudder at the mention of writing a manuscript or document that can be circulated in the office. The reasons are obvious. There are simply too many parameters to think of while writing anything for business use. Correct choice of words, sentence structure, grammatical accuracy, correct spelling and usage, and of course, the image that the reader will form about you are all very important points to remember while writing for your co-workers.

Now, how to handle this task? There is an old saying that “**Well begun is half done.**” We need to implement this philosophy in our writing too. We need to find out the purpose behind our writing, which will clear our thoughts on these following questions:

### 1. Who are your readers?

This will help you understand the vocabulary and sentence formation that will be suitable according to the readership.

### 2. What is the purpose of your document?

You need to understand the reason you are writing something.

### 3. Why should the readers read your document?

In other words, you have to think of the message for the readers inside your document.

### 4. What outcomes you expect?

Each action has an equal and opposite reaction, hence for every word you write, there must be an equal reaction created (even if not necessarily opposite). This means that if you want to get the reaction or outcome you desire, your words should be such that they can portray what you want to express clearly.

## Get Started

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Experts claim that the real purpose of business correspondence is to evoke an immediate or late action from your reader(s). Remember the AIDA technique? It ended with Action, and that is the achievement that every piece of writing should target.

An email sent from the Manager is read by the ones in his team, and depending on the clarity of instructions combined with the individual interpretation of each reader, either the desired action is completed or a few areas are left. So, let us now focus on the most important things that one needs to keep in mind while designing any text. While writing a business document, you must:

1. Know what you want to write.
2. Write what you want to achieve.

Knowing these two things will go a long way in giving you the right direction in approaching any content, and one of the most effective ways of finding the right approach is – **brainstorming**.

## Brainstorming

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Brainstorming is the technique of writing any ideas that come to your mind without worrying too much about any logical order, sequence, punctuation and spellings. While brainstorming, one does not need to bother about the order of thoughts and the correct usage of words. Instead, one should focus on collecting as many ideas and data available on that particular subject.

Take your time to think of a topic. Collect your thoughts and start writing them down in random. Let one idea freely lead you to another related idea and so on. This collecting of information will slowly give you an approach to the content. After some more time, a few alternative approaches will be formed. The more you keep looking at the streams of thoughts that you have put on paper, more ideas will form.

Now try to arrange these ideas in a logical flow. Do not start checking for grammar yet. Just try to get a uniform flow. Now all your ideas will be streamlined. Thereafter, do the necessary editing like replacing certain words with more appropriate ones, checking grammar, usage of words, spelling and punctuation.

## 2. Effective Writing – Get Going

With the way the world has evolved around us, every person has to write nowadays, irrespective of his age, job, and designation. Be it for school assignments or filing reports, or signing invoices – everyone writes.

While many of those who "have" to write actually enjoy writing, there are many for whom writing is nothing more than a chore.

The problem with these people is that they don't give themselves a moment to think how to write. As a result of which their writing style is time-consuming, inaccurate, and unsatisfactory.

Just as there are steps to solving a question on Algebra, there are several steps that can be followed for a better written output. Here in this chapter, we will discuss how you should actually initiate the process of writing an effective business document.



### How to Begin

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Of all the steps, the trickiest (and the most frustrating one) is to figure out the beginning. Here are a few tips to start your work quickly:

1. Research to find facts.
2. Brainstorm to jot down all random ideas.
3. Discuss the rough draft with a colleague.
4. Keep an amiable, relaxed tone of writing.
5. Empathize with the reader.
6. Check it and sleep on it.

### Planning and Structure

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Companies produce documents on a regular basis, like annual reports for shareholders, monthly newsletters for clients, and editorials for its employees. Based on the amount of content you are designing, you might be needed to arrange your data in three structures:

#### 1. Time-based Structure

This structure is used when you are writing agendas and minutes, or reports where tasks are allotted and results are charted in a chronological sequence.

## 2. Alphabetical Structure

This structure is used when the document has a large number of separate topics, which need to be put under specific alphabetical order (A – Z). Examples of this would be a glossary of words, or a book on fruits and calories, where the names of fruits are listed alphabetically.

## 3. Topic Structure

The most commonly used structure is where the structure is divided according to topics. For example, a website could design its FAQ page in such a way that it will have three topics to choose from – "delivery status", "complaints" and "payment & refund", with each topic having several questions on that topic.

## Effective Steps to Arrange Content

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There are some effective steps that will help you in arranging the content in a proper structure and fill in the details in a logical flow so that the entire document looks synchronized and complete. These are:

1. The document should have a logical beginning, middle, and end.
2. Organize the body of your message in concise and small (max. 4–5) paragraphs.
3. Modify the content to suit your readers.
4. Never lose focus and the desired outcome of the letter while writing.
5. Don't correct yourself while writing, edit only after brainstorming.
6. Take some time off before you start editing.

Above all, one should always follow a logical sequence while writing a business document in order to ensure the document conveys the right message.

# 3. Readers' Requirements

Business documents have an audience and a specific purpose. Therefore, it is vital to have the readers' requirements in mind before writing a business document. That is the reason almost all letters start with addressing the recipient of the document.

Before you begin writing, know the reason you are writing and what action you want to be taken or accomplished by the reading of this letter.



## **What Readers Want**

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The idea is to write keeping in mind the reader you are sending it to. For any written document to be comprehensive, there are a few questions that you should ask yourself throughout:

1. Who is your reader?
2. What does he want to know?
3. What does he need to know?
4. What does he know of the topic already?
5. What is the expected time to send the document?

Tell the readers early on about the benefits they will gain on reading your document, mention the actions/accomplishments expected of them, and what other information they will gain from reading your document.

# 4. Writing a Document

Writing is similar to starting an assignment. You need to be well-planned, prepared, focused, committed, and most importantly, passionate towards what you are doing. If you implement all the points mentioned, the odds of writing a well-appreciated text will be in your favor.

## Key Points to Writing a Document

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First of all, let's accept the fact that very few people, almost none, can write a document the way they wanted to put it on paper, in the very first attempt. Ideas and memories often come when least expected, and these new ideas keep on changing your document with each subsequent input.

Once you have put your ideas on paper, the next step would be to present it in a simple, logical, connected and clear manner. This needs planning and preparation, for which there are definite steps you can follow:

- Appropriate language
- Plain English (free of jargon)
- Simple sentences
- Relevant content
- Use of bullet points
- Conciseness
- Constant improvement

## Research

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Researching on any topic is a very critical step before writing. Your sources need to be reliable and widely accepted. Before you identify and develop your topic, you should find the context and background information on your topic. This can be done by referring to books, articles, journals, news sources, and magazines. People nowadays use video and sound recordings too. The following steps will help you to:

- Note the important and relevant details.
- Evaluate each point against the topic and the purpose of your document.
- Record the details of your resources and references (i.e. author, title and publishing)
- Arrange the content in a logical order under appropriate headings and sub-headings.

## Purpose

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Knowing your audience will give a lot of help in deciding the content and the way you should approach it. In case you are not aware of your audience, write keeping in mind the demographic, i.e., the target group for your write-up, as online article writers or bloggers do.

Before you begin to write, try to understand always what your reason of writing is. It could be anyone of the below:

- Providing information
- Applying persuasion
- Presenting your opinion
- Proposing ideas
- Sending reports
- Recommendations
- A desired action
- Reaching an accomplishment

For example, if your intention is to sell a product or get someone to subscribe to a service you are providing, or are promoting a cause, ask yourself questions like:

- Who are my potential readers?
- What is the background of my prospective target readership?
- Where do they live and how old are they?
- What are their interests and priorities?

These questions will set the purpose for your writing.

## Writing the Documents

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Once you have identified your audience, try to anticipate the information that your reader might think necessary and include it in your document as you write. It can be done by asking yourself the "WH-questions".

- **Answer the WH questions** – Answering "Who? What? Why? Where? When? Whom? How?" will give you a head-start on the content of the writing.
- **Determine the Start and Finish** – After collecting all possible ideas that you have on the topic, you could go through them and reject a few that won't make sense in your write-up. After that, find out the idea that will leave the maximum impact on reading it, and put that at the start of the article. The end should have the idea that summarizes all the ideas in a clear and crisp manner.
- **Get a second-person opinion** – Always get your written text checked by somebody before submitting it. This lends an objective, second-person

perspective to the review and stops your emotions and indulgence from getting in the way. Don't do this if the content is confidential and not to be shared.

- **Discuss suggestions and include improvements** – Once your friends have suggested some changes, implement the ones you think are relevant.

# 5. The Three Steps of Drafting

## Writing the First Draft

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Think your ideas out loud before writing them down so that the thoughts are expressed clearly. Once you have the initial rough draft, fill in the relevant missing details as per the standard document structure. Write as per your content outline using bullet points and indentation for the headings, sub-headings, and minor headings.

## Re-Drafting

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After completing the first draft, wait for a few days before editing it. Improve the draft by evaluating every word, sentence, and paragraph with an objective of designing concise and correct content.

- Include any omitted necessary details.
- Make sentences tighter and clearer.
- Check that the tense is consistent.
- Correct the spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Use active voice and first person when appropriate.
- Re-arrange the sequence of sentences or paragraphs and check the flow.

## Writing the Final Draft

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Write several drafts, with each one an improvement on the last one. Keep revising the final draft till you are satisfied with the final output. Show it to colleagues and get their feedback. Discuss the suggestions and implement the necessary corrections or changes.

## Writing the Final Copy

- Type the final copy of the document.
- Proofread word by word, and figure by figure.
- Sign and/or type your name or initials at the end of the document.
- Send the document to the reader.

## 6. Adapting The content

While adapting the content to suit the needs of clients and readers, you should try and avoid technical jargons, acronyms, and abbreviations as much as possible. These not only confuse the readers by asking them to guess the meaning, leading to ambiguous interpretations of what's mentioned. A few more of such points are discussed below.

To adapt the content, tone, and language of your documents as per the requirement of the readers, you should follow these simple steps:

- Use 'you' more than you use 'I' or 'we'.
- Write from the readers' point of view.
- Focus on their benefits.
- Your language should not be specific to any gender, race, age and disability.
- Use a professional but friendly tone to give a formal, yet amiable impression.
- Use positive words that are polite, simple and precise



Using second-person pronouns wherever possible, instead of 'I, we', gives a positive tone and makes the reader think that you are empathizing with him. It lets him be in command as he understands this as an exclusive conversation, rather than a piece of text that is aimed at the general crowd.

# 7. 15 Things to Remember in Writing

Now that you have learnt how to structure your thoughts and put your ideas in a sequence, let's learn how to make your writing appear more professional and crisper.

A lot of people have very interesting ideas and they even manage to put them on paper. However their readership doesn't extend beyond a particular level, even though their writing is good and the thoughts were properly mentioned. It is because their writing lacks a proper selection of words, or maybe a proverb like "nipping it in the bud" was used, which readers may not understand.

Let's discuss 15 things that you should keep in mind while proof-reading and revising your writing:

## 1. Clarity

- Your writing must be understood at the first reading. Avoid technical jargon, unfamiliar words, or formal language.

## 2. Formal vs. Modern

- Payment has been duly noted **vs.** we received your check.
- Attached hereto **vs.** please find attached

## 3. Avoid ambiguity

- Words with double meaning or sentences that confuse the readers should be avoided:
- Having eaten the fish, Kiran talked to Karan. (Who had the fish?)

## 4. Avoid colloquialisms

- In a nutshell **vs.** in short
- In this day and age **vs.** today, presently

## 5. Avoid using many words

- Prior to the event **vs.** before
- At this point in time **vs.** now

## 6. Avoid unnecessary repetition

- Absolutely essential
- Combine together

## 7. Include only relevant information

- Omit unnecessary background information.
- Keep the sentences short and simple – 17 words or less.

## 8. Completeness

- Check that all the information the reader will need is included:
- Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

## 9. Correctness

- Check accuracy of grammar and spelling of names of people and places).
- He done it **vs.** he did it.
- It's color has faded **vs.** its color has faded.

**10. Don't Rely on Spell Check**

- Typing 'no/on', 'then/than', 'quite/quiet', 'lose/loose' won't show errors.

**11. Concreteness**

- Give specific details.
- Your investment plan will earn high interest.
- Your investment plan will earn 8% interest.

**12. Convincing**

- Use language that is believable. Avoid exaggeration and superlatives.
- Always vs. Usually
- Never vs. Rarely

**13. Courtesy**

- Display good manners in your writing. Passive voice should be used when communicating bad news to avoid negative overtones.
- We can't agree to the terms and conditions outlined in the contract.
- Some discussion regarding the terms and conditions will need to be done.

**14. Write with the reader in mind.**

- Sexist – Chairman, businessman
- Condescension – 'Of course', 'Obviously'

**15. Using Bullet Points**

- Communicates your message in an easy and clear manner
- Highlights the most important information.

## 8. Effective eMail Writing

Email is widely used as a form of inexpensive yet highly effective business communication tool. Emails are rarely taken print-outs of, and are used as soft copies because it is easy to archive and retrieve emails. The reason of its popularity is its ease of access, which everyone in an organization starting from the CEO to the janitor can use.

Emails are an efficient way to communicate information in a well-presented, easy to read and professionally appropriate manner. Many people quote lack of time as a reason to forward substandard emails that range from incomplete to incomprehensible.

Many people mistake emails with text messaging, or at least their approach towards writing emails suggests so. Taking that to be the case, let's discuss the difference between a text conversation and email writing.

- **Text Message Conversation** – In a text message conversation, two people can exchange information, share details, provide corrections, and ask for clarifications in a rapid back-and-forth manner of communication.
- **Email** – Compared to this, emails are read by professionals who, depending on their work, may get anything between 20 to 200 emails a day. They neither want to engage in a back-and-forth conversation, nor have the time to ask for details multiple times. They just want to understand the content of the email, read out the instructions, process the information, get the task done, and empty the "unread" section of the inbox.

Keeping this in mind, let's discuss some **tricks to write effective emails**:

- Plan your message.
- Use the subject line to grab reader's attention.
- Keep your message short and clear.
- Don't type your entire message in lower case.
- Proofread your message before sending it and assume accountability.
- If you are angry, take a few minutes to cool down before sending an email.
- Don't type your message in capitals. Capitals are considered to be SHOUTING.

In certain cases, **emails may not be suitable**. Prefer to call someone when:

- You have to discuss personal, sensitive or confidential information.
- You are going to give bad news.
- Your message is complex and meaning might be lost in the wordings.
- You need an immediate response.

## Legal Risks of Emails

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Emails are the preferred mode of communication for a lot of workplaces, and this means they carry a lot of information that could be confidential. The security and confidentiality of the information in the emails is the joint responsibility of both the sender and the recipients. Companies have strict guidelines to safeguard their documents and their contents. Let's discuss some of the most commonly followed guidelines to prevent the misuse of emails.



### **You and your company will be held liable for numerous legal suits if:**

- You send or forward emails with offensive content.
- You send an attachment that has a virus.
- You forward the sender's email to another person without permission.
- You try to forge others' emails or send emails from others' accounts.
- You try to conceal your identity from the receivers when sending email.
- You copy a message belonging to another person without permission.

## **Format of a Formal Email**

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While most of us send informal emails to friends that might contain grammatical mistakes in them, the same is not true when writing to colleagues, especially when we want to make a good impression, as we have to be more careful and diplomatic this time. Here are some general tips on the right format of an email:

### **Background**

The default white background should be used for all emails. Colored backgrounds or scroll designs are deemed unprofessional and distracting.

### **Font**

Preferred fonts are Times New Roman or Arial, font size-12.

### **Font Color**

Font should be navy blue or black only.

### **Contact details**

Official contact information like name, designation, email id, contact number, company logo, and address of correspondence should be mentioned in the signature area. Personal statements are best avoided.

### **First name and surname**

They should be mentioned in the same font as used in the body of the email, only two font sizes larger. Cursive fonts are not recommended.

### **Signature**

The following information should be supplied in the same font and size as the body of the email.

- Designation
- Department
- Company Name & Address
- Landmark and ZIP Code.
- Contact Number
- Email address
- Company telephone number
- Company fax number
- Company URL
- Disclaimer

**Example:**

Vineet Nanda  
Lead, Learning & Development  
Soft Skills  
Tutorialspoint Pvt. LTD.  
Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad  
Beside UCO Bank, 500033  
Ph: 91 40 23542835  
Fax: 91 40 23542836  
vineet.nanda@tutorialspoint.com  
<http://www.tutorialspoint.com/>

**Disclaimer (with example)**

Use a disclaimer at the end of your email signature in standard font, size-8:

**YOU MUST READ THIS NOTICE**

The information contained in this email and any attachments is confidential and may be subject to copyright or other intellectual property protection. You are not authorized to use or disclose this information other than with the express consent of the sender



## Example of Email

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<b>To</b> < <a href="mailto:md@tutorialspoint.com">md@tutorialspoint.com</a> >
<b>Cc</b> < <a href="mailto:hr@tutorialspoint.com">hr@tutorialspoint.com</a> >
<b>Subject:</b> Reply on Interior Decor   Finalizing date and time for meeting

Dear Sir

I received your email with instructions to contact an Interior Decor firm. Accordingly, I had contacted Hasta La' Vista, one of the most reputed organizations in delivering Behavioral Training, Mode Assessment, Psychometric Analysis, among others.

They have replied to my email and are pleased at the prospect of us working together. They have requested me to schedule a meeting for their representatives so that they could visit us and explain the rest of the details in person. I have sent you their Terms & Conditions as a PDF attachment named **Terms** to this email. Kindly go through it and reply.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you. Have a nice day.

With Regards

Vineet Nanda

(Lead, Learning & Development in Soft Skills)



Email- [vineet.nanda@tutorialspoint.com](mailto:vineet.nanda@tutorialspoint.com)

Website- [www.tutorialspoint.com](http://www.tutorialspoint.com)

Address- Tutorialspoint (I) Pvt. Ltd., 388-A , Road no 22, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, A.P.

### YOU MUST READ THIS NOTICE

The information contained in this email and any attachments is confidential and may be subject to copyright or other intellectual property protection. You are not authorized to use or disclose this information other than with the express consent of the sender

# 9. Business Letter Writing

Business Letters are written to express good news, bad news, thanks, acknowledgement, invitation, request, Problem, denial or complaints. It is usually sent via email and bears the company letterhead.

A business letter is divided into three parts:

1. **Introduction** - Opens with greetings and/or references to previous mails.
2. **Middle** - Contains details and added information.
3. **Conclusion** - Suggests or mentions action to be taken and the ending.



## Format of a Business Letter

---

A business letter normally contains the following elements:

- a) **Letterhead**
- b) **Organization name**
- c) **Address**
- d) **Telephone number**
- e) **Date**
- f) **Reader's name (Position preferred)**
- g) **Address**

- h) **Dear Mr. /Ms. [reader's name]**
- i) **Your ref. id (if in use) and Subject**
- j) **Introduction**
- k) **Body**
- l) **Conclusion**
- m) **With Regards**
- n) **Writer's signature**
- o) **Name**
- p) **Position**

## Example – Business Letter

---



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📍 Tutorials Point (India) Pvt Ltd  
388-A, Road No-22, Jubilee Hills  
Hyderabad, AP - INDIA, 500033

### **Tutorialspoint Pvt. LTD.**

Address- 388-A, Road no 22  
Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, A.P.  
500033, Ph: 91 40 23542835

**Date-** 23/04/2015

To

### **The Manager**

Hasta La Vista Café Pvt. LTD  
Address- 318-W, Road no 12  
Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, A.P.  
500033, Ph: 91 40 23542836

**Dear Sir**

**Ref ID:** < IBDFC172187323: Confirmation Call >

**Subject:** < Booking an appointment to discuss Interior Décor >

Greetings from Tutorialspoint

We are a Hyderabad-based educational organization and are one of the fastest growing firms in the world of online training. Your firm was referred to us by one of our associate firms and had complimented your commendable job.



We would like to avail your services for the purpose of interior decoration of our office premises. We would like to meet your representatives, hence kindly let us know of a date and time for the meeting so that we discuss the details.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon. Have a nice day.

With Regards

**(Insert signature)**

Vineet Nanda

Lead, Learning & Development

Soft Skills, Tutorialspoint Pvt. LTD.

# 10. Memo Writing

The primary purpose of writing a memo is to support decision-making by documenting a reference for future use. It also helps in conveying information, presenting an informal report, and proposing a solution to a problem.

A business memo is appropriate to use when making company announcements such as employee appointments, promotions and changes in company policies.

## Format of a Memo

---

A memo normally includes the following elements:

- a) **Organization name** – in the letterhead.
- b) **Memo Title** – at the top of the page.
- c) **Attachments** – documents attached to the memo for reference.
- d) **Summary** – placed at the beginning of the memo, should condense the subject to five or ten lines. It should not contain jargon or highly technical language.
- e) **To** – Reader's full name (include honorary titles, but keep generic titles like 'Mr.', 'Ms.' out. The 'To' line negates salutation usages like 'Dear'.



- f) If the number of readers exceed five, mention them at the end of the memo under 'Distribution List' and refer to it on the 'To' line. For example - **To: Refer Distribution List on page 14.**
- g) **From** - The name and designation of the sender is mentioned here. It negates complimentary closes like 'With Regards'.

- h) **Date** - Mentioning the date helps in tracking the memo.
- i) **Subject** - Mention the topic in a few words (5-6) but it should clearly state the purpose.
- j) **Message** - This section contains Introduction, Discussion (contains 2-3 middle paragraphs mentioning the details), and a Conclusion.
  - **Introduction** - States the memo's purpose and scope. In the case of good news, bad news, refusal, rejection or approval, a short message is mentioned here before providing the details in the Discussion Section.
  - **Discussion** - Details of the problem, the approach to solving it, analysis, evaluation, and recommendations are mentioned here.
  - **Conclusion** - Rounds up the main points and provides necessary action and directions for the readers.
- k) **Distribution list** - Names on the distribution list are usually typed in alphabetical order. However, if one of the individuals clearly outranks the others, place that name first.
- l) **Writer's initials** - A memo is completed by the writer's initials, not his/her signature, immediately after the last sentence.

## Example of Memo

---



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388-A, Road No-22, Jubilee Hills  
Hyderabad, AP - INDIA, 500033

**Memo Title:** <Meeting with Hasta La Vista for Interior Décor>

**Attachments:** <Company Brochure and Quotation List>

**Summary** - Meeting representatives of Hasta La Vista for the purpose of interior decoration of our office premises.

**To:** <Mohtahsim M., Kiran K. Panigrahi, Gopal K Verma, Manisha Shejwal, Anaadi>

**From:** <Vineet Nanda>

**Date:** 23/04/2015

**Subject:** Meeting with Hasta La Vista today at 6:00PM in Meeting Room- 1

As per our earlier discussion dated 12/01/2015, we were planning to renovate the interior of our office. The decision taken at the end of that meeting was to contact an interior décor firm.



Hasta La Vista is a Hyderabad-based interior décor organization and it is one of the fastest growing firms in the business.

We are planning to hire their services for the purpose of interior decoration of our office premises. We will be meeting their representatives today at 6:00PM in Meeting Room-1.

Looking forward to your active participation. Thank you.

**V.N.**

# 11. Minutes of Meeting

Also known as **protocol** or **note**, minutes are the live written record of a meeting. They include the list of attendees, issues raised, related responses, and final decisions taken to address the issues. Their purpose is to record what actions have been assigned to whom, along with the achievements and the deadlines.



## Format of Minutes of Meeting

---

A minutes of meeting normally includes the following elements:

- a) **Name of the company** - to the top-left of the page.
- b) **Date** - to the top-right of the page.
- c) **Topic** - after two return keys; Center-aligned.
- d) **Attendees** - Name and designation (2 columns of a table).
- e) **Absentees** - name, roles, reasons for absenteeism. (3 columns)
- f) **Agenda at hand** - topic to be discussed.
- g) **Issues raised** - along with the names of the speakers.
- h) **Suggestions** - made along with the names of the speakers.
- i) **Decision** - the outcome of the meeting.
- j) **Task List** - task allotted and the respective allottee.
- k) **Future Meetings** - the date and topic of the next meeting.

## Example – Minutes of Meeting



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 Hyderabad, AP – INDIA, 500033

### Tutorials point Pvt. LTD.

Address- 388-A, Road no 22  
 Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, A.P.  
 500033, Ph: 91 40 23542835

**Date - 23/04/2015**

**Topic-** Meeting with Hasta La Vista representatives at 6:00PM

#### Attendees:

Name	Designation
Mohtahsim M.	Managing Director
Kiran Kumar Panigrahi	Senior Technical Writer
Gopal K Verma	Technical Manager
Manisha Shejwal	Technical Writer

#### Absentees:

Name	Designation	Reason
Anaadi Sharma	Senior Trainer	Conducting Online .NET Training

**Agenda at hand** - Meeting with Hasta La Vista representatives

**Issues raised** - High Quotation, long duration, hourly mode of payment.

**Suggestions:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Suggestions</b>
Mohtahsim M.	Alternative company
Kiran Kumar Panigrahi	Negotiating mode of payment
Gopal K Verma	Negotiating hours of workload
Manisha Shejwal	Postponing the plan

**Decision** - The representatives were told to consult with their Management and report.

**Task List:**

Gopal K Verma	Taking updates from Hasta La Vista
Manisha Shejwal	Looking for an alternative company

**Future Meetings** - 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 at 4:30 PM in Meeting Room-1

# 12. Agenda Writing

An agenda, also called a **docket** or a **schedule**, is a list of activities in the order they are to be taken up, from the beginning till the adjournment. An agenda helps in preparing for a meeting by providing a list of items and a clear set of topics, objectives, and time frames that are needed to be discussed upon.

## Format of an Agenda

---

An Agenda normally includes the following elements:

- a) **Meeting Agenda Title** - at the top; preferably center-aligned
- b) **Meeting Information** - Description of the purpose
- c) **Objective** - description of Agenda
- d) **Date** - for maintaining records of correspondence
- e) **Location** - the place of meeting
- f) **Time** - the actual time of commencement of the meeting
- g) **Meeting Type** - brainstorming or Discussion or Assessment
- h) **Time of Arrival** - time to begin the meeting
- i) **Time of Adjournment** - time the meeting ends
- j) **Attendees** - Number of people present, with their names
- k) **Preparation for Meeting:**
  - o **Please Read** - instructions to be followed
  - o **Please bring** - things supposed to be carried that day
  - o **Action Items:**

Last Action	Responsible Authority	Due Date
New Action	Responsible Authority	Due Date
  - o **Other notes** - other instruction or information to be taken down.

## Example – Agenda Writing



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### Update after meeting with Hasta La Vista representatives

**Meeting Information** - Update after meeting representatives of Hasta La Vista.

**Objective** - for the purpose of interior decoration of our office premises.

**Date**- 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2015

**Location**- Meeting Room-1

**Time**- 4:30 PM

**Meeting Type**- Discussion

**Time of Arrival**- 6:00 PM

**Time of Adjournment**- 8:30 PM

**Attendees**- Mohtahsim M., Kiran K. Panigrahi, Gopal K Verma, Manisha Shejwal

### Preparation for Meeting:

**Please Read** - Hasta La Vista Company Brochure, Quotation Document

**Please bring** - Competitor Company's quotation, hourly rates analysis

### Action Items:

#### **Due Action:**

Updates from Hasta la Vista	Gopal K Verma	30 <sup>th</sup> April, 2015
Find Hasta la Vista's competitor	Manisha Shejwal	30 <sup>th</sup> April, 2015

#### **New Action:**

Send email to their Head of Marketing	Manisha Shejwal	5 <sup>th</sup> May, 2015
---------------------------------------	-----------------	---------------------------

**Other notes** - Products to purchase for the interior décor.

# 13. Business Case Writing

The objective of a business case or proposal is to identify the requirements of an organization and propose strategies to meet them. It is also used to evaluate results to get optimal success. A business case is document that is written to convince a decision maker to approve the action suggested in the case.

## Business Case Format

---

A business case normally includes the following elements:

- a) **Business Case Title** - the Topic of proposal
- b) **Executive Summary** - description of the proposal
- c) **Current Process** - the procedures currently in operation
- d) **Reason to Change** - profits that will be brought by the changes
- e) **Risks** - factors that company needs to watch out for



- f) **Options** - any alternative procedures that can be implemented
- g) **Option Comparison** - Risk vs. Profit analyses of all options
- h) **Recommendation** - the final option to implement, after changes
- i) **Action** - the necessary steps to implement the changes
- j) **Approval Requested** - what actions need approval from whom

## Example – Business Case Writing



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### Feedback on Interior Décor by Hasta La Vista

#### Executive Summary:

We have handed over the task of renovating the interior of our office to Hasta La Vista, a reputed Hyderabad-based interior décor organization.

#### Current Process

We are currently paying Hasta La Vista an hourly remuneration of INR 22,000 for their 350-hour interior décor Business. This includes five hours of decorating and redesigning the office premises. Days of operation are seven days a week, and hours of operation are the five hours between 11:00AM and 4:00PM.

#### Reason to Change:

Output not according to client's requirements. Excessive décor materials used and plenty wasted.

**Risks** - new décor designer might reinstall previous state and undo all renovations.

**Options** - Asking the new décor company to continue designing from the same template and not enforcing a new design.

**Option Comparison** - Loss in enthusiasm of new company might lead to drop in productivity but fixed monthly compensation and more number of daily hours would balance productivity.

**Recommendation** - Terminate contract with Hasta La Vista. Contact Rye's Décor.

**Action** - Call representatives and technicians of Rye' Décor and let them inspect premises and submit a final report with assessment.

#### Approval Requested:

- Calling Rye's Décor- approval needed from HR, Admin
- Meeting Rye's Décor representatives- approval needed from the MD
- Finalizing quotation for the renovation- approval needed from HR, Accounts.

# 14. Media Release Writing

A media release, also known as **press release**, **news release**, or **press statement**, is a written or recorded communication directed at the members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something newsworthy to the public.

## Format of a Media Release

---

A media release normally contains the following elements:

- a) **Company Logo and Address** - mentioned in the letterhead
- b) **Date** - the date of press release
- c) **Timing** - the time of the event
- d) **Release Date** - the date of the event mentioned
- e) **Title** - a short one-line description of the event
- f) **Location** - the place of event
- g) **Introduction** - A description of the event and the reasons.
- h) **What** - what is the event all about?
- i) **Why** - why was the event organized?
- j) **When** - when is the event organized to be held?
- k) **Who** - who are the people visiting the event?
- l) **About** - brief description of the company
- m) **Contact Details** - where to contact for further detail

## Example – Media Release

---



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**Date of event-** 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2015  
**Timing of event-** 4:00PM  
**Media Release Date-** 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2015

### **Grand Opening of Tutorialspoint Pvt. LTD.**

**Venue:**

Tutorialspoint Pvt. LTD.  
Address- 388-A, Road no 22  
Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, A.P.  
500033, Ph: 91 40 23542835

**Introduction-** Tutorialspoint Pvt. LTD will be opening after renovations and we invite all of you to witness the new look of our workplace.

- **What** - Interior Décor of Tutorialspoint Pvt. LTD.
- **Why** - to welcome people to witness our new-improved premises.
- **When** - on 30th April, 2015 from 4:00PM onwards at company premises.
- **Who** - employees with their families, media, guests, Prince Dance Group

**About** - The tutorialspoint.com is a dedicated website to provide quality online education in the domains of Computer Engineering academics, Information Technology, Computer Languages and Management. This website is started by an AMU alumni, Mr. Mohtashim, by launching a single tutorial on HTML in year 2006. At present, this website is developed and maintained by Tutorials Point (I) Pvt. Ltd., which established on 12th June, 2014.

**Contact Details:**

**Address:** 388-A, Road no 22, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad Telangana, INDIA-500033



# 15. Résumé Writing

A résumé is a document used to present an applicant's backgrounds and skills while applying for new employment. It's a summary of a candidate's job experience and education.

## Format of a Résumé

---

Although the templates of resumes vary from profession to profession, we will discuss the most widely accepted format here, which consists of:

- a) **Name** - Full name of the applicant without general salutations like Mr., Ms.
- b) **Address** - the permanent address
- c) **Objective** - the aim of your professional life
- d) **Education** - your academic qualification
- e) **Skills** - areas of expertise in your profession
- f) **Programming Languages** - if any
- g) **Software Tools** - Software tools you use in your profession (MS Word, Excel)
- h) **Operating System Platforms** - operating system you use (Windows, Mac)
- i) **Database Management System** - if any
- j) **Personal Skills** - soft skills
- k) **Experience Breakdown** - detailed explanation of your experience
- l) **Achievements & Interests** - Hobbies. Achievements in professional life
- m) **Declaration** - stating all information provided about the applicant as true

**NOTE** - Fields marked (**e, f, i**) will change as per applicant's area of expertise. Points (**g, h**) are considered parts of a general template now, as almost all the companies now expect the candidate to have basic computer proficiency on some specific software tool (MS Word, MS Excel, etc...).

## A Sample Résumé

<b>Vineet Nanda</b>	
1691 – Popular Avenue San Diego, CA 92139	Telephone: 598-654-2356 email1@example.com
<b>Objective</b>	
I want to utilize my skills in problem solving, computer graphics & animation and 3-D graphics applications in as a visual effects technical director.	
<b>Education</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M.S. Computer Science and Engineering Antioch University – Midwest (OH) Major – Computer Graphics and Animations</li> </ul>	GPA: 3.8 (on the scale of 4.00) June 2013 - Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B. Tech. Computer Science &amp; Engineering Air Force Institute of Technology (OH) Major – Software Engineering</li> </ul>	First Class with Distinction August 2008
<b>Skills</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visual Animation: Algorithms and Techniques</li> <li>Object Oriented Programming – VB, C++, Java</li> <li>3-D Image Generation</li> <li>Software Engineering</li> <li>Operating System</li> <li>OOPs Concepts</li> </ul>	
<b>Programming Languages</b>	
Proficient in Java, Java Script, C, C++, HTML, Visual Basic, also worked in PHP	
<b>Software Tools</b>	
Adobe Dreamweaver and Adobe After Effects, MS Visual Studio, Side Effects Houdini, Autodesk Motion Builder, Autodesk Maya	
<b>Operating System Platforms</b>	
Microsoft Windows (all releases), UNIX	

<b>Database Management System</b>
<p>Oracle 9i</p> <p>ODBC</p> <p>JDBC</p>
<b>Personal Skills</b>
<p>Strong Communication Skills, Working in a Team, Quick Learner</p>
<b>Experience</b>
<p><b>Antioch University – Midwest (OH)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Associate – July 2010 to Present</li> <li>• Animation Mentor – December 2010 – June 2011</li> <li>• Computer Animation Assistant – July to December 2012</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements and Interests</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presented a series of 5 lectures on Computer Animation – 2011</li> <li>• Computer Lab Assistant – January 2011 – December 2012</li> <li>• Offered Services as Editor of the Monthly University Magazine – Aril 2011 – December 2011</li> <li>• Football and Hockey</li> </ul>
<b>Declaration</b>
<p>I, hereby, declare that the above written particulars are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.</p>
<p>Signature</p> <p>Place</p> <p>Date</p> <p>Time</p>

# 16. CV Writing

A Curriculum Vitaé (CV) is a written overview of the person's experience and other qualifications that a potential employer seeks about a job-seeker and is supposed to be carried by tenured applicants looking for a job change.

## CV and Résumé – What is the Difference?

---

**A CV can be easily mistaken for a résumé**, however, there is a notable difference. A résumé is supposed to be carried by applicants with no relevant career experience or no experience whatsoever. On the other hand, CVs are to be carried by candidates with relevant experience.



## Format of a CV

---

As with the résumé, we will be discussing a widely accepted template. A CV normally includes the following elements:

- a) **Name** - Full name of the applicant without general salutations like Mr., Ms.
- b) **Address** - the permanent address.
- c) **Summary** - a brief description of what you have achieved in your profession.
- d) **Academic Qualification** - your academic qualification
- e) **Additional Knowledge** - Skills you have acquired beyond your profession.

- f) **Acquired Skills** - Soft Skills
- g) **Programming Languages** - if any
- h) **Software Tools** - Software tools you use in your profession (MS Word, Excel)
- i) **Operating System Platforms** - operating system you use (Windows, Mac)
- j) **Database Management System** - if any
- k) **Personal Skills** - soft skills
- l) **Experience Breakdown** - detailed explanation of your experience
- m) **Achievements & Interests** - Hobbies. Achievements in professional life
- n) **Declaration** - stating all information provided about the applicant as true.

**NOTE** - Fields marked (**e, g, j**) will change as per applicant's area of expertise. Points (**h, i**) are considered parts of a general template now, as almost all the companies now expect the candidates to have basic computer proficiency on some specific software tool (MS Word, MS Excel, etc...).

## A Sample CV

<b>Vineet Nanda</b>	<p><b>Address:</b> 1022 Brannon Street Los Angeles, CA 90014</p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 231-215-6582</p> <p><b>Cell:</b> 635-845-5425</p> <p><b>Email:</b> kathyjohnson@example.com</p>															
<b>Summary</b>	I am a talented and ambitious individual with a strong aptitude in accounts. With an excellent grip over Microsoft Excel I am keen to start my professional career. I am eager to have further training in the field of accounts while working as assistant to an experienced employer in a fast paced working environment.															
<b>Academic Qualifications</b>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="3"><b>Cathedral Institute of Commerce</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Bachelor of Business Administration</td> <td style="width: 20%;"></td> <td style="width: 20%;">2009 – 2013</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>GPA: 3.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><b>Streamline High School</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mathematics</td> <td></td> <td>2005 – 2009</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Cathedral Institute of Commerce</b>			Bachelor of Business Administration		2009 – 2013			GPA: 3.5	<b>Streamline High School</b>			Mathematics		2005 – 2009
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Bachelor of Business Administration		2009 – 2013														
		GPA: 3.5														
<b>Streamline High School</b>																
Mathematics		2005 – 2009														

	Statistics	A+						
	Fundamentals of Economics	A						
	Psychology	A						
	Geography	B+						
	Civics	A						
		A						
<b>Additional Knowledge</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Accounting</th> <th>Professional</th> <th>Personal</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budgeting</li> <li>Pro-forma Invoices</li> <li>Pay Orders</li> <li>Auditing</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microsoft Excel</li> <li>Microsoft Access</li> <li>Data Entry</li> <li>Recordkeeping</li> <li>Finance Analysis</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teamwork</li> <li>Listening Skills</li> <li>Communication</li> <li>Time Management</li> <li>Meeting Deadline</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Accounting	Professional	Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budgeting</li> <li>Pro-forma Invoices</li> <li>Pay Orders</li> <li>Auditing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microsoft Excel</li> <li>Microsoft Access</li> <li>Data Entry</li> <li>Recordkeeping</li> <li>Finance Analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teamwork</li> <li>Listening Skills</li> <li>Communication</li> <li>Time Management</li> <li>Meeting Deadline</li> </ul>	
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<b>Acquired Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well Organized</li> <li>Detail Oriented</li> <li>Business Savvy</li> <li>Excellent Communicator</li> <li>Processing Invoices</li> <li>E-Commerce</li> <li>Knowledge of online business transactions</li> <li>Online Banking</li> </ul>							
<b>Hobbies and Interests</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Study of accounts related book to get up to date knowledge</li> <li>Creating accounts related documents templates in MS Excel</li> <li>Attending Seminars</li> <li>Public Speaking</li> <li>Swimming</li> </ul>							
<b>References</b>	Will be provided on request							

<b>Declaration</b>	I, hereby, declare that the above written particulars are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
	<b>Signature</b>

# 17. Report Writing

A business report is primarily used to communicate detailed information on a specific topic, unlike a letter that conveys messages in a summarized form.

Reports are frequently written in a chronological manner from one reporting period to another so that information published in successive reports can be compared. A report may be published or sent to individuals outside of the company.

## Format of a Business Report

---

A formal business report normally contains the following elements:

- a) **Title Section** – includes the Table of Contents and definitions of terms used. Optional details like the writer's name and date prepared on may be mentioned.
- b) **Summary** – an overview of all relevant information on major points, conclusions, and recommendations. It's a good practice to write this at the end to include all the last minute modifications.
- c) **Introduction** – specifies the reason the report was written and the problem it addresses; generally it is the first page of the report.



- d) **Body** – the main section of the report; it includes industry jargon. Information is arranged in sections, in decreasing order of importance.
- e) **Conclusion** – this, along with Summary, is the most read section of the report, hence the language should be simple and specific.
- f) **Recommendations** – actions to be followed in an increasing order of priority.
- g) **Appendices** – technical details and industry facts to support your conclusions.

## Example of Report Writing



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 388-A, Road No-22, Jubilee Hills  
 Hyderabad, AP – INDIA, 500033

<b>Table of Contents</b>	
Introduction	1
Brief History Of Our Business Model	3
Achievements In The Last Decade	5
Last Year's Mission Accomplishments	9

### Summary:

#### Introduction:

Tutorials Point originated from the idea that there exists a class of readers who respond better to online content.

#### Brief History of Our Business Model:

15 million readers read 35 million pages every month. Our content and resources are freely available and we prefer to keep it that way.

#### Achievements in the Last Decade

The journey commenced with a single tutorial on HTML in 2006 and elated by the response it generated, we worked towards adding fresh tutorials to our repository.

#### Body:

The content on the website are created by highly skilled professionals. A number of freelancers helped us in the growth of the contents.

#### Conclusion:

Our mission is to deliver Simply Easy Learning with clear, crisp, and to-the-point content on a wide range of technical and non-technical subjects.

#### Recommendations:

Design improved content.  
 Exercise efforts on networking.

#### Appendices:

Information Policies: A Compilation of Position Statements, Principles, Statutes, and Other Pertinent Statements". Coalition for Networked Information. Retrieved 24 June 2013.

# 18. Data Visualization

**Data Visualization** is used to communicate information clearly and efficiently to users by the usage of information graphics such as tables and charts. It helps users in analyzing a large amount of data in a simpler way. It makes complex data more accessible, understandable, and usable.

**Tables** are used where users need to see the pattern of a specific parameter, while **charts** are used to show patterns or relationships in the data for **one or more** parameters.



## Tips to follow while representing data visually:

- Number all diagrams
- Label all diagrams
- Ensure that units of measurement on axes are clearly labelled
- Place any explanatory information in footnotes below the visual
- Check layouts to ensure maximum clarity

## Pros and Cons of Data Visualization

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Here are some pros and cons to representing data visually:

### Pros

- It can be accessed quickly by a wider audience.
- It conveys a lot of information in a small space.
- It makes your report more visually appealing.



### Cons

- It can misrepresent information – if an incorrect visual representation is made.
- It can be distracting – if the visual data is distorted or excessively used.

# 19. Common Layout Mistakes

A business document, by definition, should be crisp and to-the-point. It should be presented in a layout that is strictly professional. We have listed here a few common layout mistakes that one should avoid while preparing a business document.

## **Avoid unnecessary elements**

Don't fill up all blank space with pictures and quotes unless they are absolutely indispensable.

## **Beware of excessive content**

Use short and clear sentences. Avoid colors and images unless they are relevant to the text.

## **Don't overuse symmetry**

Symmetrically arranged tables look boring after a while. Use differently-shaped pictures to break symmetry. Left-aligned text is more readable than central.



## **Pay attention to uniformity**

Maintain a uniform font, font size, font color and formatting throughout the document.

## **Write with hierarchy**

Start with the most important information in the beginning and continue with the decreasing order of importance.

## **Avoid excessive multimedia**

When used inappropriately, animations, videos, and sound can all distract the readers, instead of attracting them to the text. Keep it simple.

## 20. Common Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
intro	introduction
app.	appendix
Biblio.	bibliography
c.	chapter; circa, about, approximately
n.	note
ed.	editor
e.g.	for example
esp.	especially
et al.	et alii, and others
etc.	et cetera
no.	number
fn.	footnote
fig.	figure
i.e.	that is
infra	below (in the text)
p	page
par.	paragraph
s.	sect., section