**FORMAL MEMORANDUM**

**WRITING A MEMO**

Memos are an essential type of written documents intended for communication within companies or organizations. Memos also serve as internal communication tools and are sent to other people within the company or organization. If in case you wanted to write a memo to a certain person but at a different company, you should use a letter instead of a standard memo. Keep in mind that both format and context are essential when it comes to constructing a memo, so you should always pay attention to details.

It is highly necessary to understand the way people read memos. Unlike magazines or books, people don’t often read at the starting part of a memo, rather they read through to the end. Often a reader skips headings and subject lines after they will make decisions regarding what parts are essential to him or her. You can think of it this way: a professional with hectic schedule does not have spare time to read word per word of every page that comes in a document. He or she will just decide what are the important details to read by just looking at the subject line and headings. Hence, writers need to properly understand how to put together a document that will surely help a reader look for important information as fast as possible.

Different Components of a Memo

* **Headers**

Header is the starting part of a memo. The header provides information regarding the writer, the intended recipient, the subject title, the complete date, and the list of complete names of other individuals who can see the memo (cc :). A lot of companies enclose a smaller version of the letterhead and it is placed at the top portion of the document.

Below is a sample:

[INSERT NAME OF ORGANIZATION]

To: [INSERT RECIPIENT’S NAME]

CC: [INSERT NAMES OF PEOPLE WHO CAN SEE THE MEMO]

From: [INSERT SENDER’S NAME]

Subject: [INSERT SUBJECT TITLE OF THE MEMO]

Date: [INSERT COMPLETE DATE]

Take note of how the information in the heading is properly aligned, making it easier to read. The subject should be simple and direct to the point. If you want more details, this is not the right place. Understand the reader; the heading must display the valuable information. There is no set of order for the different sections of the header; just put into consideration what is ideal and best for the reader. Moreover, majority of senders will initially send the memo in order to verify and confirm its legitimacy and to take accountability for the content. This is highly similar to signing your name at the end of a letter. If in case the memo exceeds over a minimum of one page, a different heading is required for the pages that are being added. Set in the page header, it often includes the name of the sender, the complete date, and the number of the page.

Below is a sample:

[INSERT NAME OF RECIPIENT]

[INSERT COMPLETE DATE]

[INSERT PAGE NUMBER]

Sample: Header to Follow for Additional Pages

* **Summaries**

Long memos (memos with more than one page) usually contain a short summary following the opening paragraph. The summary is indeed a compelling tool when it comes to helping the reader determine how much of the memo to read. Summaries are useful if a certain memo has complex subject matter. Make sure to keep the summary in balance to the rest of the document. The summary for a two-page memo would be substantially shorter than the summary of a proposal with twenty-pages.

* **Subject Headings**

Headings are divided into separate sections and break up the memo for the reader to easily read and understand the content of the memo. If there are no headings, the memo would just be plain, lifeless, and difficult pages of text. Whenever there is a new subject, you should distinguish it with a new heading. Headings will also help readers digest and comprehend the information by strengthening the ideas in that specific section. You should always keep the headings simple and make use of font style that is distinct from the rest of the text.

The major objective of this memo is to demonstrate the results of the [INSERT TEST NAME] testing trials.

**Summary**

Generally speaking, I was pleased with the performance of the [INSERT TEST NAME]. It exceeded in all parts of testing.

**Product Testing**

The [INSERT DEPARTMENT] team made [INSERT NUMBER] various test trials of the [INSERT TEST NAME] [INSERT FIELD] system. Tests contained.

**Outcomes**

Several testing results suggested superior performance. The [INSERT TEST NAME] system functions at [INSERT PERCENTAGE VALUE] productivity levels and is anticipated to last at least [INSERT YEARS].

**Activity Items**

The [INSERT DEPARTMENT] team needs to start the initial market research as soon as possible. [INSERT NAME] and the [INSERT DEPARTMENT] team will require [INSERT NUMBER OF DAYS] to amend the revenue input system.

Sample: Body of a Memo

Style

When talking about style, always keep in mind that you are not writing a letter for an English class. You want to have an effective communication in a clear and accurate sense. Do not create any confusion to your reader in an effort to sound intellectual.

The key is being simple.

* Don’t:

Use very complicated words or phrasing.

Irrelevant information.

Difficult to understand sentences.

Condense every details into a single paragraph.

Rely too much on spell checker to catch errors.

Not asking other people for some help.

* Do:

Use simple, clear-cut language.

Always incorporate the important and relevant information.

Write in a direct-to-the-point manner.

Use proper headings and division paragraphs.

Not forget to always proofread and edit your document afterwards.

You may consult a style manual for assistance.

**MEMORANDUM**

To: [INSERT RECIPIENT’S NAME]

From: [INSERT SENDER’S NAME]

Subject: [INSERT MEMO SUBJECT TITLE]

Date: [INSERT COMPLETE DATE]

You will be utilizing this memo format frequently when it comes to answering colleagues or professors. I am handing out this memo as a set of directives and at the same time as a sample memorandum. You will find below the information regarding the format and requirement context about proper writing of a memo. Make sure to follow these guidelines and see [INSERT SPECIFIC CHAPTER] in [INSERT BOOK TITLE] by [INSERT AUTHOR’S NAME] for more added details and clarifications.

* **Spacing**

You need to follow the proper spacing shown in this sample memo. Also, make sure to single space items you see within paragraphs and don’t forget to double space between paragraphs. Basically, paragraphs should not be too long, this can lead to difficulty in reading and understanding.

Opening Paragraph

All memos act as records of essential communications. Since there are instances that recipients might not always remember the occasion or significance of your messages, you should include an opening paragraph that provides a context by indicating the following:

* The subject and the major goal of the memo (what made you decide to write it);
* Any essential context information needed (include the dates, names, task numbers, etc.);
* An overview of the contents (this should not be a summary—just tell the reader directly what to expect in your memo).

Take note that I did these things in my opening paragraph above. Also, you need to take note that there is no formal salutation like there would be in any business letter format.

Format and Tone

In your messages, make use of professional yet conversational format. Using of jargon is highly discourage, this will overly stiff the formal text. Remember to select a polite, accommodating tone, just like what you will normally do in conversation with a professor in his/her office. When it comes to other audiences, you will need to make selections about format and tone based on your relationship with them and this will also base on your thoughts of their needs and objectives.

Closing

There are some memos, just like this sample, wherein there is no need for you to have concluding comments such as you might compose for more formal, disputative documents. Numerous memos, however, need some kind of reaction or indication regarding a future proceedings. When it comes to those cases, close the memo by providing an opportunity for response. (For example, “I will visit your office on [INSERT DAY] at [INSERT TIME] to talk about specific documents and regarding my important meeting with you.”) Make your finishing statement significant and substantive. As much as possible avoid any clichés— your readers probably have seen it a thousand times.

Initials

There is no signature block when it comes to writing a memo. You should, nonetheless, write your initial, beside your name in the heading section, and this should be written using a pen. Take note that I did so at the top section of this sample memo.