# WRITING A MEMO

## **B.JOLAMANOVA**

# Memo To: John Smith, Department Head From: Jane Summers, CEO Date: 19th May 2014 Subject: New Creative Strategy

## **DEFINITION:**

an in-house business letter, an important form of intra-corporate communication, written to one person, several persons, a group, a whole community

## PURPOSE OF A MEMO

#### To "solve problems" by:

- informing
- persuading
- refuting
- arguing
- analyzing
- giving feedback, etc.

### MEMO VERSUS LETTER

#### Reader:

- Communicating within your organization
- Communicating with sb outside the company

## Signature/Closing: full, formal

#### **Wordiness:**

- Memos are more straightforward, to make it easier for reader to get the info
- Letters tend to be more dense, more formal

## **MEMO STRUCTURE**

To:	Mrs. Sharon Jones, Supervisor
From:	Dianna Moreno, Bookkeeper <i>DM</i>
Date:	March 2, 2007
Re:	Retirement Party

## SUBJECT LINE

- probably the most important part of your memo
- summarize the intent of your memo, e.g.:
  - "Request for assistance with grant project"
  - "Consequences of recent material thefts"
- specific, concise and to the point

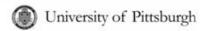
## **STRUCTURE**

- The opening part provides context
- The body contains task/action/request
  - The closing part call for action with clear instructions, including deadlines where applicable.

## **FORMATTING**

- Make it single spaced and justified.
- Instead of using indentations to show new paragraphs, skip a line between sentences.
- Use headings and lists to help the reader pinpoint certain information

#### **MEMO SAMPLE**



School of Dental Medicine Center for Dental Informatics

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#### Memorandum

To: JACS Committee

CC: K. Shwalsh, H. Spallek

From: T. Schleyer

Date: 12/3/02

Re: Proposed LRC Renovation

Attached are a description and architectural drawlings for the proposed renovation of the Learning Resources Center (LRC). The description provides an overview of the type of equipment proposed for the renovated LRC. The drawlings illustrate two options for a new larout.

The description provides an overview of the type of equipment proposed for the renovated LRC. The drawings illustrate two options for a new layout:

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- Adf adf adfadfadf adsfadfa daf a adfadf adf adf adf da f drawings illustrate two options for a new layout.
- Drawings illustrate two options for a new layout, drawings illustrate two options for a new layout.

Please send us your comments on this project by December 20, 2002. We will also make this plan accessible to students and faculty for their comments. The renovation is expected to start in January 2003.

Thank you very much for your input in advance!

## **TIPS:** Cohesion

- Arrange topics in a logical order.
- Move from old information to new.

Start sentences with ideas that you have already described, or with something you can safely assume the reader already knows.

Place technical terms new to the reader not at the beginning, but towards the end of the sentence

## TIPS: Language

Make the sentences more straightforward: We have come to the decision that it is not possible for our company to accept the offer.

We <u>have decided</u> that <u>our company cannot</u> accept the offer.

## TIPS: Language

- Use the active voice wherever possible
  - Write in 1<sup>st</sup> person, i.e. "I cannot accept your proposal"
- Use action verbs instead of phrases
  - NOT OK: "We made a payment of \$15,000"
  - OK: "We paid \$15,000."

#### TIPS:

#### Language:

In view of the fact that we will lose a big contract next year, we have to cut expenses.

Since we will lose a big contract next year, we have to cut expenses.

## **TIPS**

- Headings
- Numbering of paragraphs, points, instructions
- Tabulating when presenting statistics and figures

#### **TIPS**

- Get personal: Use words like I, you, and we. To initiate action, write in the active, not the passive voice.
- Be conversational: Write the way you talk and do not be afraid to use contractions.
- Don't show off: Avoid scholarly words, technical jargon, and just plain gibberish like "as per your request" when you simply mean "here's what you wanted".

## Which date is correct?

- a. March 7, 2007
- ы. March, 7, 2007
- c. March. 7, 2007

## Which initials are correct?

- a. **D.M.**
- b. **D,М.**
- c. DM

## Which phone number is correct?

- a. 255-555
- ы. 727 255555
- c. (727) 255-555

## Which courtesy title could a married woman use?

a. Ms.

b. Miss.

c. Mrs.

### REFERENCES

http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/5381/34825

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/print/pw/p\_memo.html

http://ibi.cbe.wsu.edu/Tansuhaj/ibus380/memo.htm