

Format: The memos should start with a brief paragraph stating your main point. Paragraphs that provide a background summary, supporting information, and a concluding summary or request for action should follow.

Conciseness: Keep your sentences short. They should average around twenty words. Keep the memo itself short and limit your main points.

Tone: Write the way you talk. Be natural and friendly in tone. Use the active voice to give your writing vigor, but it's OK to use the passive voice when you want to be indirect. For instance, it might be better to say "Time is being wasted" rather than "You waste my time."

Response Mechanism: Tack on a sentence in your close that asks for a response or which authorizes you to act. For instance: "If I don't hear from you, I will assume that you approve."

Critical Distance: Hold on to the memo before sending it, especially if your message has an emotional charge. Sleeping on it might give you perspective.

That wraps it up. If I can help in any other way, let me know. If you find this summary, others might as well. Just give me the word, and I'll photocopy it and distribute it to others in the department. I'm attaching a copy of the article for your reference.