



# How to Read a Financial Report: Wringing Vital Signs Out of the Numbers

By John A. Tracy

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By John A. Tracy

Hidden somewhere among all the numbers in a financial report is vitally important information about where a company has been and where it is going. This Fourth Edition is designed to help anyone who works with financial reports—but has neither the time nor the need for an in-depth knowledge of accounting—cut through the maze of accounting information to find out what those numbers really mean. In this edition an entirely new and carefully designed exhibit is used to visually illustrate the connecting links among the three key statements in a financial report (the balance sheet, the income statement and the cash flow statement). This center-piece exhibit—used throughout the text—includes a two-year comparative balance sheet to explain the cash flow statement much more effectively. Also features a new chapter on the making and changing of financial reporting rules and updated information on new legislation.

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## **How to Read a Financial Report: Wringing Vital Signs Out of the Numbers** By John A. Tracy **Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

#### How to Read a Financial Report

Lurking somewhere amidst all the figures in a financial report is vitally important information about where a company has been and where it is headed. But without a guide to isolate and interpret those numbers, the dizzying array of columns and rows doesn't add up to a hill of beans. That's why thousands of professionals and savvy individuals have referred to this bestselling resource that shows anyone how to make sense of all those numbers.

If you're someone who works with financial reports or needs to understand them—but have neither the time nor the need for an in-depth knowledge of accounting—this book will help you cut through the maze of accounting information to find out what those numbers *really* mean. It steers you quickly and painlessly through the basic accounting concepts and line-by-line explanations of the basic financial statement. Complete with a visual guide that leads you through the intricacies of financial reporting, *How to Read a Financial Report* shows you how the three essential parts of every financial report—the balance sheet, the income statement, and the cash flow statement—fit together and what it all means to you and your company.

Updated throughout, this new edition addresses the many changes in the financial world in the past few years, including new pronouncements of the Financial Accounting Standards Board, new income tax laws, and emerging financial reporting problems. Also, all exhibits have been made easier to follow. Features updates on:

- Tax reform
- Recent FASB rulings
- Depreciation methods
- Spotting fraudulent reporting

From the Back Cover

Lurking somewhere amidst all the figures in a financial report is vitally important information about where a company has been and where it is headed. But without a guide to isolate and interpret those numbers, the dizzying array of columns and rows doesn't add up to a hill of beans. That's why thousands of professionals and savvy individuals have referred to this bestselling resource that shows anyone how to make sense of all those numbers. Updated throughout, this edition features new information on tax reform, depreciation methods, spotting fraudulent reporting, and recent FASB rulings. Also, all exhibits have been made easier to follow.

"If you would like to have a minimal understanding of the numbers that make up a balance sheet, income, and cash flow statement . . . then *How to Read a Financial Report* might be just what you are looking for. Mr. Tracy's book explains in plain English the meaning of the major terms used in financial statements."  
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About the Author

**JOHN A. TRACY** is an award-winning professor of accounting at the University of Colorado at Boulder. He is also the author of *The Fast Forward MBA in Finance* (Wiley).

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