

Learning objectives in this lesson

Raising awareness of the content expected in a report and developing students' awareness of the language typically used. By the end of the lesson, students will be able to write a report using appropriate language.

- 1 Ask students to work in pairs and discuss the questions before feeding back to the rest of the class.
- 2 Ask students to read the report and answer the questions. They can then share their answers with the rest of the class.

Answers

The report reviews the performance of the logistics company and makes recommendations regarding renewal of the contract with this company.
It is most likely written for management / key decision-makers.

- 3 Ask students to read the report again and decide where each section heading should go.

Answers

- 1 Introduction
This report reviews the performance of YP logistics ...

2 Findings

Efficiency

We found that 88% of deliveries arrived on time.

3 Conclusion

The service provided by YP Logistics is satisfactory ...

4 Recommendations

Before renewal of the contract, ...

- 4 Ask students to read the report again and answer the questions. They can then check their answers in pairs before feeding back to the rest of the class. During feedback, highlight the fact that different tenses are more suitable for the various sections of the report and remind students to be aware of tense use when writing their own reports.

Answers

- 1 Present simple and present perfect – because the facts about the report are being stated and a recent action with present results (the survey) is mentioned.
- 2 Conclusion – this is making suggestions and predictions based on the findings, so modals such as *could* and *would* are used.
- 3 The 'Customer service' section of the Findings has the most examples of the present perfect. This is because it is reporting actions by the logistics company that have had an effect on the customers.
- 4 Recommendations – this is listing what should be done, so using the imperative makes sense as it enables the recommendations to be concise and clear.

- 5 Ask students to work with a partner and look at the words in *italics* in the report. They should then answer the questions. During feedback point out that these kinds of linking words are frequently used in report writing. They also have an effect on the register – using *however* instead of *but*, and *in addition* instead of *and* increases the formality and is therefore more suitable in a business report.

Answers

- 1 However 2 Although 3 In fact 4 In addition

- 6 Ask students to read the information and plan what action they would recommend based on the notes.
- 7 Ask students to write their reports. Remind them to include the four sections and encourage them to think about the tenses and linking words they will use. Then ask students to exchange reports with a partner. They should read their partner's report and decide whether they think the recommendations are worth following. You could also ask students to comment on their partner's level of accuracy and use of language, or you could collect in the reports and provide more detailed feedback if you prefer. See the following page for a sample answer.

Sample answer

1 Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of a recent staff survey conducted to find out how satisfied staff are with the company restaurant. This survey was implemented in response to the increase in the number of complaints about the staff restaurant – this increase has occurred since the catering contract was given to a new catering company.

2 Findings

Choice

We found that 85% of staff are unhappy with the level of choice available and 100% of those asked said that there was less choice now than there had been with the previous catering company. 50% of staff complained about the lack of fish dishes, and 72% of the vegetarian members of staff are dissatisfied with the choice available to them.

Quality

83% of those asked said that the level of quality has decreased since the new company took over. 91% of the meat eaters were unhappy with the quality of meat being used. Many described the meat as fatty and tough.

Hygiene

52% of those asked are concerned about the standards of hygiene in the restaurant. 24% said that the plates were not clean and 35% think that the salad in the salad bar seems old.

Healthy options

78% of those asked said that they would like to see more healthy options available. 54% complained about the amount of processed meats on offer.

3 Conclusion

Levels of satisfaction with the staff restaurant have clearly decreased since the new company took over. The contract with this catering company is due to run for another six months before it comes up for renewal. It would be preferable to try and improve the service provided by the company in the next six months. In the meantime we could look into the costs and implications of using a different company, if matters don't improve.

4 Recommendations

I recommend that the following steps be taken.

1 Arrange a meeting with the catering company. Present the findings of the survey. Ask for improvements to be made in the next month. Request the following:

- more fish dishes and vegetarian options
- fewer processed meat dishes
- improved meat quality – suggest they use a different supplier
- introduce quality control procedures for the salad bar and plates
- more healthy options.

Be prepared to compromise on some of these requests, as they are likely to have cost implications.

2 Arrange a new staff satisfaction survey to be conducted after one month. Then arrange a review meeting with the catering company to discuss the findings of the new survey.

3 Research costs involved with using another company, or going back to the old company. Record any findings for use in the contract renewal negotiations in six months.