|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Essential Components** | **Things to consider** | **Write what you will say** | |
| **Context** | Context is necessary.  It helps the reader put the document into a framework.  Be careful not to overwhelm the reader with everything you’ve ever known or thought about the topic—just enough, not too much. |  | |
| **Main Message** | The following phrases are signal words to alert your reader that this sentence is the main message.   * Overall, project performance is satisfactory … * The main conclusion is … * The study’s key finding is … * Our main recommendation is to … |  | |
| **Optional Components** |  | **Are you including it?** | **If yes, what will you say? (Write it here)** |
| **Scope** | State the scope if it’s important to clearly define what areas the report covers. |  |  |
| **Relevance** | Include this component when you think it would be helpful to motivate your reader or to clarify why the report matters to them. |  |  |
| **Purpose** | The purpose establishes what you hope to achieve in your report. If this is already clear from the context and main message, then you may not need to state the purpose explicitly.  However, it is never wrong to state the purpose. |  |  |
| **Stated Methodology** | This is usually necessary in a research document, but it is not often required in others.  Be brief! Do not give an exhaustive description. |  |  |
| **Summary of Findings** | Often the main message itself is the summary of findings. One common exception is where the writer states a fact, theory, or problem (summary of findings), and then a recommendation (which becomes the real main message).  The findings are most commonly seen in research reports. |  |  |
| **Road Map**  **(If you include a road map, it should follow the main message. The roadmap—if used—is the only part of the introduction that follows the main message.)** | If the main message names the themes, you probably don’t need a road map. However, if the main message is very general, the road map will help the reader see themes/topics of the document. Road maps are also commonly used with long, complex reports or with reports where the unit’s standards (more or less arbitrarily) require them. |  |  |