

# MEMORANDUM

*An efficient internal system of communication keeps an organisation alive and kicking.*

## *Learning Objective*

To provide detailed guidance to the learner in writing inter-office memorandum, press release and fax for performing day-to-day professional tasks and to draw his attention to the situations in which these forms of communication are generally used.

## FUNCTION AND STRUCTURE

A memorandum (plural: memoranda) is a short piece of writing generally used by the officers of an organisation for communicating among themselves. That is why it is also called **interoffice memorandum**. The main purpose of a memorandum (memo for short) is to record or convey information and decisions or to make short requests. Some organisations use the memo form for short reports too—reports in which an officer supplies certain data to another officer to enable the latter to take a decision. Occasionally, such a memo may also contain an analysis of data and the opinion and recommendations of the officer sending it.

To achieve its purpose a memo is written in easy-to-understand language. Its style is like that of reports: objective, matter-of-fact, and lucid. No attempt is made to make an emotional appeal to the reader or to create psychological impact on him. Plain and direct statements of facts are made to achieve all that is required.

A memo plays a very useful role in an organisation. It ensures quick and smooth flow of information in all directions. It also enables officers to maintain good business relationships. A memo will come to our aid when you wish to avoid coming into personal contact with certain colleagues.

Another useful function of a memo is to establish accountability. Since, it is a record of facts and decisions, you can turn to it in future if there is a need to find out who went wrong and at what stage. Some organisations insist that even small events and requests, telephonic conversations on official matters, etc., should be recorded in the form of memos.

Many organisations use printed memo forms. One can quickly write the message and transmit it to the concerned officer. It takes comparatively less time to write a memo since it does not contain several details which a letter has.

The following essential items of information must be given in a memo: (i) the designation of the receiver, (ii) the designation of the sender, (iii) reference, (iv) date, and (v) subject. In printed forms the name of the organisation/the department concerned is written on the top. If copies of a memo are sent to other officers, an indication is given at the bottom as in the case of letters.

The name of the organisation is usually printed on the top in the middle of the page. The designations of the sender and receiver are given on the left-hand side and the reference and date on the right-hand side flush with the margin. The sender signs on the right-hand side and if necessary, his name is typed below his signature in brackets. If the memo is to be sent to other officers, an indication is given on the left-hand side, as shown in the exhibits that follows.

With the increasing use of computers in offices, the practice of sending a typed or word processed memo is on the wane. It is being replaced by email. For many routine internal communications, email is found to be more convenient. The Government offices are slow in changing over to the new practice and some private organisations also still use memo as a form of communication. Let us, therefore, briefly look at the kind of messages that are generally sent by a memo.

## TYPES

Each organisation has its own way of arranging the various parts of a memo. You should adopt the practice followed in your organisation. One way of arranging a memo is shown in Exhibits 26.1 to 26.6. Sometimes memos are classified into the following categories on the basis of the function they perform, namely, confirming an activity or a conversation (Exhibit 26.1), requesting for an activity or action (Exhibit 26.2), restating or modifying an existing procedure or a policy (Exhibits 26.3 and 26.4), and writing a report (Exhibits 26.5 and 26.6).

### Samples

#### Exhibit 26.1

<b>TOSE STEEL COMPANY LIMITED</b>	
Interoffice Memorandum	
To: Office Manager	Reference: SOT/P18
From: Purchase Officer	Date: 16 June 2009
Subject: Purchase of Office Chairs	
As desired, the order for the supply of 300 office chairs has been placed with Shinewell Furniture Mart, Lal Chowk. The chairs will be supplied in two lots of 150 each on 23 and 30 June.	
c.c. Finance Officer	Z.L. Ahmed

**Exhibit 26.2**

**Sharewell Food Products Limited**  
Interoffice Memorandum

To: Marketing Manager  
From: Managing Director

Reference: LT/M172  
Date: 11 August 2009

**Subject: Export of Jam and Jelly**

Recently, I visited the manufacturing plants at Rahimpur and Dinasgaon and discussed with the production managers the possibility of increasing the production so that we could export these items to Far Eastern countries. They see no difficulty in doing so but before they take any definite steps in this direction, they would like to have an estimate of the demand for our products in these countries.

Would you please contact our agents quickly and let me have the estimates by the end of October?

c.c. Division Managers

R.T. Gomrez

**Exhibit 26.3**

**Hira Ispat Nigam**  
Interoffice Memorandum

To: Sectional Heads  
From: General Manager

Reference: ON/S1467  
Date: 16 July 2009

**Subject: Wall Newspaper**

The cost of stationery has gone up considerably and so to keep expenditure within the budget provision, it has been decided to discontinue the issue of the weekly newsletter. However, to ensure dissemination of important information among the employees a wall newspaper will be brought out fortnightly and displayed near the two main entrances.

Hiren Bose

**Exhibit 26.4 Sample Memo Report**
**Everest Equipment Limited**

 483, Sugam Path  
 Harinagar-122005

 To: Sectional Heads  
 From: Office Manager

 Reference: PM/R/69  
 Date: 14 August 2009

**Subject: Outgoing Mail**

You would recall that two years ago we had stated our policy regarding the despatch of outgoing mail. I am restating it below to remind you of the procedure we follow.

All mail received upto 4.30 p.m. is despatched on the same day. This cut off point has been fixed because the office closes at 5 p.m. and the Despatch Section needs full 30 minutes for processing before it is sent to post office. Any mail received after 4.30 p.m. is despatched on the following day.

I hope you will cooperate with us and help the Despatch Section perform its duty efficiently.

Arpit Kashiwal

**Exhibit 26.5**
**Saraswati Institute of Technology**
**Interoffice Memorandum**

 To: Registrar  
 From: Placement Officer

 Reference: PGS-32  
 Date: 4 November 2009

**Subject: Employment of Graduating Students**

Please refer to your Memo No. SE-387 dated 31 October 2009. As desired, I am presenting below the results of my study regarding the employment pattern of students who graduated in 2008. The study is based on the data regarding job offers made as a result of campus interviews, information available with the Alumni Association and informal communications from students.

The analysis of the data shows that out of the total number of students who graduated in 2008, 7% went in for higher education in India or abroad. Of the rest, 3% joined the central government service, 5% state government service, 58% accepted jobs in the

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private sector, and 23% decided to set up their own consultancy, business or industrial units. The information about the remaining 4% is not available.

If we compare this pattern with the trend in preceding two years we find that the number of students opting for self-employment and private sector is gradually increasing with a corresponding reduction in preference for government jobs. The percentage of students opting for self-employment and private sector in 2008 was 16 and 48 whereas in 2009 it increased to 21 and 54 respectively. This is so because for the former new schemes have been launched, offering tempting incentives in terms of financial aid and infrastructural support. The private sector has become more attractive because it is highly growth-oriented and provides greater professional challenge and job satisfaction, besides liberal pay package, perks and immediate reward for meritorious work.

There has been hardly any change during the last three years in the percentage of students going in for higher education or those about whom information was not available.

Rachit Kashiwal

### Exhibit 26.6

#### Lakshmi Cotton Mills Limited

#### Interoffice Memorandum

To: General Manager  
From: Production Superintendent

Reference: PA/129  
Date: 16 May 2009

Subject: **Damage by Fire**

A fire broke out in the factory at about 11 p.m. on May 14, 2009. It originated in the Store Room on the ground floor and quickly spread to the whole factory. The fire-brigade fought it for nearly eight hours before it could be brought under control.

Preliminary enquiry shows that the fire was caused by a short circuit in a junction box near the stores.

As per your instructions, a committee consisting of Sri T.L. Swamy, Mechanical Engineer, Sri P.S. Dubey, Foreman and Sri Rasool Ahmed, Stores Officer has been appointed to find out the cause of fire and the extent of damage and to recommend measures to prevent such mishaps in future. The committee has been asked to submit its report within a fortnight.

Arun Ghosh

### PRESS RELEASE

We would like to draw your attention to a different type of memorandum, called Press release. It is written for the outside world and is not meant for internal circulation like other types discussed in this chapter.

352 Business Case  
of structuring  
consumer  
Howe  
dr

We may define a press release as a memorandum written to make news to the public. This is one of the several methods used by a corporate org. the market and boosting its image. As the name indicates, the memo contains to the news media for dissemination. The information could be in regard policy of organisation, merger or collaboration with another organisation launching of a new product, etc.

**Exhibit 26.7**

**Healthcare Ayurvedic Products Ltd.**

Arvindpur

Bhavnagar - 623004

*Goodbye to Diabetes and Dyspepsia*

The company is pleased to announce the launching of the following products in the market:

- Diabof
- Dyspocar

They are available in the form of 250 mg tablets and 300 mg capsules respectively.

These medicines have been developed after more than a decade's intensive research by our R & D Division on the use of indigenous herbs for health care. They have been successfully tested on a sufficiently large number of patients spread over a wide geographical area.

The first medicine is for those suffering from insulin-dependent diabetes. One tablet a day controls the blood sugar, keeping it within permissible limits. Its continuous use in most cases activates pancreas, helping it produce the required amount of insulin.

The second medicine is for those suffering from chronic stomach disorders such as dyspepsia, dyspepsia, acidity, etc. Two capsules a day after main meals can regulate and tone up the entire digestive system.

For further information and bulk orders, the interested persons and parties may please contact:

Sri Shyamal Saxena

Research Director

(Phones: 01524-732611 and 734689)

16 December 2009

R.R. Malik

Company Secretary

A press release is different from an advertisement as the former is strictly factual. The emphasis is on focussing the information that would be of immediate benefit or interest to society. The various strategies

private units, and presenting the message used in advertisements to attract and persuade the prospective units, have no place in a press release. That is why its style is *expository, direct, concise and clear*. However, sometimes the title of the release is catchy enough to be used by the press. The name and address of the person who could be contacted for further information is invariably given. If the release is to be telecast, it may include film footage, explaining the message by visual means. Usually, the name of the organisation is given on the top whereas the date and the name and designation of the officer sending the memo at the bottom as shown in Exhibit 26.7.

## OTHER SHORT MESSAGES

While dealing with the major forms of communication we have already discussed how to write effective messages. Here we shall focus our attention on how to write short messages, namely fax and e-mail. The transmission of messages such as these depends partly on how to compose them and partly on how to handle the technical instruments through which they are transmitted. We shall concentrate on the former. The technical aspect has already been discussed in Chapter 5.

By its very nature a message sent through fax or e-mail is direct, devoid of all words and phrases that do not add significant meaning to the basic message. However, a brief reference to context, where necessary, is provided to make it complete and independent. Obviously, therefore, you have to write neither salutation such as *Dear Sir, Dear Madam, etc.*, nor complimentary close such as *Yours faithfully, Yours sincerely, etc.* You should, however, include your name at the bottom. Both faxes and e-mails are often used for sending formal business letters as well. But those between intimate colleagues can be informal.

You would observe from the examples given in Exhibits 26.8 and 26.9 that both fax and e-mail are like a memo in nature and structure. The layout is slightly different, partly because of the technology used in sending them. As we discussed earlier in this chapter, a memo is usually written for transmission of messages within the organisation. This is not the case with fax or e-mail. These are used for communication both inside and outside the organisation. See Chapter 14 for a detailed discussion on email.

### Fax

#### Exhibit 26.8

Fax from: Faulad Cement Mfg. Co. Ltd.  
423, Naubat Ali Road  
Surjangadh - 321034  
Fax : 312 835 4968

Fax to: Purchase Manager, Madhulika Enterprises Private Ltd.

Fax no: 103 626 3122

Date: 30 December 2009

Subject: Remittance of draft for supply in November.

\* Based on the proforma given on study pages 313 and 251 of *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Sixth Edition*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000.

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From: Hari Kumar, Marketing Manager

Refer to our telephonic conversation on 23 December. The bank draft for Rupees Two Lakh and Forty Three Thousand has not yet been received. Please send by return post or by courier.

Hari Kumar

**Exhibit 26.9**

Date: 31 December 2009

From: Sales Manager, Star Publications

To: Training Manager, ABC Co. Ltd.

CC: Managing Director, ABC Co. Ltd.

Subject: Despatch of 'Executive Communication'

We have sent today 20 copies of Executive Communication by courier. Sorry for the delay.

Amit Kumar

**Communication Core**

The purpose of a memorandum is to record and convey information and decisions, to make requests within an organisation, and to transmit outside the organisation messages through electronic media. Its style is direct, matter-of-fact, and brief. Usually, each organisation has printed memo forms. In the form, the name of the organisation is printed on the top and the space for filling in the following items is provided: the designation of the receiver and sender, the file number, and the subject. A memo written to make newsworthy information available to the public is called press release. The information may be in regard to launching new products, significant change in policy, merger with another organisation,

## ① REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is a memo generally not written for communication outside the organisation?
2. What is the difference between the tone and style of a letter and a memo?
3. In what circumstances would you prefer to send a memo rather than an email for communication within the organisation?
4. Distinguish clearly between a press release and a memo.

## ① EXERCISES

Attempt the following exercises, inventing the details you think necessary.

1. You were asked by the office manager to place an order for 50 tables, 30 office chairs, 1 carpet, 6 ceiling fans and 4 typewriters for a new branch office of the company. Prepare a memo informing him that you have placed the order and tell him also the cost of these articles. Assume that the copies of this memo will be sent to the Managing Director, Financial Manager and Branch Manager.
2. As the Managing Director of a company, write a memo to the Sectional Heads, announcing the appointment of a person from outside to the post of Personnel Manager. Bear in mind the fact that some of the sectional heads having long experience in your company were aspirants for the post.
3. The head of your organisation is worried about the amount of time employees are spending during the 'tea break'. Draft a memo to be signed by him and circulated to all employees, asking them to be at their desk during duty hours.
4. Assume that you have just returned from a seminar to which you were deputed by the company. Write a memo to your immediate boss, reporting to him the important matters discussed at the seminar. Also point out their relevance to the company's business.
5. Write a memo to the manager of your firm suggesting a change in the system of circulation of important information to the employees of your organisation.
6. Prepare a memo for circulation to all employees of your organisation announcing a change in the working hours and explaining the reasons for the change.
7. A large number of young employees have sought permission to study in the local evening colleges. Draft a memo to be signed by the Managing Director, enunciating the company's policy in this regard for the guidance of employees in future. Say that the applications already received are being examined in the light of the policy declared and individuals will be informed of the decision soon.
8. As the chief of production section write a memo to the financial manager seeking his approval for purchasing additional raw materials worth Rs. 10,000.
9. As Works Manager of a factory you have been asked to examine the arrangements for the maintenance of equipment and report to the Chief Engineer. Write a memo report suggesting changes in the present system that you think necessary.

10. The management of your organisation has recently announced a new bonus and incentive scheme. The employees are critical of this scheme. As Public Relations Officer you have been asked to investigate the causes of complaint and recommend some action. Write a report in the form of a memo, addressing it to the Managing Director.
11. Assume that Nausher Steel Company, Moranda Industrial Complex, Ranchi has decided to merge with Bharat Steel Corporation, Durgapur (a Govt. of India undertaking) with effect from July 2009. As the company secretary of the former, write a press release, inventing the reasons for the merger.
12. The Board of Directors of Savignon Electronics Limited, Baweja Mansions, 12th Cross, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bangalore has decided to launch two new products, namely, washing machines and refrigerators and place them in the market from May 2009. Write a press release, assuming yourself to be the Marketing Manager. Invent the necessary details.

Nitij Reader