



Business Memos

A business memo is used when communicating within an organization. Most memos are no longer than one page. Generally memos are less formal than business letters and follow a basic form.

Memos may be written by a company president to inform employees of a new product. Human resource personnel may send a memo explaining company policy changes. A department head may write a memo reminding workers of an upcoming meeting. A coworker may write a memo asking other workers to help in cleaning the break room.

A memo starts with a heading segment that includes

- The readers' names and job titles
- The writer's name and job title
- The date
- The subject of the memo

The subject in the heading states the reason for the memo. Be specific when writing it. For example, "Cell phones" is vague. "Company Policy Concerning Personal Cell Phone Use" is much clearer.

The body of the memo should be concise and to the point.

- The Opening Segment states the problem and the purpose of the memo.
- The Discussion Segment gives details of the problem.
- The Closing Segment states what the writer wants the readers to do.

Look at the following example of a business memo.

MEMO	
To:	<i>John James, assistant director and Marilee Walker, administrative assistant</i>
From:	<i>Joseph Miles, human resource director</i>
Date:	<i>September 23, 2008</i>
Subject:	<i>Need Your Follow-up Reports from Employee Health Fair</i>
Opening Segment	<i>The main office needs the final report concerning our annual Employee Health Fair. Your follow-up report is due tomorrow.</i>
Discussion Segment	<i>The main office is considering eliminating the Health Fair next year. The information in your reports is needed in making this decision.</i>
Closing Segment	<i>E-mail your reports to me by 11 A.M. tomorrow. Thank you in advance.</i>



A business memo should be easily read. An effective business memo quickly summarizes the issue at hand and then states any recommendations. Also keep in mind that business memos are often seen and shared by numerous employees. They are not usually an effective means of personal communication.

When writing the body of the memo, use short paragraphs dealing with one main subject. Listing key points using numbers or bullets is another method of getting the reader's attention without using many words. Like all business correspondence, a memo should be proofread before sending it to avoid any misinformation or mistakes in grammar.



Check It Out

6-4

You are having surgery next week. You expect to be out at least a week. Send a memo to your department supervisor as a reminder. Use the following memo form to write it.

MEMO

To: _____

From: _____

Date: _____

Subject: _____

