

Date: February 29, 2020

To: Select a person or group related to the project

From: Write the names of every team participant in **alphabetical order** – first name and last name

Subject: Writing a Two-page Business Memo

The first paragraph of a memo states the reason for writing it. Cite the problem or challenge you'll address, and describe the structure the memo. Keep all paragraphs to 6-7 lines, made up of 3-4 sentences, not exceeding eight lines. Use Arial 10 point font. Write sentences between a 15-17 words average to maintain a high comprehension rate for the "Spelling and Grammar" feature in Word; find this feature in the *Review* tab. Looking in the Paragraph button on the *Home* tab, use line spacing found in the third section at Before: and After:, and Line spacing: at 0pt, 0pt, and single respectively by using the arrows or dropdown box. In this memo, you will read about the issues/problems, understand the analysis of the issues/problems, review proposed solutions, and assess a recommendation.

Issues/Problems: Provide a Subtitle of the Header Content

In reading a case study or a book assignment, you will identify two-three issues/ problems that the organization needs to address. You will delve into the initial issues you see to grasp what may appear as an issue/problem. In business or life situations, you may run into an issue that doesn't seem to present a solution. You need to work at piecing together aspects of the issue/problem, which in reality address a symptom that you can't solve. You dig deeper to uncover an issue/problem around something related to a system(s), a process(s), people, a structure(s) and/or culture. In real situations, the identifiable issue/problem will contain elements of all five factors. Work to differentiate the five as interconnected in a complicated or complex way. Use the idea in this header to identify two-three issues/problems.

Use this paragraph, where in a memo you will describe the second issue/problem as cited above, I will talk in class about writing practices I want you to incorporate into the memos. First, write paragraphs averaging 6-7 lines with a max of eight lines. **I didn't say sentences but lines.** I will count each paragraph if it looks long and cite any additional length and include a point deduction. Use action verbs, and see the Bloom's Taxonomy for verb examples for six levels of cognitive skills. Don't use *is, was, were, and have, has, and had* in your writing. Work to eliminate *I am...* and say "I (action verb)...", when talking about yourself as the manager or consultant. In the recommendation paragraph for the last paragraph of the memo, don't use conditionals (*would, could, and should*) when discussing its benefits.

Analysis of Issues/Problems: Provide a Subtitle about the Header Content

In this header section you will analyze your two-three issues/problems at a deeper level, looking for connections to and interconnections to other departments or functions within the organization. No department or function works in isolation to the rest of the company. Something going on in one area of the company will affect or be affected by another part. You want to describe the issue's/problem's effect on other departments or functions, raising important concerns. For example, these concerns can address communication, processes, systems, structures, and people. As you analyze the issues/problems, you want to distill a few key important-to-consider elements that need addressing or correcting. In your analysis, focus your writing on the topic, and do not wander into secondary or tertiary issues/problems.

In your writing style, you want to minimize ambiguity by writing specific statements that speak to the issue/problem. Don't wander in your writing to touch on other issues that possess a tangential connection. With any organization issue/problem, many elements surface to create the topic of the memo, but not all elements directly affect the design of any proposed solution and recommendation. Proofread your work to make sure it keeps a tight focus on the main issue(s)/problem(s). When working on a team, identify one

person who will proofread the final draft with the power to make corrections so the memo reads as if it came from one writer. In the next section you will read about 2-3 (you use the number for the number you will provide) proposed solutions that will address the issues/problems explained in the memo.

Proposed Solutions

Firstly, in each paragraph under this header **describe the solution paragraphs with a short statement** in the first line. I will highlight each "title" so you see how I move it to the end of the conclusion paragraph. In business writing you don't highlight it, and don't highlight it in any memo. The reason for providing a title gives each proposed solution its identity in the possible selection and implementation process. Make the title descriptive and easy to remember to garner recognition and support. You want each proposed solution title to stand out to use in conversations. In this paragraph my comments stay focused on the title to describe the features of what the solution will contain and how it can solve the issue/problem.

Secondly, in each paragraph under this header **don't wander onto other topics** that do not address the paragraph title. As much as you see connections to other issues/problem, stay focused on the title of the paragraph. When you write each proposed solution paragraph, you proofread to focus your writing on addressing features about the title. The reader wants to know specifics about the title that address solving an issue/problem. Writing about other less important areas that don't fit into the title will frustrate the reader, e.g., your manager. In each proposed solution paragraph, you want the reader to easily identify the topic and read about how the proposed solution will solve it. Content to provide in each paragraph addresses features that will help the reader understand cost, needed resources, and people time.

Thirdly, in each paragraph under this header **state the features clearly and logically** so the reader can grasp the roll out expectations. Features state the steps in the implementation process. Benefits, which you describe in the recommendation paragraph, state how the solution benefits the organization. Features can include a starting point, a mid-point, and an end-point. It will state the key features important to implementation. You don't describe the features extensively since this activity will take place by the project team. You want the decision maker to understand the big picture items that will solve the issue/problem. Don't provide additional analysis when describing features. In remaining faithful to clear and logical writing, the decision maker will identify responsibility and authority.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In the memo, you read about... (describe the key issue(s), summarize the content in the memo, touching on the few important items you want the reader to remember. Don't wander in summarizing the paragraph by adding new information. Stick to describing what you want to reader to know. Executives will read the introduction, skim the headers and a few lines of each paragraph, look at the proposed solutions, and read the items under this header. Make the paragraph contain the important information the executive needs to make a decision. Lastly, the memo proposed three solutions (Insert the 4-5 words in the first line of each proposed solution that describes each one): 1) describe the solution paragraphs with a short statement; 2) don't wander onto other topics; and 3) state the features clearly and logically.

We (the team) recommend that you describe the solution paragraphs with a short statement. You select the proposed solution's "title" to maintain continuity in thought development. It will provide the company benefits in the following ways. In the recommendation paragraph you describe the benefits of management accepting the proposed solution to show the effective outcomes it will place on a process, structure, systems, culture, and/or staff. You provide one solution, and you don't incorporate analysis. Write 6-7 lines explaining the benefits, and you continue to use action verbs in short sentences. You want the decision maker, e.g., executive, vice president, manager, team, etc., to understand the benefit of accepting the memo's recommendation. In all written material, proofread.