**JESS ASTACIO- PROJECT 3**

**Preparing a High Impact Consultant’s Report SUMMARY**

The report starts out with introducing various types of reports and explaining a few brief concepts of them. These reports are: Security Assessment Report, Design Concept Report, Architectural Design Phase Report, Peer Review Report, and the Forensic Report. It is clear to see that the focus of this report is to inform on how to properly write a security assessment report. The report states that this is the most common type of report, and that as you write reports, you will find your own way to write it. It is important to remember that there is no wrong or no right way to write your report.

The anatomy of the security assessment report is very quite detailed. First, you need an outside cover, and inside cover, and an acknowledgements section. Next, you will need the following sections: Table of contents, executive summery, introduction and scope of the project, description f the current facilities, description of the existing security program, risk analysis, consultants evaluation and opinion, findings and recommendations, appendices, and summary of recommendations.

The report then continues to give tips of this type of report writing. One of the first steps is “Understanding the Importance of the Report”. I feel like this is one of the steps that is most important because it is the first hands on work that is delivered to the consultant. It is going to be read by many and will even be kept for several years, so it is important that it is taken seriously and done correctly, as it also can become a legal document. The next section that is spoken about is “Consider Who Will be Reading the Report”. This is another important step because as stated previously, not only your boss will view the report. Many others like lawyers, elected officials, board of directors, and top-level executives may be viewing your proposal. Next, it is important to start writing the report early, as well as keeping the report simple and clear. Being verbose and adding “fluff” will be apparent to the reader. You want to be able to communicate your message clearly and for the reader to understand the message that you are trying to convey. It is important that your report maintains a conversational tone and that flow exists in your report. If you aren’t sure of what to write, you should make sure you outline your thoughts because you do not want it to seem unorganized and sloppy. Remember, quantity does not equal quality. It is better to have a shorter paper if it is well written, than one that is incredibly long and seems redundant. Another important step is to define any terms and concepts that are unfamiliar to the reader. As stated earlier, you may not be presenting this idea to very technical people. This is why it is important to properly explain these terms so that the audience can understand the message. Consistency is also key when writing the report. If you call something a “security room”, next time you talk or write about it, you do not want to call it a “security office”. You have to decide on the term that will be used in the report and use it consistently throughout. Facts and numbers are important to include in your report because they can amount to power and direct statement. Another great point that the report states is to use photos and charts to enhance your report. At times, it may be difficult to read a large series of numbers, so when you can create that into a visualization, that will be much easier for the reader to understand. Lastly, it is important that you have you report reviewed by other members of your team before presenting thing and sending them to your client.

**State Office of Education Network Design Proposal SUMMARY**

This report started out immediately with is title followed by a table of contents. Essentially, the report states that this proposal is for a data network to work for the Maryland public school system. The proposal is designated for that state office and the 2 district offices that it has. The state office has 5 separate departments that need to be serviced, and the district offices each have 4 departments. The network is solely for administrative services, not for the instructional needs of the students.

The objectives of this proposed network are to: provide secure service, have integration and updating, have versatile information processing, allow for collaboration, and have a good amount of scalability. The intended users for this network are 3 admins, 3 secretaries, 10 members belonging to the curriculum department, eight members of the human resource department, and 6 members of the finance/ accounting department. There will also be secondary users of the system who will be: parents, pre-service teachers, teachers, and the public. They will receive information that is processed and produced on the network, but they will not actually be using the network. Several things need to be analyzed during this process. Some of them are: data types, data sources, numbers of users on the system and their priority levels, transmission speed requirements, load variation estimates, storage requirements, reliability requirements, security requirements, and if there is an existing network.

The next parts include several diagrams of possible topologies for the different offices and departments as well as an inventory of the equipment to be used, its specs, and their costs. The report also includes a cost-benefit analysis that helps justify their spending. Lastly, they have an appendix that shows the average network usage.

**Evaluation of the Network Design Report**

1. NEGATIVE
   1. One thing that I immediately did not like from this report is that it does not have the outside cover. As detailed in the preparation report, this report needs to have and outside cover that contains the client name, location, and the date of the report. It is something that contains pertinent information. Everything is on the front right now, so it does not look professional and there isn’t like an introduction to it.
   2. I also found that some of the heading are not really relevant or are vague. The previous report spoke about being clear and concise. One for the headings in this report is called “NETWORK NEEDS ANALYSIS”. Yes, clearly the network needs analysis. That is why your client has hired you. I believe some of the headings should be changed to more concise ones. For example, instead of the one that they used earlier, it can be called “Considerations”.
   3. There are not explanations for the network diagrams and then there are not explanations for the network usage. I fee like if this were proposed to me, not all people are going to want to read through the statistics of the data usage. This information may not be presented to highly technical people, so it needs to be clear and easy to understand.
   4. The report also does not have the inside cover, which lays out the makers of the report and associates who contributed to it. It should have a project address, consultants name and information, other team members who worked on the project as well as any certifications of the consultants. The way the report is laid out does not allow us to even know who wrote the report, which really should be vital for the client.
2. POSITIVE
   1. I like the network diagrams that they had because they really went into detail about it. They provide several examples. I believe it may have been a little better if they provided some brief descriptions with the diagrams, but I feel like visual representations are very important for the user to be able to understand the thought process.
   2. I thought the cost benefit analysis was very great in this report. It is important to be able to justify why the client needs to be spending the amounts of money that you are stating in the report. In the report they showed the benefits of having this network, which included: increased productivity, decreased anxiety, les training time, ease of record keeping, increased security, and increased connectivity. All of these are very great benefits, and the fact that the consultant could measure this in the dollar amount was very great and beneficial to the client understanding how vital this network will be to them.
   3. I liked how many things that the consultant decided needed to be overlooked and analyzed. It is quite a long list that was stated earlier in the summary. I feel that it really shows that this was not just pulled out of their pocket. Lots of thought and consideration has gone into this report. I think one of the biggest points for me was the numbers of users and priority levels. This is incredibly important because you want to be able to handle as many users as you want to. You don’t want to design a network that cannot support the amount of people who will be accessing it. That is asking for lots of trouble.