

*Guidelines (continued)***Block pattern**

Item A
 first point
 second point, etc.

Item B

first point
 second point, etc.

Point-by-point pattern

first point of A/first point of B, etc.

second point of A/second point of B, etc.

For illustration of each of these patterns in an actual document, see pages 210–11.

5. **Order your points for greatest emphasis.** Try ordering your points from least to most important or dramatic or useful or reasonable. Placing the most striking point last emphasizes it best.
6. **In an evaluative comparison (“X is better than Y”),** offer your final judgment. Base your judgment squarely on the criteria presented.

For Feasibility Analysis

1. **Consider the strength of supporting reasons.** Choose the best reasons for supporting the action or decision being considered—based on your collected evidence.
2. **Consider the strength of opposing reasons.** Remember that people—including ourselves—usually see only what they want to see. Avoid the temptation to overlook or downplay opposing reasons, especially for an action or decision that you have been promoting. Consider alternate points of view; examine and evaluate all the evidence.
3. **Recommend a realistic course of action.** After weighing all the pros and cons, make your recommendation—but be prepared to reconsider if you discover that what seemed like the right course of action turns out to be the wrong one.



Usability testing

Checklist: Usability of Analytical Reports

For evaluating your research methods and reasoning, refer also to the checklist on page 170. (Numbers in parentheses refer to the first page of discussion.)

Content

- Does the report address a clearly identified problem or goal? (564)
- Is the report’s length and detail appropriate for the subject? (564)
- Is there enough information for readers to make an informed decision? (565)

- Are all limitations of the analysis clearly acknowledged? (569)
- Is the information accurate, unbiased, and complete? (565)
- Are visuals used whenever possible to aid communication? (568)
- Are all necessary report components included? (571)
- Are all data fully interpreted? (567)
- Are the conclusions logically derived from accurate interpretation? (568)
- Do the recommendations constitute an appropriate and reasonable response to the question or problem? (569)
- Is each source and contribution properly cited? (634)
- Is all needed front and end matter included? (598)

Arrangement

- Is there a distinct introduction, body, and conclusion? (571)
- Does the introduction provide sufficient orientation to the issue or problem? (572)
- Does the body section present a clear picture of the evidence and reasoning? (573)
- Does the conclusion answer the question that originally sparked the analysis? (581)
- Are there clear transitions between related ideas? (693)

Style and Page Design

- Is the level of technicality appropriate for the primary audience? (28)
- Are headings informative and adequate? (312)
- Is the writing clear, concise, and fluent? (216)
- Is the language convincing, precise, and informative? (232)
- Is the report grammatical? (670)
- Is the page design inviting and accessible? (298)



Exercise

Prepare an analytical report, using these guidelines:

- a. Choose a subject for analysis from the list of questions at the end of this exercise, from your major, or from a subject of interest.
- b. Identify the problem or question so that you will know exactly what you are seeking.
- c. Restate the main question as a declarative sentence in your statement of purpose.
- d. Identify an audience—other than your instructor—who will use your information for a specific purpose.
- e. Hold a private brainstorming session to generate major topics and subtopics.
- f. Use the topics to make an outline based on the model outline in this chapter. Divide as far as necessary to identify all points of discussion.
- g. Make a tentative list of all sources (primary and secondary) that you will investigate. Verify that adequate sources are available.
- h. In a proposal memo to your instructor, describe the problem or question and your plan for analysis. Attach a tentative bibliography.
- i. Use your working outline as a guide to research and observation. Evaluate sources and evidence,