

How to

...write memos

Memos are used in business to write to other people in the same company. Memos are more formal than a message, and may be kept on file. They should be written clearly and without mistakes.



Try this!

Ask your supervisor how internal messages are sent in your company. Find an example. Remember that some people may not use the rules correctly!

As with any type of communication, you need to think about:

- **its purpose.** Why are you writing the memo? What information do you need to get across?
- **your audience.** Who is going to receive the memo? What do they know already? What new information do they need to know?

It is important to learn how and when to use memos.

TIPS

Prepare

Collect together any relevant details or information.
Write key words about what you need to say.

Plan

Organise the information clearly for the reader.

Write

Use a memo format.
Write a title and a short introduction.
You can use short paragraphs or numbered points.
Use short clear sentences.

Check

Proofread your work.
Check spellings in a dictionary, with the PC spell-checker or with another person.

Try this!

Finish the sentences about memos below.

- 1 Memos are used for
 - a) sending messages in the post to customers
 - b) keeping on file
 - c) important messages that are sent inside the company.
- 2 When you write a memo you need to
 - a) plan and organise your points clearly
 - b) write your thoughts quickly so you don't forget them
 - c) write clearly by hand.

Here's an example of a memo.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brian Peeps
FROM: Darren Cole
DATE: 23 January 2005

SUBJECT: Filing cabinets

The new filing cabinets are ordered and will arrive on Wednesday.

Can you make arrangements for the old cabinets to be removed by Jim before Wednesday? He needs at least three days' notice.

Please let me know if there are any problems.

Thanks.

The word 'MEMORANDUM' or 'MEMO' usually appears at the top.

Who the memo is TO and FROM

DATE is very important

SUBJECT describes what the memo is about

Keep sentences and paragraphs short and

No need to sign as your name is at the top

You can hand-write memos on preprinted forms, or type them on a memo template on a word processor. Ask your supervisor which you should use.

If it is an important memo, keep a copy of it so that you can prove that you sent it.

Many companies use emails instead of memos. They follow the same rules. The computer program will enter your name and the date automatically. You then type in other 'fields' as described in the boxes below.

TO Type in the email address of the person you are writing to

CC To send copies of your message to other people, type their addresses here

SUBJECT Say what the email is about

The main field is the area for your message

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word window titled 'Untitled Message - Microsoft Word'. The menu bar includes File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Tools, Table, Window, and Help. Below the menu is a toolbar with various icons. The main area of the window is divided into sections for 'Send', 'To...', 'Cc...', 'Subject:', and a large text area for the message body. The 'To...' and 'Cc...' fields are currently empty. The 'Subject:' field is also empty. The message body area is large and empty, with a cursor at the top left.