

Webquest: Memo Writing

Introduction

In today's world memo writing is as an integral part of every organization. It is a document which is used for communication within a company. Memos can be as formal as a business letter however; the heading and overall tone make a memo is different from a business letter.

As memos are generally sent to co-workers and colleagues, you do not have to include a formal salutation or closing remark. Memos follow a particular format, although a company or an organization may choose to develop alternative formats.

Most often memos solve problems either by informing the reader about policy changes, price increases, etc. They could also be used as a means to persuade the reader to take an action, such as attending a meeting, using less paper, or changing a current production procedure and so forth. Regardless of the specific goal, memos are most effective when they connect the purpose of the writer with the interests and needs of the reader.

Task

In this WebQuest you are required to do the tasks in 2 classes and by the end of the second class you will be able to write a memo confidently on your own.

Task 1 introduces you to memo writing and to the different types of formats. Visit the given links and read the information and complete the true and false activities.

Task 2 A gives you practice in choosing the most appropriate subject headings for your memos.

Task 2 B is a reading for comprehension exercise based on the content in the memos.

Task 2 C gives you more practice in understanding the components of a memo.

Task 3 A, B, and C give you practice in using the correct language for memo writing. These tasks give you language input for improving your memo writing skills.

Task 4 A gives you practice in using prepositions. It also serves as an example of how email memos are generally written in business settings.

Task 4 B expects you to write a short email memo.

Task 5 provides visuals and languages cues for you to complete the task. You are now ready to write a paper memo using the correct format, structure, and language used in a formal memo for business purposes.

Process

Task 1

A- Work with a partner. Are these statements about memos true (T) or false (F)?

1. A memo is short for memorandum. _____
2. It cannot be send without a salutation. _____
3. A memo is usually sent to more than one person. _____
4. Memo's are usually short and to the point. _____
5. A memo is usually sent to people in a different company. _____
6. A memo has a specific date format. _____
7. You should always reply to a memo. _____
8. A memo usually has one specific format. _____
9. Memo writing is similar to letter writing. _____
10. You can write a memo on paper or as an email. _____

<http://oregonstate.edu/dept/eli/buswrite/memos.html>

<http://www.nku.edu/~fordmw/memo.htm>

<http://depts.gallaudet.edu/englishworks/writing/memowriting.html>

Task 2 A

Structure of a memo

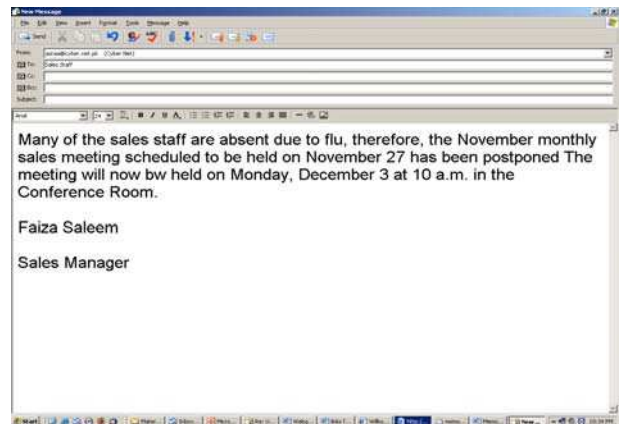
<http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/cill/eiw/memos.htm>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/590/02/>

Read the memos and write the correct subject on the subject line of each memo.

Choose from these subjects:

- a. Company health club
- b. New general manager
- c. New sales manager
- d. Closure of cafeteria
- e. Meeting postponed
- f. Conference rooms



Raza Optics Ltd

MEMO

Date: October 30, 2007
To: All staff
From: Rehan Ali
Subject: _____

Arifa Rehman has been appointed General Manager following the retirement of Zubeda Hussain. All staff are requested to attend an informal meeting in the cafeteria Monday November 5 at 4:30 p.m. where they will be introduced to Ms Rehman.

MEMO

AT Communications Inc.

Date: October 30, 2007
To: All employees
From: Farha Naz
Subject: _____

The new company health club has been completed and will be open from Monday, November 12. Opening hours will be 7:00 a.m.– 9:00 p.m. and 5:30-9:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

If you would like to use the health club, please fill out the attached registration form.

TASK 2 B

Based on the information provided in the three memos in Task 2 A, write short answers to the questions below. Then check your answers with a partner.

a. Who is the new general manager?

b. When can the staff meet her?

c. Which meeting has been postponed?

d. Why has it been postponed?

e. What has just been completed?

f. How many days a week will the company health club be open?

Task 2 C

Fill in the blanks in the paper memo below using this information:

November 23 Tabla Musical Ltd All employees thefts Faizan Cheema

there have been a number of thefts in the building recently

Memo

Date: _____
To: _____
From: _____
Subject: _____

As you know, _____. All employees are reminded to keep their personal belongings safe at all times and use the lockers provided.

Components of memo writing

<http://www.ecf.utoronto.ca/~writing/handbook-memo.html>

Sample memos

http://www.ic.arizona.edu/~profcomm/writing/samples/memo_samp.htm

<http://www.nku.edu/~fordmw/Sawyer%20Productivity%20Memo%20w%20Comments.doc>

Task 3 A
Writing about recent events

1. To announce a recent event, you can use the simple past tense and a time expression.

We *interviewed* six applicants for the position of I.T. manager last week.

If the time when something happened (e.g., last week) is not important, or you don't want to mention it, you can use the present perfect without a time expression:

We have *interviewed* six applicants for the position of production manager.

You can change the passive sentence in the same way:

The new cafeteria *was completed* on March 16.

The new cafeteria *has been completed*.

Slide show:

<http://www.slideshare.net/rosarioa.slide/the-simple-past-tense>

Helping links:

<http://www.englishpage.com/verbpage/simplepast.html>

http://efreeway.avcenter.ntu.edu.tw/freeway/self_assessment/package/package8/high-gram.htm

2. Rewrite these sentences using the present perfect without time expression.

1) Natasha Hussain from the Nepal office was appointed manager of the New York office last week.

2) The August monthly sales meeting was postponed this morning.

3) Last week we decided to increase the marketing staff.

4) New cycling and running machines were ordered at the end of last month.

<http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/410/grammar/ppperf.htm>

3. Work with a partner. Write three sentences using the passive voice and present perfect tense. Use the idea below.



a) a new computers
(install)



b) the new library (complete)



c) new "No Smoking" policy
(introduce)

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/passivevoice.html>
http://www.learn4good.com/languages/evrd_grammar/presentp.htm

Optional quiz
<http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/410/reading/exercises/dogqz.htm>

Task 3 B

Announcing events in the future

You can use *will* with the passive to announce events in the future:

The Birthday party *will be held* on December 14.
The new model *will be introduced* next month.

Complete the sentences below using the correct form of the verb in brackets.

- The positions _____ next month. (advertise)
- He _____ as manager of the Paris office by Jameel Khan. (succeed)
- The new equipment _____ by the end of this month. (install)
- The next meeting _____ on January 7 at the usual time. (hold)

<http://home.earthlink.net/~eslstudent/grammar/verbs/future.html>
<http://www.ibiblio.org/tamil/paadanoor/lesson6.html>

Optional future tense activity

<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/rgshiwyc/school/curric/Spanish/Future/INDEX.htm>

Task 3 C

Formal Requests

You can write a strong, but polite request like this:

All sales staff are requested to attend the meeting.
Would all sales staff please attend the meeting?
Please contact the personnel department for more details.

Rewrite the words of the sentences in the correct order. Pay attention to capital letters and punctuation.

- a. are requested/ the enclosed form/ to complete/ all employees

- b. their computers/ would/ turn off/ before leaving/ all staff

- c. me/ any questions/ please/ with/ email

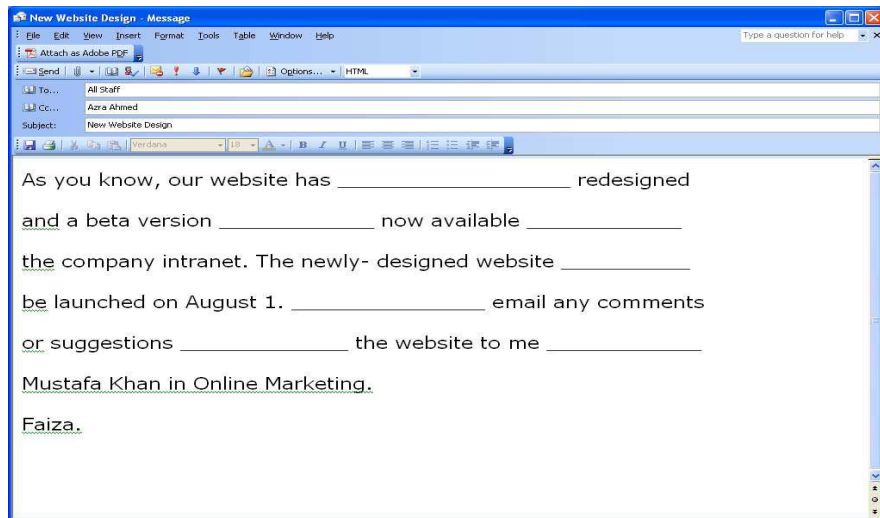
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_overvw.html
<http://www.correctpunctuation.co.uk/>
<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/marks/marks.htm>

Task 4 A

An Email memo

Memos are often sent as emails. Fill in the blanks in the email memo. Use the words below.

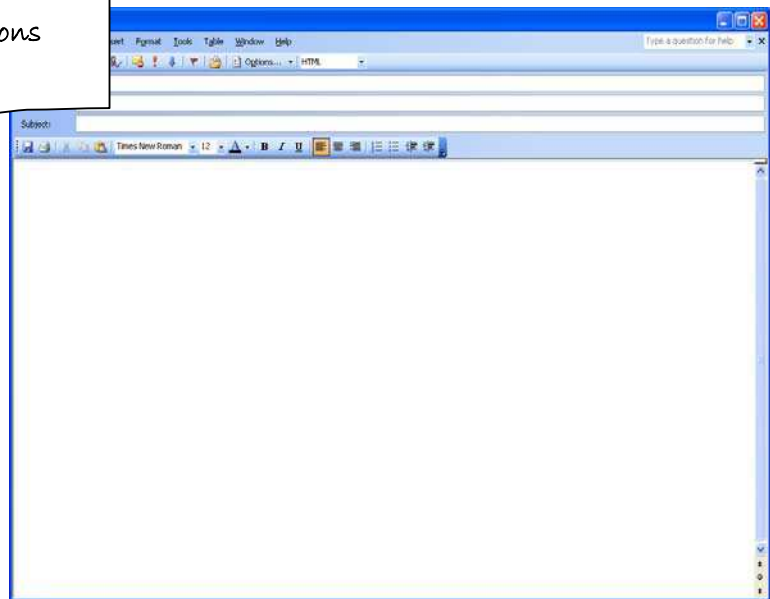
will about or is on been please



Task 4 B

Work with a partner and write an email memo from Soniya Tahir, Manager of the Human Resources Department. Use these notes:

- Mr. Kamal Khan of Pacific Enterprises
- Visit our corporate headquarters and factory
May 5-7
- Reema Danish will show him around
- Be ready to answer Mr. Khan's questions

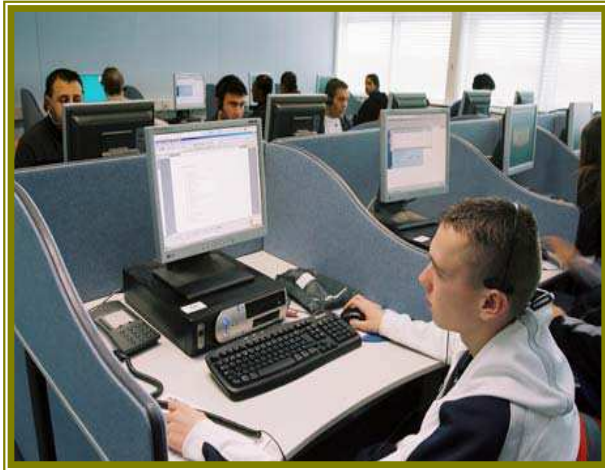


<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/590/01/>
http://business.lovetoknow.com/wiki/Memo_Writing

Task 5

If you would like to practice further, visit http://www.mpg-saarlouis.de/till/intro_1c.php
Once you complete Exercises 1.6 to 1 A you will feel quite confident to do the following task:

With your partner, write a paper or email memo about an imaginary situation based on the pictures provided.



open/ new language centre



promote to/ Human Resource Manager



have/ important visitors to factory



receive/ Employee of the Year Award

Evaluation

You will be evaluated based on the memo you write as a result of your team's discussion. Your grade will be based on three areas:		
Information gathered	Development of memo	Structure/format of memo
your ability to locate at least one high quality information resource per team member related to the issue of filtering	the strength of the arguments your team has developed and that you show in your memo	your ability to use the information you located to make a case for your point of view
Comments on each area:		

Checklist: Memos		
Sr #	Areas to be covered	Y/N
1	Have you completed the task?	
2	Is the layout correct?	
3	Are the details correct (To: From: Date:)	
4	Does the subject line tell you briefly what the memo is about?	
5	Have you included all the relevant information?	
6	Have you ordered the information in the best way?	
7	Is the language appropriate for a memo?	
8	Have you checked spelling, grammar and punctuation?	

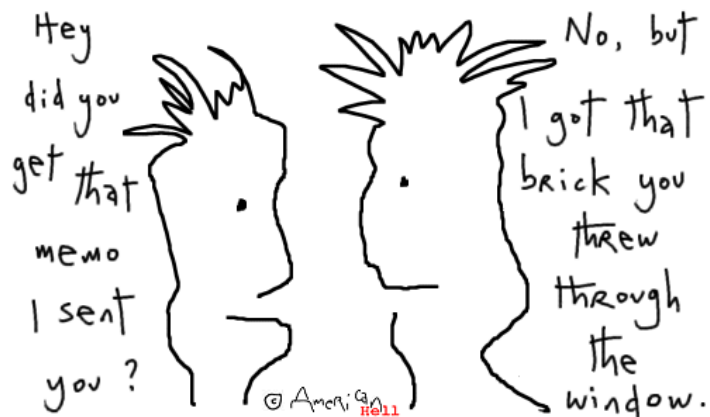
Standards	Evaluation
Worked effectively as a group to divide tasks and reach consensus.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5..... Comments:
Understood their roles as evaluators and their focused perspective is clear in their organizer(s).	1.....2.....3.....4.....5..... Comments:
Organizer was completed with accurate and relevant information. Student(s) displayed critical thought in completing their tasks.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5..... Comments:
Members of the group were involved in the discussion and contributed to each others understanding.	1.....2.....3.....4.....5..... Comments:

Conclusion

You have now got some input on the structure, format and language used in writing a memo for business purposes.

For some really interesting practice go to <http://elc.polyu.edu.hk/cill/eiw/reportheadings.htm>

We are quite sure you will be much more adept at memo writing than you were six hours ago!



Links for your reference

<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/documents/memo/pop2a.cfm>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/590/01/>

http://englishrocks1.tripod.com/Memo%20Writing/memo_writing1.htm

http://englishrocks1.tripod.com/Memo%20Writing/writing_a_memo1.htm

<http://online.nmit.vic.edu.au/courses/Business/com401/html/memo.html>

<http://www.msu.edu/~zuidema2/TWmemo.pdf>