

CHECKLIST for Revising and Editing Analytical Reports

Use this checklist to refine the content, arrangement, and style of your report.

Content

- Does the report grow from a clear statement of purpose?
- Is the report's length adequate and appropriate for the subject?
- Are all limitations of the analysis clearly acknowledged?
- Are visuals used whenever possible to aid communication?
- Are all data accurate?
- Are all data unbiased?
- Are all data complete?
- Are all data fully interpreted?
- Is the documentation adequate, correct, and consistent?
- Are the conclusions logically derived from accurate interpretation?
- Do the recommendations constitute an appropriate response to the question or problem?

Arrangement

- Is there a distinct introduction, body, and conclusion?
- Are headings appropriate and adequate?
- Are there enough transitions between related ideas?
- Is the report accompanied by all needed front matter?
- Is the report accompanied by all needed end matter?

Style and Page Design

- Is the level of technicality appropriate for the stated audience?
- Is the writing style throughout clear, concise, and fluent?
- Is the language convincing and precise?
- Is the writing in the report grammatical?
- Is the page design inviting and accessible?

NOTE: the following page reproduces *Technical Communication's* general checklist for revising and editing all sorts of documents.

CHECKLIST for Revising and Editing Documents

Is the Content Worthwhile?

- A brief but explicit title
- Subject and purpose clearly stated
- Enough information for readers to understand the meaning
- Material (or insight) new and significant to the audience
- All material technically accurate
- Technical details appropriate for the audience
- All needed warnings and cautions
- All data examined fully and interpreted impartially
- Both sides of the issue presented
- Opinions and assertions supported by evidence
- Conclusions and recommendations supported by the facts presented
- No recommendations where none were requested
- No gaps, foggy areas, or needless details
- All anticipated reader questions answered
- All definitions double-checked
- All information sources documented
- All material honest and fair to everyone involved

Is the Organization Sensible?

- Structure for the document visible at a glance
- An evident line of reasoning
- A distinct introduction, body, and conclusion
- A given section's length is equal to its importance
- Enough transitions and connectors to signal relationships
- Material arranged for the reader's understanding
- A topic (orienting) sentence to begin each supporting paragraph
- One main point developed in each supporting paragraph, with unity, coherence, and reasonable length

Is the Style Readable?

- Each sentence understandable on *first* reading
- The most information expressed in the fewest words
- Related ideas combined for fluency
- Sentences varied in construction and length
- Each word chosen for exactness, not for camouflage
- Concrete and specific language
- No triteness, overstatements, euphemisms, or jargon
- Tone unbiased
- Level of formality appropriate to the situation

Are Design, Visuals, and Mechanics Appropriate?

- An inviting and accessible format: white space, fonts, and so on
- A design that accommodates audience needs and expectations
- Adequate, clear, and informative headings
- Adequate visuals, to clarify, emphasize, or organize
- Appropriate displays for specific visual purposes
- All visuals fully incorporated with the text
- All visuals free of distortion
- All pages numbered and in order
- Supplements that accommodate diverse audience needs
- Correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar