

ENGLISH 2950
PROJECT #5

ANALYTICAL REPORT
"Global Issues, Challenges, and Conflicts in the World of Work"

Overview of the Analytical Report

This report requires conducting research, collecting viable source material, reporting gathered information, and compiling it into a visually-enhanced report with the expected front matter and end matter (*A Concise Guide to Technical Communication*, Chapter 12 -- specifically pages 267-282).

Description of Assignment

Select an event somehow related to a field of study that is of interest to you as your starting point of investigation for this report. The topic you select is thus to be an *industry-related event involving possible ethical workplace infractions, misconduct, conflicts, etc.* You will examine a particular issue/event to determine what caused the ensuing problem/conflict. And, finally, you will offer recommendations to ensure a similar incident does not reoccur.

Possible Workplace Issues to Investigate for the Analytical Report

- Instances of workplace violence
- Unionization
- Outsourcing
- Case of sexual harassment
- Mishandling of finances
- Insider trading
- Poor and/or dangerous working conditions
- Unfair/illegal hiring practices,
- Unfair/unethical/illegal termination practices
- Product recalls

Analysis

The "Long Report" section of Chapter 12, in *A Concise Guide to Technical Communication*, describes the types of situations that typically lead to this kind of investigation and reporting. Three types of analytical reports are discussed: "causal analysis" (*Why does X happen?*), "comparative analysis" (*Is X or Y better for our needs?*), and "feasibility analysis" (*Is this a good idea?*). Your report should develop from one of these three approaches. A model report appears in

never-operated head from Midland, Michigan, was the correct decision. You might want to justify why the Nuclear Regulatory Commission recommended a new replacement head. You might want to justify – citing Davis-Besse information – the continued use of older nuclear power plants, especially in light of the expiration of forty-year operating license.

Research ("Data Collection")

Information ("secondary sources") for this report must come from relevant, reliable, current sources (reports prepared by companies, academics, government agencies, and private organizations). In keeping with research guidelines, anticipate biases and be able to account for them. Thus, read informed opinions of different experts in the field who publish in professional journals, as well as comments and responses of community leaders published in national and international news sources. You may want to locate information printed in newsletters of organizations, public agencies, or community action groups. You must also collect information first hand ("primary sources") by interviewing someone, distributing a survey, conducting a mini poll, or via an email posting. These two types of information – primary and secondary – will need to be summarized, paraphrased, quoted, analyzed, and interpreted within your report. Locate relevant information from a minimum of 4 different and reputable secondary sources, including professional journals, dissertation abstracts, conference proceedings, online databases, international news sources, or textbooks. Collect relevant information from a minimum of 1 primary source.

BASIC FORMAT FOR REPORTS:

(Completed report should be approximately 16 pages: the BODY of the report should comprise approximately 8 of those total pages; the remaining pages are made up of the indicated front matter and end matter.)

1. Letter of Transmittal (page 272). As indicated, this is an actual business letter. It is written to the readers of your Report, as a way to introduce yourself and your subject matter. It should include a BRIEF summary of your Report's content. It should also include the appropriate heading and closing material. It should be no longer than 1 page.
2. Cover or Title Page (page 272, and sample – page 276).
3. Descriptive Abstract/Executive Summary (page 272-273, and sample – page 276). As shown in the sample, this is a brief summary of the main content of your report. It should be no longer than 1 page. *It contains basically the same summary material included in your letter of transmittal – just written in 'stand-alone' format (rather than letter format).
4. Table of Contents (page 272, and sample – page 276).
5. Body (pages 269-271, and sample – pages 277-281).
6. Conclusions (page 271, and sample – page 281).
7. Recommendations. (These are usually incorporated into the conclusion.)

Chapter 12 (Figure 12.9 – pages 276-282). Your report should look similar to this example.

Guidelines for the Three Optional Analyses

These three approaches reflect different purposes, require different data to be collected, and result in different structures for organizing information in the report. For example, "causal" investigates why the event happened, isolating immediate and ultimate factors. "Comparative analysis" contrasts similar events to determine what differs in the factors or circumstances leading to the event and its outcome. "Feasibility" examines whether a proposed course of action is realistic or desirable, often contrasting several optional courses of action to argue in favor of one or another. *No matter which type of analysis is chosen, the analytical report contains common features that lead to a set of conclusions and recommendations that grow logically out of the data.*

- A "Causal Analysis" using Davis-Besse might investigate the causes of the corrosion that had built up without detection. Such investigations look beyond the superficial and obvious answers in an attempt to determine how the situation came to happen, with the intent being to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future. NRC and First Energy Corporation have prepared reports, as have other groups. Reading through these several reports, you will – as informed engineers and managers – *identify the most likely causes*, and from the causes, *recommend a specific course of action*. Your recommendation must consider what these several groups have suggested, and what the strengths and flaws in their different approaches are. Finally, your recommendation must put forth an intelligent approach that goes beyond merely restating what others have said.
- A "Comparative Analysis" using Davis-Besse could contrast alternative plans for correcting the problem associated with corrosion in reactor heads, alternative energy sources, or alternative oversight responsibilities. You would then discuss the benefits of each plan, after establishing categories by which to compare them (such as "financial," "long-term," "short-term," "public support," etc...). Or, you might contrast Davis-Besse with nuclear power plants of a similar vintage to determine what structural or operating problems have occurred at others. A third possibility might be to compare nuclear power plants built at the same time as Davis-Besse with newer plants to determine what design or operations' changes have been made and why. These are only some of the possible types of comparisons you could investigate and report.
- A "Feasibility Analysis" using Davis-Besse would examine proposed courses of action to build solid explanations as to why one particular course of action should have previously been taken, or should now be taken. For example, you might "justify" why Davis-Besse personnel were unable to detect the problem earlier, though the NRC identified several "missed opportunities." Or you might want to justify why First Energy's decision to replace the impaired reactor head with the

- 8. Graphs, Charts, Illustrations (throughout report).
- 9. Appendix (or Appendices), (page 273) – which MAY include any of the following (depending on the PURPOSE and AUDIENCE of YOUR report):
 - survey or interview questions
 - transcription of an interview
 - an evaluative summary
 - a copy of a thank you letter addressed to one of your primary sources

*Refer to *Little, Brown Compact Handbook* (or a similar reference guide) for MLA and APA formatting information.

** The final Report is due Friday, 12/16, 5pm.

Additional Notes:

- As you work on this Project, I want you to imagine that you are preparing this Report for a committee of readers that is comprised of administrators, managers, upper-level officials of a company that is interested in your subject matter. They hope to improve an aspect of their company's working environment, and have asked for help in accomplishing that goal. To that end, you have prepared this Report. Because this committee is made up of several very busy professionals, it is imperative that you grab their attention (both individually and collectively) right away. This does not have to be an ACTUAL company and committee; you may create all of that – for the purpose of this Project.
- In order to immediately grab the attention of your readers, you must make sure that your Report is VISUALLY APPEALING AND ACCESSIBLE. Utilize white-space. Make sure to spread your text out: use bullet-points, incorporate pictures, graphs, etc. into the body of your text. Basically, do not completely fill your pages with written text.
- Effectively use visual text – in order to support and strengthen the purpose of your Report, and to make it interesting to look at.
- Remember: How your Report looks is almost as important as what your Report says.