

Report Writing



Situation - Who, What, Where, When, How, Why?

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| • What happened? | Did a crime occur, what crime? |
| • Who did it happen to? | Is there a victim, a witness, a suspect? |
| • Where did it happen? | Jurisdiction, crime scene, direction of travel. |
| • When did it happen? | Just occur, is there a delay; if so, Why? |
| • How did it occur? | Gun, knife, hand, getaway driver, vehicle, etc.? |
| • Why did this occur? | Random, pre-meditated, opportunity? |

Proper report writing involves articulating facts in an organized chronological fashion. A good report will include facts and circumstances that you observed. Report writing tells a story and refreshes your memory for court presentation and documents the case for the record. Report writing format will vary, but all reports should include the basic facts of the case including location, time, circumstances, and involved parties. All reports should be written with proper grammar avoiding slang terms unless it is pertinent to the circumstances i.e. Slang that describes an act or item. For example, "Give me the ice or I'll put a bullet in your dome, dawg." The meaning of slang terms should be explained in order to clarify the circumstances.

S.O.A.P.

S - Situation: WHAT happened, WHERE did it happen, WHO did it happen to and by whom, WHEN did it happen, HOW did it happen and WHY did it happen?

Example: I responded to the listed location in reference to an armed robbery in progress. Dispatch advised that a white male subject with a small caliber handgun took the victim's purse and fled in a white late model Chevrolet sedan north on S. Dixie Highway at a high rate of speed.

O - Observation: (Senses) What did you see, hear, smell?

Example: I observed the victim to have a disheveled appearance and was visibly shaken and was crying.

A - Assessment: Did this crime occur, are there corroborating evidence to support your opinion?

P - Plan: What were your actions, did you make an arrest? Was there a report written?

Example: A perimeter was established and K-9 responded to the scene. Contact was made with the suspect behind the Publix. The suspect was in possession of the white purse. The victim positively identified the subject.