

The Essential Ask and Answer Elements

Qualities the Govern a Well-Written Report

Key Elements of Style

Who

Include identification and correctly spelled, full names of all involved

What

The guts of the report – who was doing what to whom

Where

Pinpoint the location of incident and physical location of all involved

When

Give the date and time the incident occurred

** Why*

If known, state the reason(s) or motive(s) for the incident

How

Describe the events in chronological order

Action

State what staff did as a result of the incident

Taken

Complete

All relevant information must be covered. Reports should include - **The Essential Ask and Answer Elements.**

Concise

Written reports should say what has to be said, avoiding personal opinions, hearsay, and speculation.

Clear

Reports should be written for reader ease and understanding. The writer should use simple, direct, and descriptive words.

Correct

Your report reflects your integrity. Document exactly what occurred. Using the previous 3 C's will result in a well-written report.

Short Sentences

A sentence should be strong and to the point. Zero in on key words.

Simple Language

When one word is enough – use it. Do not use two or three words that may be confusing.

Ex. – “Needless to say”
If it’s needless to say, don’t say it.

Use Dynamic Verbs

** See the list of Action and Base Verbs



Training Rocks!

Remember your signature!

** Why* - If the reason is known, and is NOT speculation or hearsay, it should be included in your report. If staff is aware of an incident(s) that motivated the report that is currently being documented, include information about the previous event(s) in the current report.

How To Use...

Commas

Use to set an introductory phrase and to separate:

- 3 or more elements
- days of week from month
- month from year
- date of the month from the year

Quotation Marks

- Use to state exact words spoken or written by another person
- Use to enclose "slang" expressions

Apostrophe

- Use to show possession
- Use to write contractions

Their/There

Their = possessive case of THEY

Ex. - Look at their accomplishments.

There = pronoun or adverb

Ex. - There will be no movie today.

Or

The Admin Building is over there.

You're/Your

- Your = possessive case of YOU
- You're = Contraction of YOU ARE

Got Training?

** A Short List of Action & Base Verbs

Knowledge

define, identify, label, list, name, state

Comprehension

describe, discuss, explain, interpret, paraphrase, summarize

Application

calculate, classify, demonstrate, modify, relate, solve

Analysis

analyze, arrange, divide, infer, order, select

Evaluation

conclude, critique, evaluate, justify, recommend

Base Verbs

hit, throw, drink, settle, assist, arbitrate

Anne Arundel County Detention Center
TRAINING DEPARTMENT

Definition of Well Written Report

An orderly and factual written of an incident that has been observed, heard, investigated, or experienced.

A well-written report does not have grammatical or spelling errors. It is clear, concise, complete, and correct.

Close attention is paid to the need for reader ease and understanding.

Close attention is paid to the fact that it may be used in court.

Close attention is paid to the fact that it can be used to assess your understanding and implementation of policies and procedures.

Finally, understand that the report you submit is a permanent record of an incident, as well as your skills, knowledge, and character.

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