

4.8.2: Sections of Formal Reports

Learning Objectives

- Describe various sections that may be used in the front of a report
- Describe various sections that may be used in the body of a report
- Describe various sections that may be used in the back matter of a report

Depending upon the situation and the institution you're working for or writing to, some or all of the following sections may be required in a specific formal report. Some guides to formal reports indicate that specific sections are recommended for each type of formal report. However, smart writers will be sensitive to the organization's requirements or expectations and the needs of the information, then use that knowledge to determine the contents of their report.

The next few pages describe a large number of these section types so you, as a writer, may pick and choose what is appropriate to each situation. It is important to the report's impact and the writer's professional image to understand the purpose of each of these sections.

In a formal report there are three major sections.

1. The **front part** includes sections that come prior to the report itself to establish various items such as authority of the report and intended audience.
2. The **body** of the report has many sections of key information and possible analysis. It is the meat of the report.
3. The **back matter** contains sections of material that support the body.

Take a look at Figure 1 to see an example of the many potential sections in a sales proposal. Since this example models a response to an RFP (request for proposal), these sections were like required by the customer requesting the bid. The white, shaded, white pages related to the broad parts of a formal report. They are illustrative since the author determines specific sections needed based on report purpose company policy, and audience.

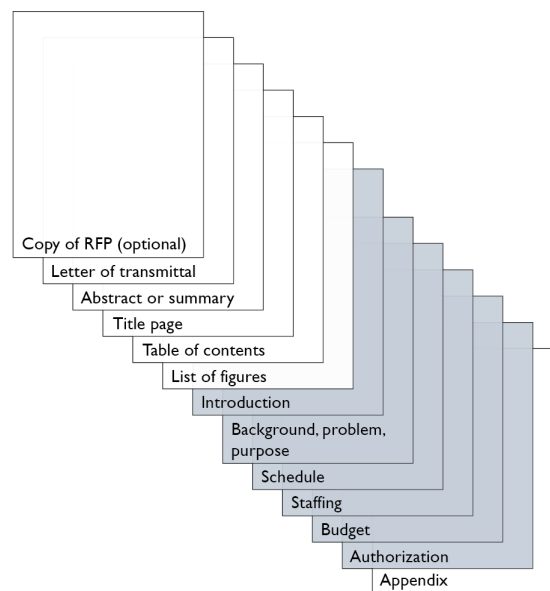


Figure 1. Sections of a Sales Proposal

Contributors and Attributions

CC licensed content, Original

- Sections Used by Many Formal Reports. **Authored by:** Susan Kendall. **Provided by:** Lumen Learning. **License:** CC BY: Attribution

4.8.2: Sections of Formal Reports is shared under a [not declared](#) license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

- **6.2: Sections of Formal Reports** by Nina Burokas is licensed [CC BY 4.0](#). Original source: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/wm-businesscommunicationmgrs>.