

Let us look at Terms of Reference

Terms of reference provide the introduction or background to your report. They clarify the scope of the investigation. That is; the areas/aspects that should be investigated as well as applicable dates. Here are the components of the Terms of Reference:

- State the problem or issues under investigation.
- Provide the names and designations of: the person who commissioned the investigation, the person who should conduct the investigation, and the person to whom the report should be submitted.
- Provide dates: the date on which the report was commissioned, and the date on which the report should be submitted.

Most of the time you will find that this information is included in the assignment/exam question.

Yours is to extract it and arrange it logically. This means you should pay attention to sequence.

Which information comes after which information? Here are the instructions for assignment 02:

Investigative report:

I used last year's
assignment 02 as
an example

You are employed as the Director: Marketing within the Management Division of Hearthealth Food Company. The company has an annual contract with the Big, Bold and Bounteous advertising agency which is renewed annually.

A year ago, the Hearthealth Food Company launched its new product, Hearthealth Margarine, and allocated an amount of R5 million for the advertising and media launch of this product. However, the company has incurred major losses in its margarine manufacturing division, and there is a possibility of job losses.

Management has requested that you investigate possible reasons for the 30% decrease in sales of the Hearthealth Margarine. You are also asked to make recommendations on how to boost sales. Your report has to be submitted to the CEO and executive members of the Hearthealth Food Company by the end of June.

Let us now dissect them to see if all the aspects of the Terms of Reference could be extricated.

Before we commence with this dissection, pay attention to the sequence of details in the Terms of reference:

On {date}, the Management of Hearthealth Food Company requested an investigation into the possible reasons for the decrease in sales of Hearthealth Margarine. Mr/Ms {title and surname}, the Director of Marketing within the Management Division of Hearthealth Food Company, was tasked with this investigation following major losses in the margarine manufacturing division which may lead to job losses. The report with recommendations on how to boost sales should be submitted to the CEO and executive members of this company by {date}.

The name and designation of person who should conduct the investigation.
Come up with a name or write your. The designation is given. Be creative and invent a date on which you were commissioned.

State the problem or issues under investigation. Incorporate the company name as you detail these problems.

You are employed as the Director: Marketing within the Management Division of Hearthealth Food Company. The company has an annual contract with the Big, Bold and Bounteous advertising agency which is renewed annually.

A year ago, the Hearthealth Food Company launched its new product, Hearthealth Margarine, and allocated an amount of R5 million for the advertising and media launch of this product. However, the company has incurred major losses in its margarine manufacturing division, and there is a possibility of job losses.

The name and designation of person who commissioned the investigation

Management has requested that you investigate possible reasons for the 30% decrease in sales of the Hearthealth Margarine. You are also asked to make recommendations on how to boost sales. Your report has to be submitted to the CEO and executive members of the Hearthealth Food Company by **the end of June.**

The date on which the report was commissioned. This date has not been provided but looking at the due date (end of June) you can work out this date. How about the beginning of June? Of course you will write specific dates. Full dates, not beginning of, or end of.

The date on which the report should be submitted. As advised before, avoid vague references and provide specific dates. Day, month, year.

The name and designation of the person to whom the report should be submitted. You will notice that only the designations have been given. Be creative and invent names.

The date can be written either as: '30 June 2017', or 'the 30th of June 2017'. The first format is easier to work with and it also reduces the wordiness of a sentence.

As you can see, Terms of Reference are right in front of you. Extract them and arrange them logically. There you are!