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Topic: Informal Business Reports

Subtopic: Short Informational Reports

Content Creator Name: Nathan Hurwitz

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Mutliple-Choice Question Type

<question type="mc">

1. Which of the following do NOT necessarily need to be included in the summary of a short informational report?
- a. a description of the purpose of the report.
 - b. a point-by-point recapitulation of each point made in the report.
 - c. highlights of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations contained in the report.
 - d. a brief overview of the data, the sources of the data, and the methods of analyzing the data.

Analysis:

- a. Incorrect. A description of the purpose of the report should begin your summary, so that all of the information that follows is viewed from that perspective.
- b. Correct. You only need to touch on the major points in the summary, you do not need to recapitulate each one.
- c. Incorrect. Summaries should always include highlights of your findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
- d. Incorrect. Including a brief overview of the data and methods of analyzing it can help support the conclusions and recommendations that you will also offer in this summary.

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2. What is the essential goal of a short informational report?
- a. to justify future actions (new hires, new products, restructuring, etc).
 - b. to get pertinent information to the necessary in-house readers quickly and efficiently.
 - c. to create yardsticks, by which your readers can measure and compare plans of action.
 - d. to create a paper trail of all important events and transactions against possible future legal actions.

Analysis:

- a. Incorrect. These kinds of justification reports are short analytical reports, rather than short informational reports.

- b. Correct. Short informational reports are written to get pertinent and up to date information to necessary in-house readers quickly and efficiently.
- c. Incorrect. Yardstick reports are short analytical reports rather than short informational reports.
- d. Incorrect. If these reports were merely records for legal purposes, there would be no need to distribute these reports.

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3. Which factor defines the style, type, and content of short informational reports?

- a. the distribution list.
- b. the template.
- c. your conclusions.
- d. the purpose of the report.

Analysis:

- a. Incorrect. Who your report is going to receive and read your report may be important, but it should have no effect on the style, type, or content of your report.
- b. Incorrect. The template will not define the style, type, and content of your report. The template should be chosen based on the needs of the report rather than the other way around.
- c. Incorrect. The style, type, and content of your report will be chosen long before you have reached and written your conclusions.
- d. Correct. The purpose of the report will define everything about the report. Why you are doing determines what you will do.

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4. What kind of reports would recurring reports that would discuss weekly customer calls, or report back on the results of conferences or short trips?

- a. this could be any kind of internal report or document.
- b. yardstick reports.
- c. short analytical reports.
- d. short informational reports.

Analysis:

- a. Incorrect. There are many kinds of internal reports, each defined by their specific need. These kinds of reports are dealing with text-driven material addressed to an in-house readership, they are a specific type of report.
- b. Incorrect. Yardstick reports allow the reader to compare two or more sets of data long the same criteria, that is not the goal of the reports mentioned in this question.
- c. Incorrect. These are not analytical reports as they are reports of events, rather than analysis of numerical data.
- d. Correct. These reports all fall into the category of short informational reports. They share regular or period material to an in-house audience regarding material that is text-based rather than numerical-based.

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5. Most organizations require activity reports that update previous reports at regular intervals. What category of report would this fall into?

- a. short analytic reports.
- b. short informational reports.
- c. letter format report.
- d. justification report.

Analysis:

- a. Incorrect. Short analytic reports deal numerical material rather than text-driven material. Activity update reports are more often driven by text rather than numbers or visuals.
- b. Correct. Activity reports are short informational reports, as they primarily deal with text-driven material rather than visual or numerical material
- c. Incorrect. Letter format reports are short reports that are usually distributed to readers outside the organization. Updates of this type are usually targeted at an in-house distribution and readership.
- d. Incorrect. Justification reports will analyze and justify certain actions rather than regularly reporting on continuing and ongoing events.

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6. What kind of informal business reports usually contain information about changing industry standards, new industrial developments, and shifting standards?

- a. trip, convention, and conference reports.
- b. interim reports.
- c. [investigative reports.
- d. periodic activity reports.

Analysis:

- a. Correct. Trip, convention, and conference reports take the information learned at outside meetings of industry professionals and share them with the pertinent people within your organization.
- b. Incorrect. Interim reports update people on projects and events that are ongoing.
- c. Incorrect. Investigative reports tend to deliver data for unique situations. These reports are less about data than shifting trends and standards.
- d. Incorrect. Periodic reports are most often updates and reports on regular events. Shifting industry standards and developments are irregular in their occurrence.

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7. Which of the following is not likely to be found on a progress report delivered as an informal in-house report?

- a. a reminder of the scope of the project.
- b. an analysis of the advisability of continuing the project.
- c. a description of work completed to date.
- d. a list of anticipated problems.

Analysis:

- a. Incorrect. Any progress report should include a reminder of the original scope of the project to help the reader put the rest of the report in focus and in context.
- b. Correct. While there are appropriate documents for questioning the advisability of continuing ongoing projects, the progress report is not the appropriate vehicle.
- c. Incorrect. Any progress report should include a clear list of work completed to date.
- d. Incorrect. Including a list of anticipated problems in a progress report can help prepare for those problems.

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Level of difficulty: Difficult

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True/False Question Type

<question type="true-false">

8 An investigative report is a short informational report that delivers information that comes up in unique situations and does not tend to offer interpretations of the data or recommendations.

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Correct. These reports are on an as-needed basis and usually include an introduction which expresses the problem, a body which deals with three to five aspects of the problem, and a summary.

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Incorrect. The question contains a proper definition of an investigative report.

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