

English Corner

Summarizing and concluding in reports



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Quiz

The following quiz tests your overall understanding of business report writing. Read the findings section below, which is taken from a report about job satisfaction in a school. The findings are based on the data in the following table. These data were derived from a questionnaire survey of senior and junior staff.

Aspects of job satisfaction	% of senior staff satisfied	% of junior staff satisfied
Salary	62%	58%
Benefits	71%	62%
Working conditions	41%	38%
Training opportunities	65%	36%
Opportunities for promotion	71%	46%
Recognition for work	74%	59%
Opportunities for interesting work	81%	62%
Chance to have a say in decision making	80%	40%
Working relationships	62%	64%

Read the findings section below and then answer the questions that follow.

Findings

As seen from the above table, senior members of teaching staff are noticeably more satisfied with their jobs than their junior-level colleagues. The findings indicate that most employees are broadly satisfied with the following areas: salary, benefits, opportunities for interesting work, working relationships and recognition for work. On the basis of the findings, four areas are identified for discussion, including working conditions, training opportunities, decision making and promotion prospects.

It can be seen that both senior and junior members of staff are generally dissatisfied with working conditions. The main reason for their dissatisfaction seems to be a result of the recent renovation of the teaching block and office move since the summer. Since the renovation and the move, there have been frequent complaints about the cramped working environment and the quality of the lighting, air-conditioning and décor. Staff are also unhappy about the pollution, congestion and overcrowding in the district where the school is located.

Another issue that deserves attention is the issue of training opportunities for junior staff. Around two-thirds of employees in this category are disgruntled with the school's performance in this area. Their dissatisfaction might be attributed to the cuts recently made in funding for training courses in the areas of computing and languages. It may also be that they resent the fact that management workshops for senior staff have escaped cuts.

In marked contrast with their senior colleagues, junior-level employees are dissatisfied with their apparent exclusion from the decision-making process. Their unhappiness in this area stems from the fact that the management's staff consultative committee has met only once last year (unlike in previous years when it was held on a regular basis).

The last area of concern is promotion opportunities. Just under a half of junior staff are discontent with the limited opportunities provided for promotion. A number of cuts were made at middle-management and senior levels in the past two years because of the gloomy economic climate in Hong Kong. Junior employees are understandably frustrated that as a result of these cuts some avenues for career advancement have been blocked.

Questions:

1. Look at the organization of paragraphs 2-5. Which sentence/sentences in these paragraphs describe the findings and which ones explain the findings?
2. What are the words/phrases the writer uses to explain his/her findings?
3. What are the various words/phrases the writer uses to express the idea of dissatisfaction?

Key:

1. The underlined sentences are used to describe the findings and the sentences in bold are for explaining the findings.

It can be seen that both senior and junior members of staff are generally dissatisfied with working conditions. **The main reason for their dissatisfaction seems to be a result of** the recent renovation of the teaching block and office move since the summer. Since the renovation and the move, there have been frequent complaints about the cramped working environment and the quality of the lighting, air-conditioning and décor. Staff are also unhappy about the pollution, congestion and overcrowding in the district where the school is located.

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2. A variety of words are used to convey the meaning of dissatisfaction in the findings section. Learn how to vary your use of expressions (e.g. dissatisfied; dissatisfaction; disgruntled; discontented; unhappiness).