Why Learn to Write Memos?
- E-mail has reduced the paper flow, but many professionals continue to write memos.
- You will, as a professional, spend considerable time reading and responding to memos.

Problem
- When should you write a memo?
- How do you write good memos?
- How do you make certain that your memo, as well as all business correspondence, meets acceptable standards?

Major Points
- Memos are a form of internal correspondence for employees or colleagues.
- The format for memos differs significantly from that of business letters.
- Memo formats may vary, depending on the organizational culture.

Objectives
- Given a topic, write a memo following accepted standards for good memos.
- On a written examination, determine appropriateness for writing a memo.

What is a memorandum?
- A memorandum, or memo, is the most frequently used form of communication among members of the same organization.
A carelessly prepared memo can:
- Confuse readers
- Waste valuable time
- Produce costly errors
- Irritate employees if written in an offensive tone

When write memos?
- Yes
  - Announce policies
  - Confirm conversations
  - Request information
  - Delegate responsibility
  - Instruct employees
  - Report results
  - Stimulate thinking/motivation
- No
  - Emotions are running high
  - Without significant purpose
  - Broad-based criticism
  - Offensive tone

Effective memos can...
- Keep employees informed
- Motivate employees to achieve goals
- Keep morale high

Clarity, Accuracy, & Motivating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example 1</th>
<th>Example 2</th>
<th>Example 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It has been decided that the office will be open the day after Thanksgiving.</td>
<td>The office will open the day after Thanksgiving.</td>
<td>Because we must meet the December 15 deadline to be eligible for the government contract, the office will be open the day after Thanksgiving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What style should be used?

Informal or Formal?
Personal or Impersonal?

Level of formality depends on the reader and purpose of the memo.

Note to remember: A dictatorial tone will prevent a memo from being an effective management tool.

Format and Parts

Letterhead

Date: To be sent out
To: Individual or group of people
From: Full Name, Position (when appropriate)
Subject: Aids in filing and retrieval
- Should not be a substitute for an opening that provides a context for the message.
- Capitalize first letter of all major words
- Should be very brief, but as specific as possible.
**Memo Format**

- Use Letterhead
- **Headings**
  - Addressee: Line labeled “TO:"
  - Stands in place of the inside address
  - Provide the addressee’s full name and title
- **Multiple addressees**
  - If several recipients are listed in the addressee line, each person’s copy should have some indication by the name showing to whom that copy is addressed. Use a check or highlight the name.

**Memo Format**

- **Sender**
  - After the word “From:” provide your full name and job title if appropriate
- **Initials**
  - Handwrite your initials to the right of your name
  - Takes the place of a signature in a letter
- **Dateline**
  - Type the word “Date:” followed by the date
  - Example – April 11, 2006

**Memo Format**

- **Subject Line**
  - Indicates the memo’s purpose or topic
  - One of the most important lines in a memo
  - Provided using several key words
  - Typically, it is the last line to appear before the body

**Memo Format**

- **Body**
  - Opening paragraph
  - Middle paragraph
  - Closing paragraph
  - May have an enclosure line
  - May have a copy notation

**Tips**

- Use a tone that are appropriate for your subject, audience, and purpose
- State your purpose in the opening paragraph
- Use a forecasting statement to tell your reader what you will cover in the memo

**Tips**

- Keep paragraphs brief
- Paragraphs should not exceed ten typed lines
- In long memos, use headings and subheadings to help the reader recognize the organization in the memo
Tips

- If the memo has a second or third page, indicate the recipient at the top of those pages in a continuing page header.

Dr. I. B. Bright
Page 2
April 11, 2006

Organizing a memo

- Outline your memo in a logical method
- Only one subject

Writing a good memo

- Begin with a statement of its main idea
- Provide an introductory background paragraph (if necessary)
- Include a summary
- Use lists
- Position your ideas in a logical format
- Indicate action if appropriate

The final steps

- Signing or Initialing
  - Lets the reader know that you approve of its contents.
  - Where?
  - Sign your initials next to your typed name.
- Proofreading

Type of paper used for memos

- Preprinted (with company name or logo) half sheets (5 1/2 x 8 1/2)
- Message-and-reply forms (“speed messages”)
- Regular 8 1/2 x 11 letterhead stationery
- Special 8 1/2 x 11 forms with company name or logo

Application/Evaluation

- Memo lab assignment
- Memo scored assignment
- Memo assignment
- Midterm examination