

Proposing and reporting a project

The main objectives

The style in which the project is presented is very important. It must convey the main ideas and invoke interest and engagement in the reader.

Once the main objectives are established, convincing arguments for the undertaking of the project must be presented, as well as the methodology used.

In scholarly reports, a part of the arguments for the project must rely on the literature review concerning the proposed project. It should illustrate a wider interest in the topic.

In the literature review, relevant methods must be emphasized to indicate good foundations for your project. Even if your project includes new methods, it is important to discuss and analyze the existing methods to highlight the novelty of your methods.

If your report includes results, evidence or conclusions, the way they're presented is very important. You need to establish a quick comprehension by the reader to make an impact.

The findings, your results, data or conclusions must be evaluated and the validation and support references must be provided. The conclusion must briefly and succinctly summarize the project and its findings.

Writing style

The writing style is very important, in particular, the paragraph structure. A lot of sentences not broken into logical paragraphs complicate the comprehension by the reader when several sentences are not really related.

A paragraph should not be very long and should contain a single unit. For example, try to cover one simple aspect or topic of the project per paragraph.

To present a smooth flow of thoughts, the paragraphs must be logically linked.

Writing and spelling errors are very detrimental. In the age of free or inexpensive spelling or grammar checking software, there is simply no excuse for having spelling or basic grammar errors in the report.

A convincing argument for the project

The objectives of the project are the foundation of the convincing argument for the project. The background should contain a brief history of the project up to present time.

Though brief, it should be complete. Cherry picking makes the project dubious in the eyes of knowledgeable people.

The report should mention the major challenges of the project that need to be taken into consideration. Here's an example.

*“The chief challenge for these studies is to grow huge orchid populations for evaluation and testing. These crops are both very **slow** budding and **expensive**.”*

An important aspect is to give a timeframe estimate for the project. Another important aspect of the report should be why you and your team should undertake the project and not some other person or team.

Relevant literature review

It is often infeasible to review all literature on a given topic. Thus in the literature view, it is important to establish the criteria for which pieces of work are included and which pieces are left out. The relevance is always subjective so there are no hard rules to follow. However, the literature should be complete with respect to your specified criteria.

If a topic has a long history, it should still be completely covered by the review. Of course, the older work should be reported and analyzed more briefly than the more recent work.

It is important to select an appropriate level of abstraction or how detailed the review should be based on the intended audience. Too much detail is detrimental for a non-specialist audience, too little detail is detrimental for a specialist audience.

Do not forget, the literature review must form a narrative of the problem and its solution.

You need to properly reference the literature. Typically anything quoted must be referenced and anything cited must be referenced.

Description of the methodology for the proposed project

The objective of the methodology is to determine the appropriateness of the methods applied with a view to ascertain solution.

Methodology is an analysis of all the methods and procedures of the investigation. It is a systematic strategy to find solution to the research problem.

Overview of relevant methods.

Methods are the tools used in the project. The objective of methods is to find a solution to the research problem.

Methods encompass carrying out experiments, conducting surveys, tests, et cetera.

Presenting results and evidence

Numeric results should be presented in a cohesive, concise and simple format to foster quick comprehension by the reader.

If many numeric results need to be presented, they should be organized into tables. A table should not span two or more pages. If they do, they should be broken into a series of smaller tables.

If the presentation of the results is in a form of a graph, the simplicity of the graph is paramount. Too much information in a graph is detrimental to comprehension.

A graph with too much information should be broken into a series of simpler graphs.

Sometimes, symbolic results need to be presented in diagrams or charts. Again, the rule of not too much information must be followed.

The frequent errors are scattered tables and graphs, charts and diagrams that are either too big or too small.

Based on the nature of the project, quantitative or qualitative evidence must be presented.

Evaluation of the findings

The evaluation of the findings is an integral part of the methodology proposed for the project. Numerical findings often require a proper statistical treatment, such as: removing outliers, false positives or negatives, and presenting a proper context for the findings in terms of the methodology of the project.

The conclusion

Though the conclusion summarizes the project, it is not a summary. It should amplify the significant findings and provide a larger context of the work and connect to the stated objectives.