

Evaluation Form: Memo Assignment
HRM 210

Name _____

Your memo will be evaluated on the following criteria and by using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Poor	Marginal	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent

___ 1) **Proper memo format** (heading, body & closing were correct) and **appropriate tone**. Memo was written as an **internal correspondence** to an employee's direct superior.

___ 2) Writing is well **organized** with a **clear** sentence structure and flow of ideas.

___ 3) Student stayed with page limits and **no typos or grammatical errors** were present.

___ 4) Writing shows a thorough understanding of the **key HR problems/issues**.

___ 5) Writing demonstrates that the student has internalized ideas important to HRM professionals. The relevant **HR functions** are clearly identified & emphasized in the memo.

___ 6) Based upon the identified HR functions, the student correctly uses **course concepts** in the context of analyzing the problems and devising solutions for this organization.

___ 7) Student's **HR solutions** are **interesting, relevant and well supported**.

___ 8) Student effectively capitalized on the **HR literature**. (good article selected, article was mentioned in some way and it was used well)

___ **TOTAL SCORE** (maximum score = 40)

MEMO

To: Dr. Joseph Evan
Vice-president of Academic Affairs

From: Dr. Marc Marchese
Professor of HRM

Re: Proposal for changes to the HRM major

Date: April 15, 2015

As you know, last year we had several productive meetings on the issue of As a result of those meetings I am proposing the following changes to the HR major:

- All HR majors will now be required to...
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If you would like to discuss the proposed changes raised in this document, I would be happy to meet with you at your earliest convenience. Thank you for considering my recommendations.

Someone had to stay until the work was finished each evening, and, in many cases this meant considerable overtime. The uncertainty of hours made the job "unbearable" to Gloria. When she tried to make suggestions that she felt might help conditions within the department, she was told by her supervisor that it was not her role to suggest changes. Sheetz said she could not remember ever hearing a supervisor compliment an employee, even when an employee was doing more than what she was told to do. It was only when someone committed an error that the employee heard from a supervisor.

Gloria Sheetz acknowledged that the bank's physical working conditions were good in general. The other employees were enjoyable to work with, but the supervisors in the department were the greatest source of employee dissatisfaction. The supervisors, she felt, were out to make themselves look good to their manager at the expense of the employees. As an example, she cited the incident concerning the "forced contributions" to the charitable fund. In Gloria's opinion, the supervisors wanted it to look as if there had been 100% cooperation of the employees relative to giving. Most of the time, "We were treated like dirt under the supervisors' feet," as far as Gloria was concerned. Quite frequently, supervisors had told various employees that their attitudes were "poor". She had suggested to a human resources staff person that the bank should give the supervisors training in human relations, rather than just training them to be competent on the technical aspects of the job. This suggestion was ignored.

Gloria Sheetz felt that a union was needed for this department of the bank. However, one day when she and some of her co-workers were discussing the merits of unions, a supervisor overheard the discussion. The supervisor proceeded to tell them that if management ever discovered that any of them had responded to a union's attempt to organize the bank, they would lose their jobs. Gloria also mentioned the matter of pay-raise information "leaking" throughout the department. She felt that this was another cause of resentment within the department.

LINDA LIGON "resigned" for reasons similar to those of Gloria Sheetz. Ligon also disliked her job, saying that employees in the check processing department were treated as if they were located in the bank's ghetto." She added, "It is the lowest department in the bank, and even those in other departments consider it as such."

As far as Linda was concerned, the worst problem was the supervision. She was even afraid to approach her supervisor, who never issued compliments, just complaints. Right before she left the bank, Linda was told that her attitude was bad. This only made matters worse. Linda felt that the reason her supervisor thought her attitude was bad was because she merely tried to be "honest" with the supervisors. Ligon said that she wasn't reluctant to speak her mind, and she often complained when she felt it was necessary.

After reflecting on these interviews, you are going to write a memo to Ms. Victoria Scott regarding your HR analysis of the situation.

Pertaining to the bank's overall attitude toward its employees, Jane Caldwell believed that the bank regarded her as a number. She felt that the supervisors were too busy to help when problems came up. As a result, she felt that most of the employees in the department had very low morale and were concerned only with "putting in their time" and receiving a regular raise. None of them had more than the minimum amount of pride or loyalty toward their employer. When Caldwell was first employed, there seemed to be some hope and competition for advancement. But now she felt that only a few employees--"the ones who only worked hard when the boss was looking"--competed, and only to appear that they did a good job. And, she added, since there was no real competition, the jobs became exceptionally boring.

ALICE WENDELL had told her supervisor that she was resigning "to seek other employment closer to home." However, her interview with you seemed to suggest other motivations. Wendell stated that she had "hated" her job. Work schedules were a major reason for her dissatisfaction. The daily schedule was from 8A.M. to 5P.M., but during the afternoons, no scheduled break time was allowed. Further, Saturday work was required every third weekend. As far as the supervisors were concerned, they were not particularly helpful. In fact, on several occasions when Wendell had gone to her supervisor for help, she felt as if the supervisor gave her any kind of answer just "to get me off her back." Wendell thought that the departmental supervisors generally favored a few of the employees and that they were uninterested in helping others. As a result, these "favored employees" were the ones who received the more frequent raises, even when they did not deserve them.

When asked about her impressions of the bank's overall attitude toward employees, Alice Wendell said that the employees "were nothing but numbers like in the computers." However, she inserted at this point an exception to her statement. Wendell had been told by one of her supervisors that she should contribute to an annual community charity fund. The supervisor implied that she had to give to this fund or her job might be in jeopardy. Wendell resented this type of coercion, and she said that only when the bank had something to gain was it aware of employees as individuals.

BERNICE RITCHEY left the employment of the bank for maternity reasons. However, she too, had some interesting comments to make in her interview. Ritchey had enjoyed her job except for the "tensions: it created and the Saturday work. Her opinion was that the supervisors were the greatest cause of discontent within the department and were responsible for most of the problems. Ritchey stated that the supervisors tended to unduly criticize employees and that they constantly made the employees feel inferior and uneasy. When asked about pay for her job, Bernice Ritchey claimed that while the bank's pay scale had risen somewhat, it was still very low and some of the new incoming employees received higher wages by comparison to the older ones. The result was that the new and inexperienced person could come in at virtually the same salary as those who had been at the bank for several years. This brought about resentment. Further, Ritchey felt that although the bank claimed that raises were based mainly on merit, an employee could do the best job possible and yet go unnoticed and not rewarded. She asserted that the bank always put itself first, and any concern for the well-being of the employees was of low priority. Since only a few of the departmental employees looked for advancement, most of them just did their routine jobs with little pride and without commitment.

GLORIA SHEETZ had resigned her position at the bank, but she actually was "forced" into this since she had knowledge of the fact that the bank planned "to let me go" due to alleged unsatisfactory attendance. Sheetz stated that she, too, disliked the long hours that often arose.

"Rock Solid?"

The Rock Solid Savings Bank is a medium sized bank located in a large mid-western city. A sizeable unit of the bank's operation is the check-processing department. The employees in this department, who serve as check-reader operators, are all women between the ages of eighteen and forty. The women feed checks into the check readers and manually input any "defective checks" into a computerized proofing system. The machines are the latest models and were spaced approximately 3 to 4 feet apart. There are about thirty check-reader operators; the other departmental employees are clerks and word and data processors who were connected with the check-collection process. In total, about forty women work together in the same large room. There are four supervisors in the department, all of whom are women. These supervisors report to Rachel Simons, a middle-level manager who has several other departments under her responsibility.

The bank had been experiencing an annual turnover rate in the check-processing department of about 40%. This turnover rate has been steadily rising over the previous few years despite efforts by management to stem the trend. With turnover of this magnitude, efficiency has been greatly reduced.

You were recently hired by the bank as a **human resources assistant**. The vice-president of HR, Ms. Victoria Scott, wants you to investigate the situation. Top management is hoping that you might obtain better insights into the problems that existed in the check-processing department and suggest ways of dealing with them.

As a first step, you decided to choose a sample of former departmental employees who, for various reasons, had either left the bank voluntarily or who had been discharged within the preceding six months. You hoped to interview these ex-employees and to encourage them to speak objectively about their past jobs. You selected a sample of ten former employees, but you were able to interview only five of them. The remaining had either changed addresses or were not available because of circumstances or personal reasons.

Interview Information

The types of questions you asked during the interviews were meant to allow the former employees ample freedom to discuss their situations. By prearranged appointments, you interviewed these women either in their homes or at a nearby restaurant.

JANE CALDWELL: had resigned from her job "to remain at home." Caldwell stated that she had liked her job for the first two and one-half years of the three years of her employment. The thing she disliked most was that she had become totally bored with the routine of her job, and she felt that there was no hope of ever moving to a different department. On several occasions, she had mentioned to her supervisor her desire to get out of the check-processing department, but Caldwell felt that her supervisor did not take her seriously. This was the major complaint she had concerning this supervisor.

According to Caldwell, one of her sources of difficulty had been that she was receiving a considerably higher salary than most of the employees in the department. Some of her co-workers knew about her higher salary and resented the fact that they were not paid as well. In fact, every time Caldwell received a raise, it seemed as if everyone knew about it before she was notified. Caldwell did not know how the others found out about her pay raises, but she alluded to the possibility that the departmental supervisors had let the information escape.

HRM 210: MEMO Assignment

Spring 2016 – 9:00 Class

As you know human resources professionals are often required to write memos to express their views on how employees are treated to improve the effectiveness of their organizations. Attached you will find a brief description of a hypothetical company. **You need to write a memo based upon this hypothetical company.** *See attached sample memo as a guide to memo format.*

Your response to this assignment will reflect how well you have gained command of the specialized knowledge a HRM major ought to have at this point in the academic program. Your response will also demonstrate the extent to which you are continuing to develop and apply liberal arts skills important to the HRM professional, specifically skills of critical thinking, effective writing and information literacy.

To accomplish these objectives, I would like you to **find a professional HR article** from **one these three reputable HR sources:** HR Magazine, HR Focus, or Workforce. Your article must be dated no earlier than **2015**. All three of these sources are available to you through the King's library database called: **Business Source Complete**. Please explicitly mention **the article in your memo**. Further, you must **attach a copy of this article** to this assignment. Your chosen article can deal with any aspect of this assignment (e.g., it may help you to clarify the causes of a problem, may help you come up with a solution, or it may help with the next step in the process). You will not find an article that pertains to the company on which your memo is based since the company does not exist. The article is supposed to help you in your analysis of a HR issue.

Your memo should **not exceed three word-processed, double-spaced*** pages. Your memo will be worth 100 points toward your final grade. A 10-point per day penalty will be imposed on late papers. The evaluation form is attached to this assignment. Please **staple this evaluation form** to the front of your paper.

The due date for this assignment is **Monday, April 18th.**

**Please note that business memos are usually one page and single-spaced. However, for the purposes of providing more detailed feedback, please double-space the body of the memo. Follow the heading format of the sample memo closely.*