Feasibility Report

The culmination of the feasibility study is a feasibility report directed to management; it evaluates the impact of the proposed changes on the area(s) in question. The report is a formal document for management use, brief and sufficiently non-technical to be understandable, yet detailed enough to provide the basis for system design.

There is no standard format for preparing feasibility reports. Analysts usually decide on a format that suits the particular practice in the organization. Most reports, however, begin with a summary of findings and recommendations, followed by documented details. Starting with summary information highlights the essence of the report, giving management the option of reviewing the details later. The report contains the following sections: (the headings MUST appear in the report)

1. Cover letter formally presents the report and briefly indicates to management the nature, general findings, and recommendations to be considered. It should be addressed to the Vice President of Student Residences.

2. Table of contents specifies the location of the various parts of the report. Management quickly refers to the sections that concern them.

3. Overview is a narrative explanation of the purpose (goal(s)) and scope of the project, the reason for undertaking the feasibility study, and the department(s) involved or affected by the proposed system. The names of the persons who conducted the study are also included, when it began, and other information that explains the circumstances surrounding the study.

4. Detailed findings outline the methods used in the present system, its effectiveness and efficiency as well as operating costs. The section also provides a description of the objectives and general procedures of the proposed system. A discussion of output reports (if any), costs, and benefits gives management a feel for the pros and cons of the proposed system.

5. Justification (cost, schedule, technical, and organizational feasibility) details point-by-point preliminary cost estimates for the development and operation of the proposed system. A return on investment (ROI) analysis of the project is also included, perhaps identifying when the university’s investment (if any) would be recovered.

6. Recommendations and conclusions suggest to management the most beneficial and cost-effective system. They are written only as a recommendation, not a demand. Following the recommendations, any conclusions from the study may be included.

Disapproval of the feasibility report is rare if it has been developed properly. When a feasibility team has maintained good rapport with the user and his/her staff, approval of the recommendations could be easier to accomplish. Management approval is required before system design is initiated; they have the final say.