**Memorandum\***

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| To: | CHEN 301 Students |
| From: | Cindy Raisor, CHEN 301 instructor (initial by hand before submitting) |
| Date: | September 17, 2013 |
| Subject: | Instructions for writing and formatting a memo report |
| \*Ref: | Used when the memo refers to a project, file, or previous correspondence |
| \*ActionRequired: | Notifies the reader if a response will be necessary |

*\*Optional*

You will be using memo format very often in this course. As a result, I am providing this memo both as a set of guidelines and an example for writing and formatting a memo report. Below you will find information regarding the areas of (A) Content and Organization (B) Style (C) Format Requirements and (D) Design.

(A) Content and Organization

Introductory paragraph

Since memos serve as records of important communications and since recipients of your correspondence don’t always recall the occasion or significance of your correspondence, you should “contextualize the memo” for your reader. (This is sometimes called “framing.”) Also, you should describe the main point or action the reader should take after reading the memo. As a result, you are required to include an introductory paragraph that establishes the context. Please include the following:

* the subject and purpose of the memo
* the occasion for the memo (what prompted you to write it)
* any context details (dates, names, assignment numbers, etc.)
* a preview of the contents (a brief summary, which tells the reader what to expect)

Body

In the body paragraphs develop your points using as much detail as needed for your reader to understand what you mean and, if appropriate, what you need him to do and why. You may use graphics (if necessary) and divide up the body into sections (and subsections, as this memo shows), depending on the complexity of the subject and the familiarity of the reader with the subject.

Closing

Some memos need no concluding comments (for example, memos that are very brief, such as a paragraph or less). Most, however, require (or at least hope for) some kind of response. In that case, conclude by providing a closing that “wraps up” your purpose for writing and provides an opportunity for response. (For example, “I will come by your office on Tuesday at 4:00 pm to get your comments on my proposal. Please let me know if you prefer to meet at another time.”) Make your closing substantive and meaningful. No clichés, please. If you’ve seen it written before, don’t use it.

(B) Writing Style

In your correspondence with me (including e-mail), use a professional but conversational style. Slang would be inappropriate as would overly stiff, formal prose. Choose a courteous, accommodating tone much as your would use in conversation with me in my office. With other audiences, you need to make choices about style and tone based on your relationship with your audience and your perception of their needs and expectations.

(C) Format Requirements

Spacing

Follow the spacing shown in this memo. You may double space between items in the heading (as shown above) or single space the heading (as shown in your textbook). However, you should single space within paragraphs of the memo and double space between paragraphs (as shown in this memo).

Signature Please note that the memo format we are using does not include a signature block. Instead, you should initial your memo as your “signature.” However, since most of your memos will be submitted electronically, you do not have to “sign” these. In fact, this semester you will be submitting many of your memo reports anonymously, i.e., as “A Student” because of the requirements of anonymity in the use of Turnitin.com and Calibrated Peer Review (CPR). However, in your professional workplaces, you will not want to neglect initialing your memos.

Continuation page format

Note the use of continuation page format used here on p. 2. You may place the three items of information along a single line, as I have done in this memo, or you can stack them at the left margin. Please use the name of the recipient, the date and the page number, as shown in this memo.

Enclosure

Use if you are attaching material to your letter or memo.

Other choices You may design your memo any way you like as long as you follow the format stipulations detailed here. Decorative additions are welcome as long as they are in good taste and appropriate based on the “style and tone” discussion above.

Differences in format between memos and e-mailed messages

In this course, you will be e-mailing a number of messages to me and to your classmates. E-mails are set up essentially like memos, with a typical memo­ style heading already included. Consequently, when you send me an e-mailed assignment, you need not REPEAT the heading in the body of the message. Instead, begin your message with a greeting using the name of the recipient followed by your reason for writing and any action requested. In other respects (tone, style, use of visual cues like headings, sub-headings, bulleting, etc.), treat your e-mailed messages in the same way I've outlined here for a memo. Last, if your e-mail program does not include your name in the heading, please type your name at the end of your e-mailed message.

(D) Design

Use typographical devices to help the reader “see” the most important information. You may want to use headings (as is used in this memo) to alert the reader to the main ideas. You may want to use other typographical devices such as lists, bolding, or white space to set off key details that otherwise might be lost in a paragraph. See sample memo below. Which design features have been used? Why?

As with any assignment you prepare for this course, remember to consult our texts and online course materials for more information and sample documents. Also, contact me if you have questions at 845-7506 or c-raisor@tamu.edu.

Sample memo

To: Operations Support Staff

From: Allen Brady, Operations Manager

Date: September 17, 2013

Subject: Agenda for October Meeting on Proposed Budget Cuts

Action

Required: Prepare New Cost Figures for Your Projects by October 6

Everyone must attend the September 20 staff meeting to decide how to cut the second-quarter budget. Please refer to the VP—Finance August 10 letter for guidelines on cuts.

Meet at 8:15 a.m. in the Conference Room.

Bring 10 copies of a new budget ready to present. Aim for the 15 percent cut suggested by the August 15th letter.

Other Agenda Items

After budgets are decided, we will discuss the following:

1. Proposed bid development on the power project (Attachment 1)
2. Revamping of the required overtime policy (Attachment 2)
3. Cost overrun problem with maintenance subcontractors (Attachment 3)

Please review the attached documents on all 3 points and be prepared to propose solutions.

This meeting will probably last for the entire morning. For those of you who have other commitments, please contact me immediately.

Enclosures (3)

c: Sally Rogers

 Rob Petrie