

## 4.5 Writing Reports



## Discussion

1 The list below gives reasons for performance appraisals. Decide which benefit the employer most and which benefit the employee.

reviewing progress	discussing rewards	setting achievable goals
planning training	stating career objectives	encouraging communication
identifying strengths and weaknesses		

2 Work with a partner. Put the sections of a report in a logical order from 1–7.

Recommendations	Introduction	Conclusions	Procedure
Executive summary	Findings	Title	

## Analysis

3 Read the following report and number the paragraphs in the correct order 1–6.

## Introduction of annual appraisal interviews

- Firstly, Webwide Consulting used a system of anonymous questionnaires to investigate employee attitudes. For instance, some questions related to company image and job satisfaction. In addition, **interviews were held** with all staff.
- The Management Committee decided to engage Webwide Consulting on 11 October to advise on the possible introduction of formal appraisal interviews. **This decision was taken** owing to dissatisfaction with the existing system. This report covers the method by which **information was gathered** and sets out a plan for adopting appraisal interviews.
- A survey was carried out by external consultants** regarding the possible introduction of formal annual appraisal interviews. Their findings clearly show that most staff and managers are in favour. Consequently, *it is recommended* that a formal system be set up as soon as possible.
- Three main areas of concern were revealed by the individual interviews.**
  - Management are seen to lack interest in staff development.
  - Employees get little feedback on whether hard work is recognized.
  - Employees get no guidance on how to improve poor performance.
- 1 We should put in place a system of annual appraisal interviews within the next two months.  
2 Each interview should be 45 minutes in length due to the tight schedule.
- In conclusion, the survey results clearly show that a more formal approach to appraisal interviews would reduce staff turnover, increase motivation, and *foster* team spirit.

4 Answer these questions about the report in 3.

- 1 Which headings from 2 match each of the paragraphs?
- 2 What other methods can be used to organize information in a report?

**Internet research**

Search for the keywords "plain english report writing" and write a short report on the advice you find. Exchange reports and give each other feedback.

**Linking words and phrases**

5 Work in pairs. Match each word or expression in the box with the categories below. Find examples of similar expressions used in the report in 3.

moreover due to finally to sum up therefore next for example overall

- a) Sequencing
- b) Giving examples
- c) Adding
- d) Expressing cause and result
- e) Summarizing

6 Complete the sentences below with appropriate linking phrases.

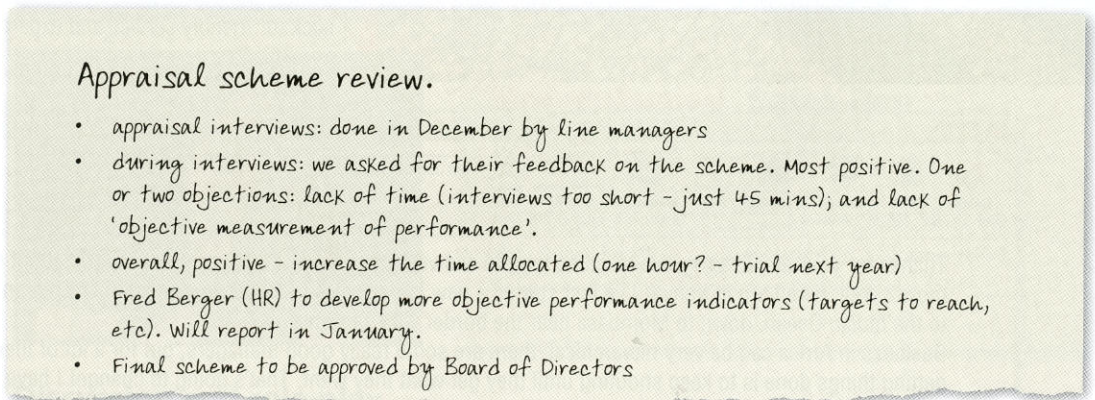
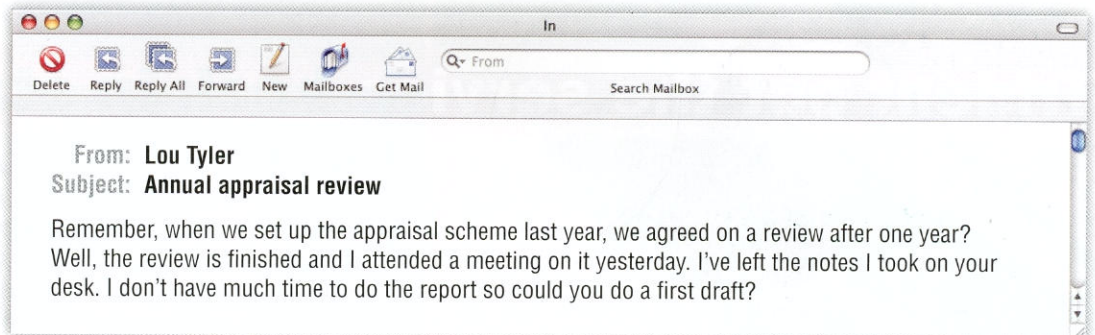
- 1 We wanted the survey to be anonymous. \_\_\_\_\_, names did not appear on the questionnaire.
- 2 Firstly, staff completed questionnaires. \_\_\_\_\_, they were interviewed by consultants.
- 3 The questionnaire covered job satisfaction. \_\_\_\_\_, some questions touched on company image.
- 4 Interviews were limited to 30 minutes each \_\_\_\_\_ the very tight schedule.
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_, the results were positive but we agreed that there were lessons to learn.
- 6 Formal appraisal interviews will be introduced \_\_\_\_\_ dissatisfaction with the existing system.
- 7 There are several reasons for adopting appraisal interviews, \_\_\_\_\_, they can motivate staff.

**Report style**

7 It is possible to write a report in an active or passive style. An active style is more direct. A passive style is more impersonal. Make the report in 3 more direct by changing the phrases in **bold** into active sentences.

**Writing**

8 Look at the email and the notes below. What does your boss want you to do?



9 Write a short report for your boss using the company template below to help you.

- Title
- Introduction – explain the background to the report and why you are writing it.
- Procedure – how was information gathered?
- Findings – what information was gathered?
- Conclusions – what conclusions can you draw?
- Recommendations – what recommendations can you make?