

OHS Report Writing

Busy people do not have the time to write long reports, busy people do not have the time to read long reports. As with all communications divide your messages in to the MUST KNOWS, SHOULD KNOWS and the COULD KNOWS. You need good reasons to include anything other than the MUST KNOWS in your written report.

The world of OHS is famous for well-meaning, ponderous reports that no one reads or gives a stuff about. The trouble with padding is that people gloss over the report in their reading and may miss key points buried in the verbiage.

The number one rule of report writing is BE SUCCINCT

Entering "Report Writing" into Yahoo will reveal a number of sites that give the conventional view of the topic.

A suggested written report format follows-

Cover sheet

Title page

Abstract or executive summary

Table of contents

Introduction, purpose, scope

Body

Conclusion / recommendations

References / biography

Glossary of terms

For general correspondence aim for 1 page, 2 pages as the maximum.

Safe working procedures should generally not be over 1 page in length. Use pictures, diagrams, flow-charts etc. to supplement the written word.

Remember to follow-up important written reports with a face-to-face meeting.

Frame communications relevant to the receiver's work environment rather than lofty corporate mission and goals.