

Soft Skills
Dr. Binod Mishra
Department of Humanities & Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee

Lecture - 36
Structure of Reports Part I

Hello welcome back to lectures on soft skills. And the previous lecture we talked about the evaluation of data and organization of data. And while we were closing, we had left you with a promise that we shall be talking about this structure.

Now, what is the structure of a report? Imagine yourself standing before a palatial building. When you look at the building you are moved by the beauty of the building. But then have you ever thought of how this beautiful mansion or building might have been made it, could have taken a lot of time to build that palatial building, brick by brick and on a structure that might have been devised before. Same is true of a report. A report which is actually a formal written document is also built structurally. As we discussed earlier you have the information ready you have also divided the information into several parts as a tailor cuts the cloth into several parts.

And then finally, decides to weave that. So, you too are now ready with those parts and now you have to understand what are the structural parts of the report. When we talk about the structure we actually should decide depending upon the topic of the report, what structure is required.

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Report Structure

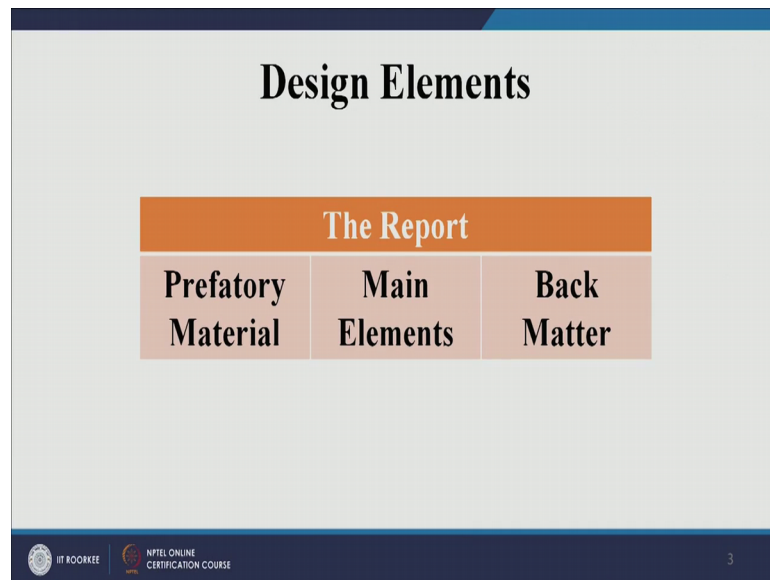
- ✓ Usefulness of the element for the report.
- ✓ Seek clarification while identifying the objectives in your terms of reference.
- ✓ It may vary depending upon the requirements of organizations

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But more or less every structure of a report is the same. Only in case of a sort report a sort report may not follow the entire structure, but then you have to understand what is expected of a report. For that you should actually consult your TOR that is terms of reference as we have talked earlier that when you are assigned the task of writing the report, you are also instructed as to what this report will have. Keeping that into consideration and keeping the requirements of the report, now you start making your report.

So, when you talk about the structure the structure actually is the foundation on which the entire building of the report will lie or will exist. So, let us say that a report structurally can be divided into 3 parts.

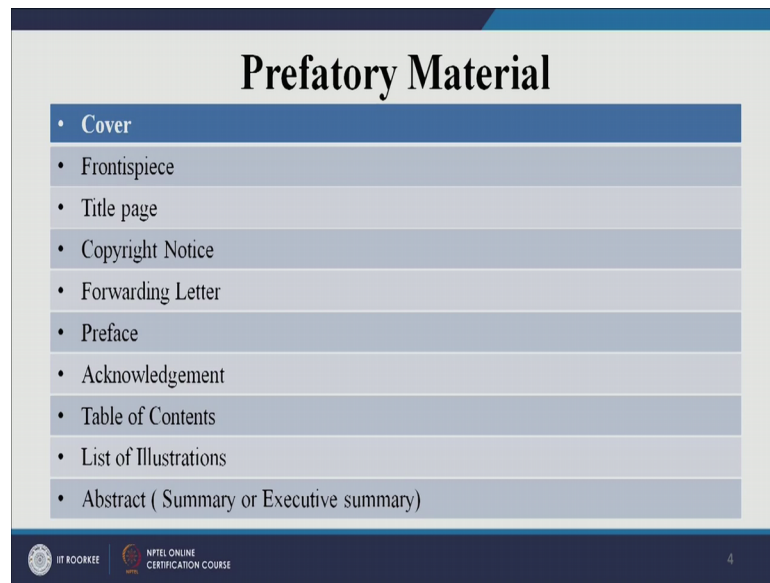
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We have discussed earlier while talking about the business correspondences, that later should have 3 parts, introduction, the middle and the end. Likewise a report will also have 3 divisions 3 parts. And these 3 divisions unitedly make a report a technical report. The first of these parts are the prefatorial material, then comes the main elements and then the back matter.

Now, there might be a question in your mind that what exactly could be the parts of a prefatorial material. This prefatorial material can also be considered the front matter, in many books you will come across these 3 divisions as front matter, main body and then the back matter. So, the front matter in a way are the prefatorial material.

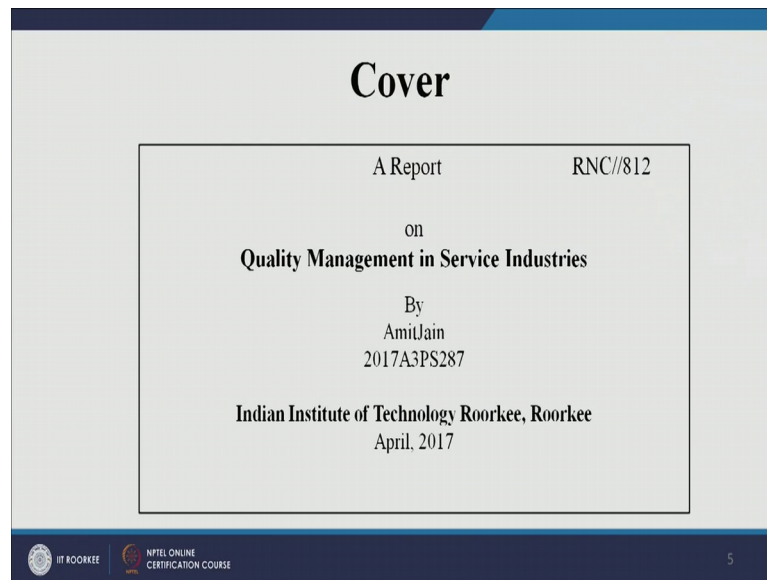
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Now, in a prefatorial material front matter of the report there are several items. And all these items are very important. Because we have talked about a report being systematic a report being functional a report written on demand a report having data. But now when you have the information these pieces of information are to be separated are to be placed into different heads, and of all these heads the most important is the front matter.

Now look at a book for that matter, you can when you talk of a report you can think of a book also. A book also on a specific subject is like a report. Now the first thing that you come across in a book is it is cover page. And so, is the case of a report. So, the items of a report especially the items of the front matter are cover. Then frontispiece then title page copyright notice, forwarding letter preface acknowledgement table of contents list of illustrations and abstract. Now all these items from the part of front matter. Let us discuss and let us try to understand all of them. Because as a professional you have all of you at some point of the time have to write a report.

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Now, when we talk about the cover, you see your report if it is a 30 page report 40 page report, the first thing that you come across is it is cover. Now how to create a cover? You will find that in several organizations, they have a proforma they have a proforma of the cover because the report has to be written in certain organizations. Where there are no proformas you need to understand how to make the cover of the report. Usually the cover of the report is a thick paper may be varying in terms of organizational requirement and all, because many organizations prefer that the cover of the report should be white.

But in order to make it more attractive some people some report writers they also go for the cover which is colored, but then with color apart we should try to understand what are the items that should be there on the cover page. You see in larger organizations every year so many reports are written, and that is why they provide a number to the report. That and in certain cases they provide the report number if they have a proforma.

So, you will find the first thing that has to be written on the report cover page is a report on. Remember every report will have a title. And now you have some liberty when you are giving the title to a report. If you are in many cases you will find that people are not even clear about how to go for the title, what should be the exact title? You see title should have certain keywords of the entire report and the title could be written either in capitals if you are if you are following the system of writing the title of the report in bold

or in capital letters follow it, but then if not then the first letter of every word should be the title except the prepositions and all.

So, you will find here the title of the report is there quality management in service industries this is actually the title of the report. And then on the right hand side you see the report number is given. You see since you are going to write this report sometimes you will find a group of people also write the report as a united effort and all. So, people would like to know who is the writer of the report.

So, here you will find it is written quality management in service industries, and the name of the report writer is also given. So, if you are writing the report please write your name. And if you have an employee number you can write if you are a student you will have an enrollment number whatever. So, by in certain cases you will find what is expected is that you are writing the report, but you are writing the report on the demand of somebody or on the authorization of somebody.

Now, these also have to be written you can write quality management in service industries prepared for, and you will read write the name of the person to whom you are going to submit the report. And you will find in every report the last space I mean this space towards the end it is actually meant for the place meant for the organization from where you are writing the report. So, here you can see it is it is written the name of the institute and then the month and the year. Because you know every report in course of time becomes important because it is on a particular subject. And if somebody else is going to do some survey or research this report may be helpful that is why the numbers are given. And then that is why the date I mean the month and the year is also given. So, this is a sample are cover of the report, next to the cover comes the frontispiece.

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Frontispiece

- A bound report material
- It serves as a window display of the whole report (not in technical reports)
- Aimed at creating curiosity

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Now what is this frontispiece? You will find once you start the once you turn the cover of the page then there may be a title page after cover page you may have a title page. Now there may be another question as to what is the difference between the title page and the cover page. In some reports you will find it is not only the title, but it also has got a subtitle. Say for example, the report may have a subtitle. So, if it is a subtitle. So, put the subtitle after the title on the title page. And then once you have written the once you have drafted the title page, here also you write the name of the organization the date the month and all, but remember there are certain differences other than the title. For example, if your report is to be approved by in certain organizations when you write the report, your report has also to be approved by.

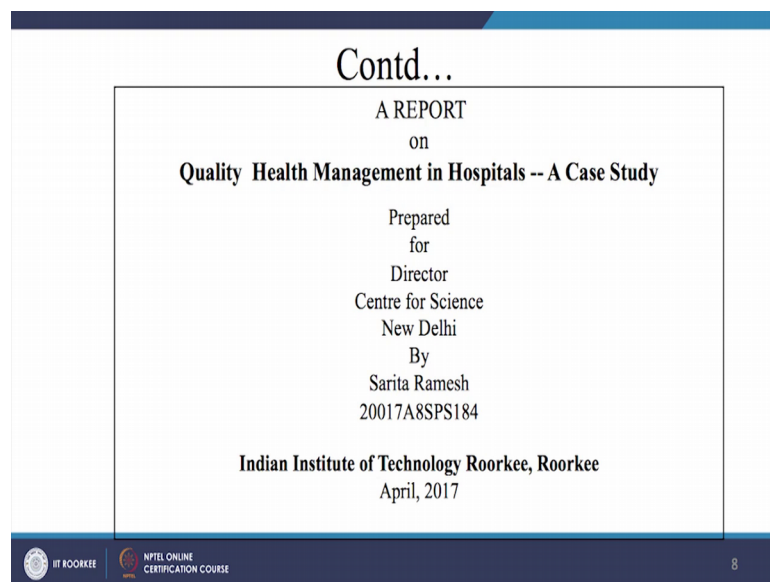
So, if it is so then on the left hand side of the report you will write approved by and the name of the person and his education that also should be written, but this should be on the left hand side of the report. The left hand side I mean below not on the top. And in certain cases there are 3 popular ways of study. One may be a discripted descriptive study, then a correlation study, then a causal study I mean these are helpful in making you create the title or write the title. For example, if we say the demand of 2 wheelers in organization, I mean this may be a descriptive study sometimes if it is a correlation study then naturally 2 things can be correlated and if it is a causal you can also say the effect of the effect of pollution on mankind. I mean these are some of the titles which you can

select for the report, but remember your title depends upon the assignment or the task that actually have been provided to you, next comes the frontispiece.

Now, what is this frontispiece? Just after the title page you will find there is a thin paper like thing which actually can be used which is which is a given just to create a sort of curiosity among the readers. And this actually protects your report because in some cases your report also may have certain drawings. It may have certain charts and in a bound report. Because you know every report cannot be bound sort reports cannot be bound sort reports are not bound.

But then when the report is thick it is bound and in such reports this frontispiece becomes very important. Of course, in modern day a times this habit of frontispiece has been abandoned. But then you ought to understand what is the frontispiece it is actually the window display of the whole report. Of course, in technical reports this may not be as important, but then reports cannot be technical always. You know there are some reports where you feel that certain paragraphs sorry certain drawings certain photographs are important. So, there you provide a frontispiece.

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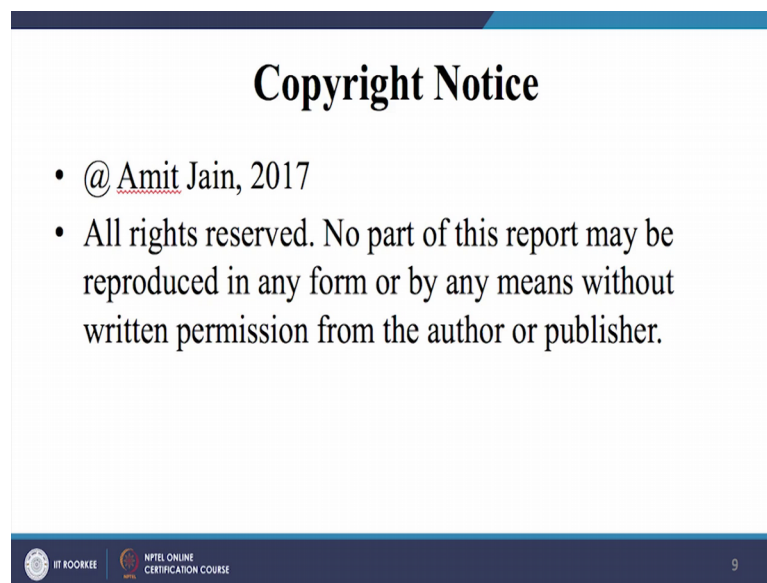


Now, here is a sample title page. Now you see, again here we write and the first 3 words a report on that has to be written in capital. And then we write quality health management in hospital a case study. Now see if the title of your report was quality management in hospitals or quality health management in hospitals a case study is the

subtitle. And now here in a very detailed manner you have provided the information prepared for I of course, it is the person to whom you are going to submit the report, and then prepare it by the name of the person who has prepared. And just here on the left hand side you will write approved by. As I have said earlier you will light approved by because the suppose you are working in a unit, where your main boss. I mean you are controlling officer is to approve this report because it has to go through a file through a formal channel.

So, naturally you have to write approved by and the name of the person who is you are controlling officer. Next to that comes the copyright notice. The report that you prepare is your property, if you are if you have done it yourself and if you have been assigned it single handedly. So, naturally the amount of labour that you have put, the entire property is yours. So, just on the back or the inside of the title page you have to mention copyright notice.

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Copyright Notice

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- All rights reserved. No part of this report may be reproduced in any form or by any means without written permission from the author or publisher.

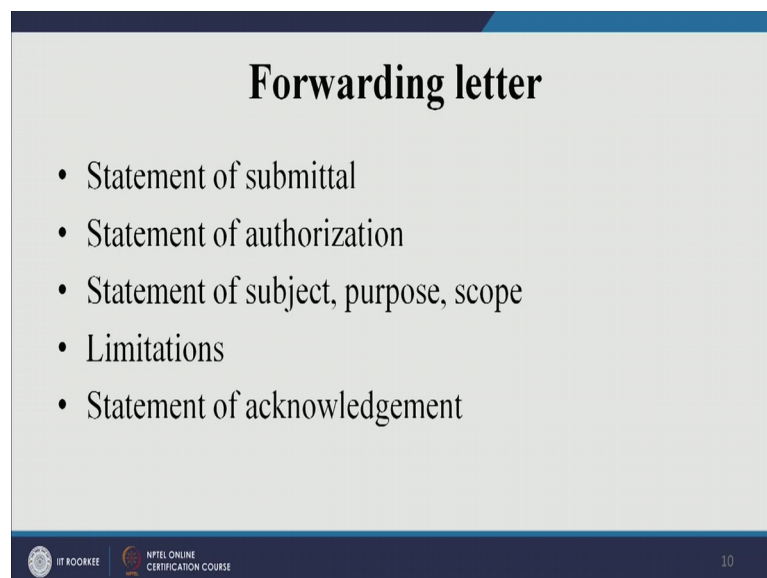
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Suppose you are Amit Jain. So, you will write on the backside of the title page, Amit Jain and at the rate off Amit Jain 2017. Or whatever year you have done this report you will mention that. And then some words are there because you know we are living in an age where your ideas or your ideas your findings are yours. Nobody can have the power to take it or the privilege to take it without your permission. That why what is written is all

rights reserved. No part of this report may be reproduced in any form or by any means without written permission from the author or publisher that is actually very important.

So, this has to be written. So, this is copyright notice, next comes the forwarding later. Suppose you are writing a report while you are working in an organization, naturally as I said earlier you have to follow certain channels. And this report because it has to be submitted to somebody else the report has to be forwarded. And for that you require a forwarding letter. In certain cases we also call it letter of transmittal. So, this because you know the officer under whom you are working he will write a forwarding later.

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Forwarding letter

- Statement of submittal
- Statement of authorization
- Statement of subject, purpose, scope
- Limitations
- Statement of acknowledgement

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He will forward this letter, this letter of forwarding it is simply a hint that this is through a proper channel. And in forwarding later the person who forwards this he actually certifies this report.

So, it is a statement of submittal, moreover it also talks about the statement of authorization. You will find that when you are provided with the TOR a means terms of reference. You are also given this authorization because you have authorized somebody else has authorized you to write this report that is why you want this report to have a forwarding letter. And it talks about the statement of the subject the purpose scope also the limitations and it is in a way a statement of acknowledgment.

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Forwarding letter

TARA SANJIVINI HOSPITAL, ROORKEE

05 April, 2017

Dr Nilesh Mathur
Chief Medical Officer
Tara Sanjivini Hospital
Roorkee- 247667

Dear Sir

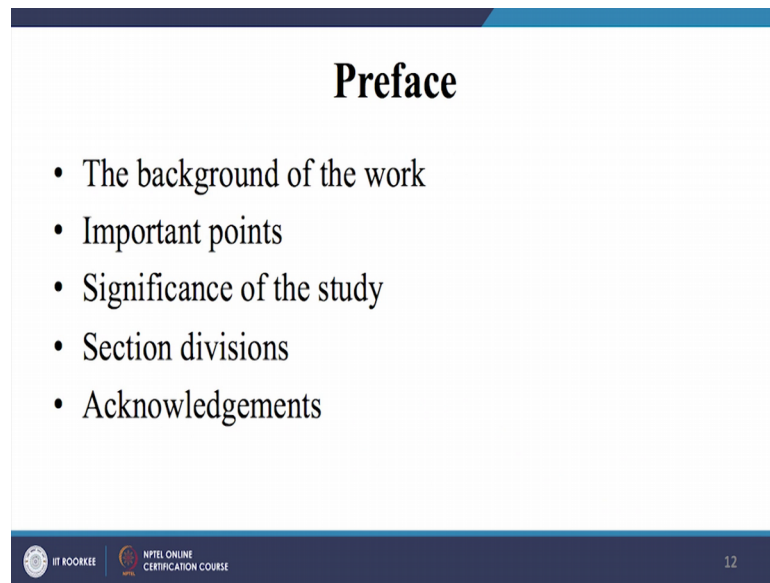
It is indeed a great privilege to submit the report on the effect of education and socio-economic status on maternal health care among the residents of Roorkee.
I am grateful to my colleagues and friends for their support and encouragement during the course of my study. I am also thankful to my students who helped me a lot in data collection by contacting 120 people on campus.

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But remember it is not mandatory in all reports. And the forwarding letter will be just like any other business letter, where the person I mean the forwarding officer or your control officer will write it in the format of a letter, where he will use the requirements of business letter. And he will also talk about how this report happened to be, and why this report is important.

So, when you formulate a forwarding letter fine for example, here you have found that here is letter to Nilesh Mathur. And then the person who writes it, he also in a way acknowledges the help of those people who have helped him in the formulation or the creation of this report.

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Preface

- The background of the work
- Important points
- Significance of the study
- Section divisions
- Acknowledgements

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Next comes the preface, this is actually the first page of the report writer. First written page by the report writer. You see in a preface because the preface is written by the writer himself the report writer himself.

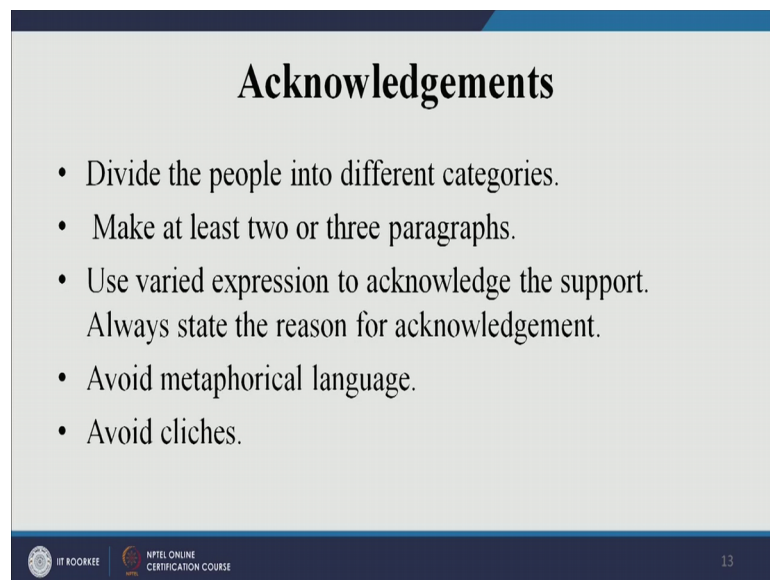
Here the report writer talks about the subject, talks about the work that he has done. And in a way he familiarizes the readers with the report. Or maybe with findings also, but the preface cannot be too long. Sometimes people often confuse between preface and forward, while a point of caution in this regard is quite important to understand, that the preface is written by the person who is writing the report whereas, foreword is written by an expert in that area.

For example if I write my book I will write my preface, but somebody else say a person who is a celebrity a person who is an expert in any air in that area. He will actually recommend it is a sort of recommendation. So, when somebody writes a foreword it is a sort of recommendation to the reader. So, and in preface you also talk about the significance of your study. You may also talk about the organization of various sections, and in a way you acknowledge also. But since the number of people whom you want to acknowledge the list sometimes becomes longer. That is why it is advisable not to acknowledge all the people in the preface that is why let the preface be as short as possible. Because you have a separate page for acknowledgement where you can pay

your gratitude where you can thank all those people who have helped you in the acknowledgement section.

Next comes the acknowledgement section. This acknowledgment section is again a different page which comes soon after the preface, and here you have to understand because you know as a report writer, you know who are the people you want to acknowledge their services. Since you came across several people who have been of some help in some way or the other to you know better. Moreover there are several people you want to acknowledge. So, while writing the acknowledgement page you need to distribute.

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Acknowledgements

- Divide the people into different categories.
- Make at least two or three paragraphs.
- Use varied expression to acknowledge the support.
Always state the reason for acknowledgement.
- Avoid metaphorical language.
- Avoid cliches.

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And divide people into different categories sometimes you will find in a report or in a book also people also acknowledge their family members and all, but you cannot do it just in the beginning because you are working in an organization from where you are going to write a report and you are also going to talk about the people you are going actually to appreciate you are just expressing your gratitude in a very sentimental manner.

So, let it be as soft as 2 or 3 paragraphs, but then and the language appears to be very polite. For example, you can say I am thankful to my director shri such and such I am also thankful to shri such and such the dean faculty of us. But remember if you go on repeating the same line it will appear very boring. Hence the need of the are is to change

for in first sentence or in first paragraph you say I acknowledge the services of shri such and such in the second you can say I felt feel highly satisfied if I also acknowledge.

You can also say I am thankful too I pay my regards to mister such and such. I shall be failing in my duty if I do not put a word of acknowledgement to shri such and such. What I mean to say I oh my gratitude to mister such and such I mean every sentence every paragraph has to have a sort of variety. But remember while using variety do not use metaphorical language who are people cannot understand. All you need to do is you need to language that is simple, we shall be discussing how you can make use of language while you are writing a report. And here has to be taken that you do not use klisors jargons because people whom you are going to acknowledge they are not men of letters like you.

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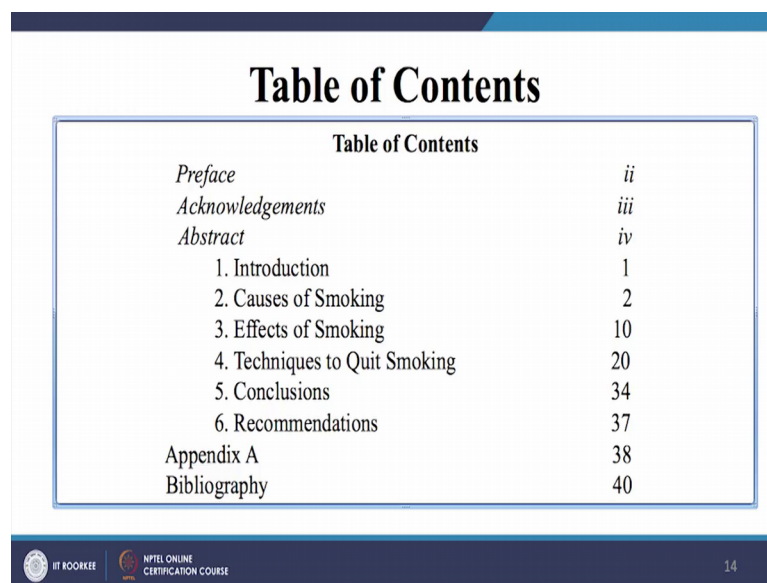


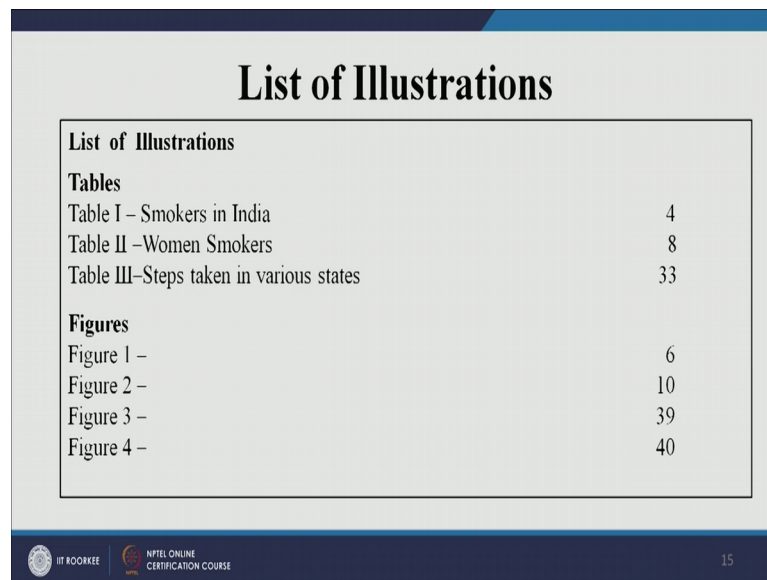
Table of Contents	
<i>Preface</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>iii</i>
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2. Causes of Smoking	2
3. Effects of Smoking	10
4. Techniques to Quit Smoking	20
5. Conclusions	34
6. Recommendations	37
Appendix A	38
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So, let the language be add simple as possible. Next to the acknowledgement part comes the table of contents. Now friends you remember in the previous lecture we talked about an outline. And here we are going to talk about the table of contents. In outline we said that it is actually the division of the entire information into several parts. In table of contents also it is actually a division of the entire matter of the book into several parts. But here the point of difference is while in outline we did not have the pagination, I mean we didnt use the page numbers, but here we are using the page numbers.

While writing table of contents you have to follow certain norms, the first is right table of contents in the middle I mean the center on the top. And then please leave some spaces and the first item that comes in every table of contents is preface, then will come acknowledgement and then will come abstract if you have also attached abstract in your report and then there will be further divisions or further titles chapter titles of your report.

But, but please do remember that when you are writing preface and acknowledgement and abstract they should be in italics, italics and the numbering wise also they will be written in say in roman. And the real pagination will begin from the introduction. And again from the introduction the real numbering will begin. This numbering here you do not have to give several subdivisions, you know many people often you know they are often driven by the idea that they should also provide the subdivisions. It is not essential you should simply provide the title because the entire matter is there in the book or in the report and then finally, the appendix and the bibliography that also will form part of the table of contents. Moreover you will find in your report there will be certain list of illustrations.

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List of Illustrations	
Tables	
Table I – Smokers in India	4
Table II –Women Smokers	8
Table III–Steps taken in various states	33
Figures	
Figure 1 –	6
Figure 2 –	10
Figure 3 –	39
Figure 4 –	40

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Now, what are these list of illustrations we will discuss. So, you also will write list of illustrations, and then your report may have several tables and charts and all. In certain cases you may avoid mentioning them in the table of contents, but nowadays many

writers also feel it important to provide them. So, if you are going to provide them its, but if you are not it is not mandatory rather, then comes abstract and summary.

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Abstract/Summary

- Abstract is clear, concise, condensation, of the main purpose and important results of the study.
- Main focus of the study.
- Shorter than the summary.

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Now here also you need to understand, but before that let us talk about illustrations, what are these lists of illustrations? When you are writing a technical report it is not only that you are providing only verbal information, written information. As I have said time and again that there are many people who do not have much time to read the entire report. So, what they need to understand is they actually need to understand is the trend they also use they also would like to know it through a table through certain drops whether it be rectilinear graphs pie charts or whatever. So, all these illustrations which are there in your report, but then in order that you are going to give them some more privilege you have provided a separate list where you have mentioned and in the list you have mentioned the number of tables are the chart number. And there also you can mention these page numbers.

Now comes the abstract or this summary. Now what is the basic difference between the t 2 and why they are important? Suppose you are going for a conference you are also going to read the paper there. So, what is expected? First they actually asked you to send an abstract an abstract. An abstract is actually in a brief manner it is the condensed form of your paper or your presentation or your written work. So, it has to be written in such a manner because this abstract helps people to understand what this entire report is about.

So, in a very succinct manner, in a very brief manner you are going to provide them what this report is all about. It actually talks about the main focus of your study.

But when you talk about these summary, summary is somehow longer than the abstract. Abstract is a very short in a very short manner you are and here you also provide some key words as to what this report is about what you have done, but when you are talking about this summary it will be a bit longer. In summary you talk about the entire report, in an certain cases people also use executive summary. Where they provide the details of the entire report, but in a very concise manner whenever concise it may be it may go up to 1.5 or 2 pages, but remember the language that you will use in an abstract as well as in a summary that has to be that has to follow a sort of neutrality. I mean the language always in all source of business communications will have a sort of detachment and it should stand true to the scientific description. It should not be a flowery sort of language moreover using too much of jagans and all.

So, care has to be taken that while you are writing the report while you are writing the report, and when you are in the structural part and you are writing the summary it has to be in such a manner that people who are going to read it may have some knowledge, because through your abstract you are preparing them to read your report. Next is executive summary. So, here we should also throw some light on what an executive summary can be. As I said earlier it is actually the entire report in a not sell. I mean you begin with you may talk about a little bit very little of the background because for that you have to do a lot when you start the main part of the report, but here you are going to talk about why you are writing this report, why you are writing this paper.

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Executive Summary

- The entire report in a nut shell.
- Identify topic sentences in different paragraphs.
- Maintain coherence between topic sentence and subordinate ones.
- Mention objectives, findings, methodology and recommendations.

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So, identify the topic sentence, and provide different paragraphs in various ways, identify the topic sentences by putting them into different paragraphs. And there has to be occurrence between the main topic and the subordinate one. Please do mention the objectives of your report, the findings in an abstract people also should see that they mentioned the methodology. I mean how they will carry forward their report how they will move on further in their report and then if there are recommendations. Because when people look at the abstract they are also in a position to see what an abstract is and how the further paper will be it creates in people a sort of desire to read your report.

Dear friends when we talk about the prefatorial material or the front matter, all the items right from the cover page, to the title page, to the frontispiece to the copyright notice to the acknowledgement, and then abstract summary illustrations, all of them they actually are simply the parts and they formulate the main part. That is why we call them prefatorial materials. But when we have done the task of completing the prefatorial materials, all we need is to go to the main discussion and then to the back matter. We shall be talking both about the main part or main part as well as the back matter in detail in the lecture that follows. Till then you should think off whether you have been able to understand the prefatorial part of the report.

Thank you very much.