Guidelines for writing the final written report

The output of the project should be a written report, with max. 5,000 words of main text.

You can organize the report as you like. It should however contain the following elements:

1. **Question.** State up front the fundamental research question you're trying to answer. E.g., "what are the barriers to collaboration between R&D and marketing at Knoll furniture and does its current KM system reduce those barriers?" The more focused, the better.

2. **Problem statement.** Describe the problem (or opportunity) the organization or manager or person is facing.

3. **Analysis/diagnosis.** Analyze the situation. Briefly mention the concepts you will be using, then apply them. Include supporting evidence. E.g., for the above example, list survey results if used, insert quotes from interviewees, refer to other data sources. Succinctly list conclusions from the analysis.

4. **Recommendations.** List recommendations. State how the analysis informs the recommendation. They need to be linked!

5. **Appendix: Sources.** List the data sources you use. Number of interviews incl. with what types, and archival sources. Include as appendix in the report. Other items in the appendix: use your discretion. Max 10 tables/charts though.

6. **Executive summary up-front:** a one-page maximum summary of problem investigated and conclusions.

Some tips for doing this well:
- It is a written report. You need sentences, not powerpoint slides with bullet points.
- Clarity of arguments. I don’t care about elegant prose, but your arguments need to be articulated clearly.
- Focused report. Do not boil the ocean. This is not a thesis. This is a “small” class report.
- The sharper the conclusion and recommendations, the better. It is better to say “the organization needs to change their incentive system to include at least 20% weight based on collaboration,” as opposed to saying “the organization needs to change the incentive system to promote collaboration,” or worse, “the organization needs to look at its HR system and how they incentive people….”
- Analysis. Make sure you enlist supporting evidence. For example, if you state that the organization has high hoarding barriers, you need to state the evidence (quotes from interviews, survey reports, other documents).
- Recommendations need to flow from the analysis. If you state that the organization has a hoarding barrier, then go on to suggest they should put in place video conferencing, then it is not clear how the two hang together.

A “grade A” report will have the following: a clear problem statement; a focused in-depth
analysis with supporting evidence; a set of recommendations flowing naturally from the analysis; well organized, easy to read, with clear arguments; a few well-organized charts in the main text; the appropriate number of charts etc. in the appendix— not too many, not too few.