Unit 308: Monitor information systems

Understand how information systems are used
Lesson objectives

• Explain how the intended use of reports affects the choice and format and language.

• Explain how the audience of reports affects the choice of format and language.

• Explain the features of different problem-solving techniques related to information systems.

• Evaluate the suitability of possible problem-solving techniques related to information systems.
Information systems

What is an information system?
Information systems

- Information is an organised set of seemingly related data.
- A system is a method or process of grouping things together.
- An information system is the combining of users, technology and processes to complete a given goal.
Activity:
What information systems do you have in your organisation?
Reporting

Within an information system you may need to create reports.

The three types of reports are:

• Informational
• Analytical
• Research
Informational reports

Informational reports provide data, facts, feedback and other types of information without analysis or recommendations.

There are four types of these reports:

• Decision-making reports
• Policy reports
• Compliance reports
• Status reports
Informational reports

**Decision-making reports** are a type of informational reporting that contains facts about monitoring and controlling operations. Additionally, these reports provide specific feedback on a company's operations.

**Policy reports** are another use of informational reporting that provides procedures and guidelines for an organisation.

**Compliance reports** reveal a company's consent to regulators or governments to show the company is abiding by regulations.

**Status reports** provide critical feedback and updates on projects.
Informational reports

Activity:
Give an example of each type of informational report
Analytical reports

Analytical reports offer both information and analysis but they also include recommendations.

Offering recommendations is the biggest difference between informational and analytical reporting.
Research reports

You will often have to write reports that are documents containing factual and objective information that you have collected through research.
Writing for your audience

When writing reports you will need to consider the format and language for your reports depending on the audience.

It is important that the writer knows and understands his or her audience and that the writer tailors what he or she writes for that audience.
Writing for your audience

Here are four key points to consider:

• What is the reader's position with respect to you?

• What is the reader's perspective? Does the reader have a particular role or position that makes him or her biased about the topic you're writing about?

• What level of knowledge does the reader have about your topic?

• What do you want your reader to take away from what you write?
Reader’s position

When writing reports you will need to consider your reader’s position.

For example, when writing something for your superior, your tone and style would be formal.

When writing something for your colleague or friend it would be written using more informal language.
Reader’s perspective

It is also a good idea to be aware of your reader's general perspective on an issue when you write.

For example, if you were writing a report about the performance of a particular team for your line manager, the tone, style and language used would be different than if writing a report about an individual’s performance.
Level of knowledge

You should take into account what your reader knows about your topic as you write.

Think about what background information your reader might need to be brought up to speed on your topic.

Are there any facts, processes or techniques that need to be explained? Are there any terms that need to be defined?
What do you want them to take away?

You will need to think about what you want your reader to take away from what you write.

To inform, persuade or entertain – those are examples of primary objectives or purposes. To meet those objectives, you'll need to think carefully about who your readers are and what their positions are, what your readers' perspectives might be and what level of knowledge your readers have about your subject matter.
Writing for your audience

Activity:
Design a report
Problem-solving techniques

Within an information system, there are a number of techniques used to resolve problems.

Examples of these include:

• Upgrades
• Training
• Retraining staff
Problem-solving techniques

Examples of problems include:

• Loss of information
• Misplacement of information
• System outage
• Incorrect information
Upgrades

Within information systems an **upgrade** is generally a replacement of hardware, software or firmware with a newer or better version, in order to bring the **system** up to date or to improve its characteristics.
Training

Delivering training to staff on the use of the system will ensure understanding and capability of the rollout of new software, hardware or firmware.
Retraining

There will be occasions, following system upgrades or following a review of the system, when you might need to retrain users to ensure that the system is used effectively and to the best of its capability.

You would also retrain should an upgrade happen to focus on specific areas impacted by the upgrade.
Problem-solving actions

When solving problems, you will need to consider which is the best option for solving the issue.

Activity:
Consider each problem-solving action’s strengths and weaknesses
Any questions?