

REPORT WRITING: Writing the introduction and conclusion paragraphs

Report question

Workplace diversity is now recognised as an important feature in organisations, especially in multicultural nations like Australia. What communication problems might arise in a culturally diverse workplace, and how can managers best deal with them?

Example introduction

Over the past twenty five years, since Australia embraced multiculturalism as a policy, issues of intercultural communication have become more and more prominent in the workplace. However, until relatively recently, little had been written on these issues, and even now, many organisational managers have no training or knowledge of how to deal with communication problems, even though most workplaces are staffed by people of diverse cultures. Particular problem areas include the difficulties that some non-English speakers have in understanding safety instructions (figures produced by the ABS in 1997 show that migrant workers have a higher incidence of accidents at the workplace); an ignorance of the different forms of non-verbal communication used by other cultures (for example it is considered impolite in some societies for an employee to look directly at his or her employer), which can lead to misunderstandings and unpleasantness; and the lack of knowledge about differing expectations. Based on interviews with managers and staff in six organisations (public and commercial), this report examines these three problem areas, and shows that many of the difficulties faced by both natives and migrants in the workforce are caused by a lack of awareness of, and training in, intercultural communication.

Identify the various aspects of the introduction using these labels

<p>The thesis statement explicitly states the specific focus of the report – to examine – and tells how this is achieved. i.e. through interviews.</p>	<p>This sentence explains the problem. Note that words from the report question are being reused to signal appropriate content</p>
<p>The scope points start here and identify the subjects to be examined.</p>	<p>This provides background information about the subject.</p>

Example conclusion

It is clear, therefore, that not only do employees have to be trained for working in the Australian multicultural workplace, but managers also need to be trained. Managers must ensure that effective in-house training programs are provided for migrant workers, so that they become more familiar with the English language, Australian communication norms and the Australian work culture. In addition, Australian native English speakers need to be made aware of the differing cultural values of their workmates; particularly the different forms of non-verbal communication used by other cultures. Furthermore, all employees must be provided with clear and detailed guidelines about company expectations. The interviews with managers and staff reveal that a majority of managers must also have training in cross cultural communication and in managing a culturally diverse workplace. Above all, in order to minimise communication problems and to maintain an atmosphere of tolerance, understanding and cooperation in the multicultural workplace, managers need to have an effective knowledge about their employees, to understand how their social conditioning affects their beliefs about work and to have the communication skills to develop confidence and self-esteem among diverse work groups. The culturally diverse Australian workplace may never be completely free of communication problems, however, further studies to identify potential problems and solutions, as well as better training in cross cultural communication for managers and employees, should result in a much more understanding and cooperative environment.

Identify the various aspects of the conclusion using these labels

<p>The final sentence suggests future trends and makes a final recommendation for further study.</p>	<p>These sentences refer back to the problem areas stated in the introduction (scope points) and identify solutions</p>
<p>This refers back to the thesis statement in the introduction and identifies a key finding of the study.</p>	<p>This is a statement about what the writer considers to be the most important recommendation</p>
<p>This sentence provides a link to the previous paragraph and refers to the main subject discussed in the body. It uses keywords such as 'managers' and 'multicultural workplace'.</p>	

ANSWERS:

Introduction

Over the past twentyfive years, since Australia embraced multiculturalism as a policy, issues of intercultural communication have become more and more prominent in the workplace. However, until relatively recently, little had been written on these issues, and even now, many organisational managers have no training or knowledge of how to deal with communication problems, even though most workplaces are staffed by people of diverse cultures. Particular problem areas include the difficulties that some non-English speakers have in understanding safety instructions (figures produced by the ABS in 1997 show that migrant workers have a higher incidence of accidents at the workplace); an ignorance of the different forms of non-verbal communication used by other cultures (for example it is considered impolite in some societies for an employee to look directly at his or her employer), which can lead to misunderstandings and unpleasantness; and the lack of knowledge about differing expectations. Based on interviews with managers and staff in six organisations (public and commercial), this report examines these three problem areas, and shows that many of the difficulties faced by both natives and migrants in the workforce are caused by a lack of awareness of, and training in, intercultural communication.

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Conclusion

It is clear, therefore, that not only do employees have to be trained for working in the Australian multicultural workplace, but managers also need to be trained. Managers must ensure that effective in-house training programs are provided for migrant workers, so that they become more familiar with the English language, Australian communication norms and the Australian work culture. In addition, Australian native English speakers need to be made aware of the differing cultural values of their workmates; particularly the different forms of non-verbal communication used by other cultures. Furthermore, all employees must be provided with clear and detailed guidelines about company expectations. The interviews with managers and staff reveal that a majority of managers must also have training in cross cultural communication and in managing a culturally diverse workplace. Above all, in order to minimise communication problems and to maintain an atmosphere of tolerance, understanding and cooperation in the multicultural workplace, managers need to have an effective knowledge about their employees, to understand how their social conditioning affects their beliefs about work and to have the communication skills to develop confidence and self-esteem among diverse work groups. The culturally diverse Australian workplace may never be completely free of communication problems, however, further studies to identify potential problems and solutions, as well as better training in cross cultural communication for managers and employees, should result in a much more understanding and cooperative environment.

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This refers back to the thesis statement in the introduction and identifies a key finding of the study.

This is a statement about what the writer considers to be the most important recommendation.

The final sentence suggests future trends and makes a final recommendation for further study.