Memos vs. Emails - Uses and Formats

Memorandum

To: Your Boss
From: You *mm*
Subject: Use a 2-part title here
Date: September 5, 2019
cc: J. Smith, T. Black, A. Brown

_____

Your memo text starts here. You use memos for internal audiences. If your organization does not have a memo format, use an MS Word template.

Use a memo when your company or organization will need a permanent record of a description of a problem, legal considerations such as employment or supplier issues, or other decisions. Ex., Announcement of a new supplier, Change in policy on accepting gifts from suppliers, etc. Memos may be printed out for record-keeping purposes or may be sent electronically.

Use a flush left, block style unless your organization's format is different. This is an example of a block style format – you do not indent to indicate a new paragraph. Instead, you skip a line between paragraphs.

Always include the "Memo" heading, and the "To" "From" etc. headings. You may include your initials next to your name in the "From" line. Use the "Subject" or "Re:" line as your two-part title. Sometimes action is required, so make it clear what the reader's role is. Ex., Proposal: Draft 3 for Review. Other times, Memos are an FYI. When action is required, always suggest a deadline.

The "To:" recipient is expected to act on the memo contents. The "cc:" recipients need to know the information in the memo, but no action is expected. Not all memos have "cc:" recipients.

Note that this memo ends here. There is no closing; there is no signature.

E-mail

To: Your Colleague
From: You *mm*
Subject: Use a 2-part title here
Date: September 5, 2019
cc: J. Smith, T. Black, A. Brown

_____

Your email text starts here. You can use emails for internal and external audiences. Your organization's ISP will provide an email format.

While emails have the same layout as memos, they have a different purpose: Emails help employees and other team members outside the company communicate routine job-related information with each other. Ex., Delivery dates, meeting times and places, change of plans, and so on. Emails are always delivered electronically.

Remember tone. Emails by their nature encourage casual, quick communication, which is part of their value. However, when emailing those outside the company, consider how casual you want to appear. You are representing your company and yourself to other professionals.

Use a flush left, block style unless your organization's format is different. This is an example of a block style format – you do not indent to indicate a new paragraph. Instead, you skip a line between paragraphs.

Always include the "To" "From" etc. headings. Use the "Subject" or "Re:" line as your clear, limiting title. In this case, make it clear what the reader's role is. Ex., Team Meeting: Date Change (this is an FYI email). When action is required, always suggest a deadline.

Emails may use a "Regards," or "Best," closure along with the sender's name, but this is not mandatory.