

Name: _____

Writing at Work: Incident Reports

Outcomes:

After this module you will be able to:

- Identify facts and opinions
- Put events in chronological order
- Determine appropriate level of detail in incident reports
- Identify key features in an incident report
- Complete an incident report with the appropriate level of detail

All About Incident Reports

An incident report describes something that happened. They are commonly used in the workplace to report facts about:

- Health and safety issues
- Violent situations
- Thefts or serious damage to workplace equipment or private property
- Injuries to staff or customers

Incident reports have a variety of names. They may be called: Accident reports, Hazard Reports, Injury reports, or Witness reports.

Tips for Writing an Incident Report

Incident reports can be used as evidence to establish negligence, liability, responsibility or wrong doing. Follow these tips to ensure your incident reports are as accurate as possible.

- Present the facts: Describe the events as they happened without adding your opinions or feelings about the situation
- Use chronological order: Always report events in the order they happened.
- Use clear language:
- Be accurate: Include exact information, don't be vague. Be sure to record the full names of all people involved. Don't take sides.
- You're not there to solve the case: Answer only questions you are qualified and able to answer. If you don't know the answer to a question, explain why you don't know.

Practice A – Writing Facts in Chronological Order

Read the paragraph and decide the correct order of the sentences. Write the sentence numbers in the correct order.

(1) The ladder slipped on the wet cement floor. (2) He climbed a ladder while carrying the box. (3) He was rushed to the hospital. (4) Roger carried a box to the storage area. (5) He landed on his wrist. (6) He crushed the bones in his wrist. (7) Roger fell 20 feet.

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____

Parts of an Incident Report

Type of incident

Define the incident as specifically as possible e.g. instead of “hurt himself” say, “fell and hurt his right arm above the elbow.”

Identification details

Identify who was involved, their title, department, employee number, phone number, etc.

Time and location of incident

Answers where and when an event happened. Be as precise as possible, avoid using vague details such as Thursday or afternoon. Instead say, February 27, 2019 at 2:00 pm.

Description of what happened

Answer what happened, why and how the incident happened and what led up to and caused the incident. Include what was done after the incident (was 911 called, did the violent person leave, was a supervisor called, etc.)

Assignment 1: Analyzing an Incident Report

An incident report should answer most of these questions:

- Who? (includes everyone who was involved)
- What? (includes everything that happened in chronological order)
- When? (includes the date and time of day the incident occurred)
- Where? (includes all of the locations where the incident took place)
- How? (includes how the incident happened, if you have that information)
- Why? (includes why it happened, if you know the reason)

Read the following incident report. Create a color code for the questions above. Use the appropriate colors to highlight/underline the answers to the questions in the report.

Answer how and why the incident happened in full sentences.

Incident Report	
Date of Incident: September 6, 2011	Date Reported: September 6, 2011
Time of Incident: 11:40	
Name of Person Reporting the Incident: Lucy Lee (Medical Receptionist)	
Location of Incident: Reception area of the Moya Clinic	
<p>Incident Description:</p> <p>Today at approximately 11:20, one of Dr. Weise’s patients, Mr. Adam Ducha, arrived at the clinic and asked to see Dr. Weise.</p> <p>I checked my appointment book and saw that Mr. Ducha did not have an appointment. I told him that it would not be possible to see Dr. Weise because his schedule was completely full. I offered to make an appointment for him, but the earliest opening I had was October 10. Mr. Ducha refused to wait so long and insisted on seeing Dr. Weise today. He seemed very agitated, so I asked him to take a seat while I talked to Dr. Weise.</p> <p>As I started to leave my desk, Mr. Ducha suddenly ran towards me. He was yelling and shaking his fist at me. I felt threatened and thought he was going to hit me. I hesitated for a moment and was trying to decide what I should do next. One of the patients in the waiting room (Mr. Rabin) immediately grabbed Mr. Ducha by the arm and pulled him away from me. This made Mr. Ducha very angry, and he began punching Mr. Rabin. At this point, several doctors came out of their offices to find out what was going on. They managed to calm Mr. Ducha and told me to call 911. The paramedics came at 11:55. The police arrived a few minutes later. Mr. Ducha was calm and got on the stretcher without any problems. The paramedics took him to Grace Hospital.</p>	

Adapted from: LINC 5 Business Writing, pg 125 <https://www.settlementatwork.org/lincdocs/linc5-7/business.writing/pdfs/bus.writing.LINC5.pdf>

Assignment 2: Facts and Opinions

A **fact** is a statement than can be proven true or false.

An **opinion** is someone’s belief or way of thinking.

The paragraph below contains both facts and opinions. Determine if each numbered sentence is a fact or an opinion.

	Fact or Opinion	Statement
1		When I came in this morning, I noticed that the window in the back was broken.
2		The back-storage room was in shambles; I don’t even know what is missing.
3		It must have been those kids that have been hanging out in the back lane.
4		The big one comes in all the time.
5		You can see him on the security video yesterday.
6		He must have been casing the store.
7		He came in and bought 5 Slurpees around noon.
8		He came back around 4:00 with his friends.
9		Those kids are nothing but trouble!
10		You need to go arrest them!

Assignment 3: Level of Detail

In incident reports you need to include enough detail so that the person reading the report understands what happened. But you don't want to include too many details.

Read the reports below. What is wrong with them? How could you improve them?

1. EMPLOYEE STATEMENT:

Yesterday my co-worker and I were working. The shift supervisor came over and made racist comments. After he left, we were both upset.

A. What is wrong with this report?

B. What would you do to improve it?

2. EMPLOYEE STATEMENT:

On June 2, 1999 at around 10:41 in the evening, my coworker, Andrew Lin and I were working in the packaging department at the sealing work-station near the back of the room next to the fire exit. The shift supervisor, Mr. Donald Gray, who has been working in the company for two years, usually on morning shift, came over. He is a tall man. He said the following thing to us, "All you immigrants come here and take jobs away from Canadians. You should go back home!" After 15 minutes of harassing us, he left. Both Andrew Lin and I are very upset.

A. What is wrong with this report?

B. What would you do to improve it?

Assignment 4: Describing an Incident

A description of an incident should:

- describe the events before, during and after the accident in order
- be objective (state facts not opinions)
- include all the relevant details
- state the information clearly so the reader can understand what happened

Incident 1

Look at the pictures. Imagine you witnessed the accident as it happened to one of your co-workers. Write a description of the incident. Include all relevant details (e.g., who it happened to, what happened, where and what time the accident happened, who else was present at the time, what action was taken after the accident).



Adapted from: LINC 6 Business Writing, pg 176 <https://www.settlementatwork.org/lincdocs/linc5-7/business.writing/pdfs/bus.writing.LINC6.pdf>

Incident Report	
Date of Incident:	Date Reported:
Time of Incident:	
Name of Person Reporting the Incident:	
Location of Incident:	
Incident Description:	

Assignment 5: Summarizing an Incident

- Watch the video: “Slips, Trips and Falls: Office – Stairs” from WorkSafeBC
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtefZwZoZg8>
- You witnessed the accident and are writing the report below. The dates and location of the incident have been filled in for you. The name of the woman who fell is Jennifer Smith.

Incident Report	
Date of Incident: March 31, 2019	Date Reported: March 31, 2019
Time of Incident: 1:15 pm	
Name of Person Reporting the Incident:	
Location of Incident: Stairway	
Incident Description:	

Answer Key: Incident and Accident Reports

Practice A: Writing Facts in Chronological Order

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1. 4 | 3. 1 | 5. 5 | 7. 3 |
| 2. 2 | 4. 7 | 6. 6 | |

Assignment 1: Analyzing an Incident Report

Who: Highlight or list individuals

What: Highlight events or summarize and state what happened

When: State or highlight the date and the time

Where: state or highlight the location of the incident

How and why: Summarize how and why the incident occurred if adequate information is provided to make a factual statement and not a throery.

Assignment 2: Facts and Opinions

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. F | 3. O | 5. F | 7. F | 9. O |
| 2. F | 4. F | 6. O | 8. F | 10. O |

Assignment 3: Level of Detail

1A. Not enough detail

B. Answers will vary

2A. Too much detail

B. Answers will vary.

Assignment 4: Describing an Incident

Answers will vary

Assignment 5: Summarizing an Incident

Answers will vary

End of Module Reflection

After completing this module, answer the questions below. If you answer agree (3) for each question, ask for a review or a final assessment from an instructor. If you answer maybe (2) or no (1), have a discussion with an instructor to make a plan to improve your performance and confidence.

1 – No

2 – Maybe

3 – Yes

A	I understand all of the outcomes covered in this module.	1	2	3
B	I do not need any further assistance from an instructor on the material covered in this module.	1	2	3
C	I do not need more practice questions or assignments	1	2	3
D	I am confident in my abilities to complete tasks related to this module.	1	2	3
E	I am ready to complete a review and/or a final assessment related to this module.	1	2	3

Reflection
