

Memo

To: All 420Y Students (Summer 2010)

From: Ms. Doran

Date: June 15, 2010

Subject: Informative Memos

An informative memo will not have an imperative statement in the first paragraph, as an action memo will. Instead, an informative memo will clearly denote the information to be given, the reason for the sharing of this information, and share what to do with this shared information. Detailed information must be clear, concise, and yet detailed enough—and perhaps shared via bullets and/or headings.

Information given

All memos are top-down documents: in other words, the most important information is stated at or near the beginning of the document. The audience should be able to tell immediately (within the first paragraph) if the memo is an action memo or an informative memo. If it is an informative memo, the audience must be told the specifics of the information to be shared: Each reader should understand the purpose immediately.

Reason for sharing this information

Information does not mean much unless it is in context. The reader must know why he/she is being given this information—in order to know what to do with this information. Include contextual information.

What to do with this shared information

Juxtaposed with the given information should be user information. The audience should understand what to *do* with this information by the end of the memo.

Details—more—but within limits

Mandatory criteria for business writing include clarity, conciseness, and pertinent/applicable details. Dense information is no substitute for these three requirements. You may *want* to give more information, but you may not *need* to give more information. Additionally, you may share an email or phone for your readers—in case they want/need more information.