PART V

USE MODELS OF EFFECTIVELY WRITTEN DOCUMENTS

CHAPTER 14

Selected Model Documents

This section contains a wide variety of model letters, memos, and reports. They represent typical documents written in a variety of functional areas, including engineering, manufacturing and science; finance and accounting; sales and advertising; and human resource management.

To use this section as a "good book" in writing your own messages, find the model that best reflects your writing objectives. Then compose a first draft imitating the structure and style of that model. I suggest you photocopy this section on three-hole paper and insert the models into it. Then when one of your own or one of your colleagues' documents receives praise, add it to this collection as a way of compiling a "good book" tailored to the needs of your department.

WRITING BUSINESS LETTERS

Many business letters, such as letters of request, letters in response to requests, letters of complaint, letters in response to complaints, and letters summarizing meetings, follow a similar format.

1. *Orientation to key issues*: The opening sentence or paragraph should explain the purpose of your letter, discussing the What, the Why, and often the When of your document.

2. *Analysis and data supporting the message objective:* Provide analysis and data the reader needs to know to understand your purpose. This can include details of a purchase, data concerning an order that has been shipped, the details of a complaint, the steps being taken in response to a complaint, and the topics covered at a meeting.

   Additional analysis and data: Provide supplementary analysis and information, when appropriate, you believe to be valuable to the reader.

3. *Follow-up:* Indicate, as appropriate, follow-up steps, including a telephone number. Close with a complimentary closing, such as "Sincerely yours," and a signature block.

Model #1: Letter of Request

In a letter of request, state what you are requesting in the opening sentence. When appropriate, give enough background to explain why you are making the request. If your request is detailed, use highlighting to make it easy for the reader to comply. For example, in the following letter, the items ordered are organized in a row and column format, with headings identifying number and type of items ordered, their color, unit cost, and total cost. It also specifies a preferred carrier and requests that shipping charges be added to the total of the purchase order.

Dear _____________:

Please send me the following supplies, using purchase order #33A. As we are now running short of nearly all of these items in our office, make sure they arrive no later than August 13. Our preferred carrier is ABC Delivery.

#	Description	Color	Unit Cost	Total
4 reams	20lb. bond paper	white	$15.00	$ 60.00
3 reams	20lb. bond paper	#3 beige	20.00	60.00
8 boxes	500 ct. ABC letterhead envelopes	white	30.00	240.00
			Total	$360.00

As you have in the past, please add shipping charges to the purchase order.

Thank you for your prompt reply to this order. We enjoy doing business with you. If you have any questions, please call me at 555–1111.

Model #2: Letter of Complaint

In a letter of complaint your objective should be to achieve an appropriate response to your complaint. To that end, write in a rational, objective tone, one that clearly indicates what you want done in response to your complaint, why this is a reasonable response, as well as the facts that validate your complaint. In short,

Orientation:	■ Indicate exactly what you want done in response to your complaint. ■ Indicate why this is a reasonable request.
Analysis/Details:	■ Provide the details that support your request.
Follow-up:	■ Close with an expression of your confidence that your request will be honored.

Dear _________:

I am writing to request reimbursement of $25.00 for the damage your wallpaper hangers caused to my hall carpet. This amount covers the expense I incurred to clean the damage done to my hall carpet.

Copies of the invoices of my purchase and of my payment for the carpet repair, as well as photographs of the damaged carpet, are attached.

Here are the details of what has occurred to date.

1. I contracted with Modern Interiors to paper my upstairs hallway. The paper was hung on March 15, 1993.

2. The installers spilled wet paste on the carpet; subsequently, the carpet became hard and stiff and the hallway smelled of wallpaper paste.

3. The workers also smoked in the house and left cigarette butts in the toilet, as well as ashes on the hall carpet, as I reported to you in my last letter, dated March 16.

4. In order to get my house ready for a party on March 18, I hired Sparkle Cleaners to clean and deodorize the soiled carpet in the hallway. They completed the cleaning on March 17, at a cost of $25.00.

Please call me at 555–1111 should you want to discuss this matter in more detail. At the time of my purchase, Ed Smith, assistant sales manager, assured me that your company stands behind its work, so I am confident that you will reimburse me as soon as possible.

Model #3: Letter Resolving a Complaint

In resolving a complaint, focus specifically on maintaining the good-will of the customer as well as creating a positive image of your organization. Avoid using negative words or phrases that may offend your reader or create a negative image of your organization. Such words include *complaint* and *allege*, which suggest you do not believe the customer, and phrases such as "every right to be disappointed," "hope you have not lost confidence in us," and "an unaccountable error in our quality program" which suggest the customer might be justified in dealing with competitors in the future.

Orientation:	■ Accept the complaint at face value.
Analysis/Data:	■ Say what you are going to do about it.
	■ When appropriate, offer a compensatory benefit.
Follow-up:	■ Ask for continued business.
	■ Thank customer for helping you improve your business.

Dear __________:

Thank you for your fax of October 3 in which you note you received only 80% of the ABC minibags you had ordered. Ms. Ellen O'Neal, Customer Service Manager, has looked into the matter. She found that, due to a shortage of supply at the Atlanta Distribution Center, we shipped you 80% of your order last week—with the remaining 20% to be delivered to your warehouse on or before October 10.

In the future we will notify you by phone or by fax of any short shipments and will continue making note of that fact at the bottom of the invoice.

To show that we stand behind our products and services, we are discounting the October 10 shipment by 2%. And, given the success of our long-standing partnership, we are confident you will continue to purchase ABC products.

Thank you for helping us in our quest to continually improve our service to our customers. We appreciate your comments and your business.

Model #4: Letter of Response

In a letter responding to a request, work to achieve two objectives: to indicate you are complying with the client's request and to create goodwill with the client.

Orientation:
- Open by complimenting the reader.
- Indicate you are responding to the reader's request.

Analysis/Data:
- If you are responding to multiple requests, use headings to subdivide the information.

Follow-up:
- Close by indicating you appreciate the positive business relationship you have with the reader.

Dear __________:

I enjoyed meeting with you to learn more about your business. ABC has a long history of success with companies like yours, and we are confident Mass Merchandisers will profit by including our products in its merchandising mix.

Below I have provided the information you requested about our products, broker coverage, and ABC's relationship with Millbrook Distributors.

<u>Product Information</u>. I have attached a list of ABC products which have proven appeal to upscale consumers. Under separate cover I have sent samples of our full line of products.

You will also be receiving pictures of our holiday collection by mid-March. We are excited by the prospect of including ABC novelties in your 1994 Christmas catalog.

<u>Broker Coverage</u>. As you suggested, to ensure the success of our line, we will introduce our products through brokers who have proven track records of providing full and effective coverage.

In fact, as soon as I receive the list of names you will be sending, I will

- complete the contracts and set up meetings in San Francisco at the Exclusive Novelties Show; and
- see Mr. Dierbergen while I am in St. Louis to get additional insights into the names and types of accounts we will be serving.

<u>Millbrook Distributors</u>. I have looked into ABC's relationship to Millbrook Distributors, as you requested. It has been highly successful. Millbrook has distributed ABC products for the past seven years, with consistent increases in the volume of products purchased from us.

Once again, I thank you for the opportunity to discuss being part of your upscale product mix. ABC looks forward to a long and mutually profitable association with Mass Merchandisers. And I look forward to speaking with you in the near future.

Model #5: Letter Summarizing the Results of a Meeting

When summarizing the results of a meeting, remember that your reader does not want to know all the details of your trip or of the meeting. What the reader wants is an answer to these questions: what issues were discussed at the meeting? What was decided? What steps do we take next?

Orientation:
- Open with a clear statement of the What and the Why of your message.
- Forecast the development of the rest of the letter.

Analysis/Data:
- Use headings to indicate the topics discussed.
- Organize paragraphs deductively, beginning with the decision made, followed by the reasons for the decisions, and, when appropriate, the data supporting each decision.

Follow-up:
- Indicate next steps.

Dear ________:

I met with the management of Sterling Silver, Inc., today to discuss the three major recommendations we recently made in our annual audit. We came to a compromise agreement on staff reductions, made some progress on the issue of severance pay, and disagreed on the need for cutting medical benefits.

Staff Reductions

Sterling's management agreed to cut the factory staff by a percentage equal to the drop in sales. They also agreed to cut administrative staff by eight people, four fewer than we recommended. They want to judge the effect of the smaller cut before considering a larger one.

Severance Pay

Sterling's management will decide on a compromise severance package awarding workers two weeks' pay per year of service. They agreed that the proposal by Mr. Moore, the vice-president of human resources, of paying one month's payment for each year's service would be too costly. Likewise, they concluded that our proposal of one week's pay per year of service was inadequate compensation.

Medical Benefits

Sterling's management rejected our recommendation that each covered employee pay the first $400 of medical claims annually before the company's health insurance program would begin payment. We had estimated a savings of $13,500 through such a program. Sterling agreed to investigate other ways of stabilizing the annual cost of medical insurance premiums for future years, including eliminating the subsidy of prescription drugs.

After I return to headquarters on Friday, I'll schedule a meeting to discuss revised proposals we can make on medical benefits. I will put them before Sterling's management at our next meeting, on August 4th.

Model #6: Letter of Application

In writing a letter of application, your key task is to prove that you deserve an interview because you are the best qualified applicant for the position. To prove this point, you must demonstrate that your education, experience, and personal qualities precisely meet the criteria stated in the advertisement. Before you write this letter, make a two-columned list. In the right-hand column, list all of the stated criteria for the position; in the left-hand column, write down specific personal details which correspond to each of the criteria. Then use this information in the application letter to prove that you deserve an interview, because you are so clearly qualified for the position.

Orientation:
- State that you are applying for the advertised position, using the exact title of the job as well as how you found out about the position.
- Assert that there is a good fit between the qualities needed to fill the job and your education, experience, and personal qualities.

Analysis/Data:
- Put your strongest qualification first. Be specific, proving your case with both persuasive reasoning and hard facts.
- Develop your other qualifications, again using empirical data to support your claims.

Follow-up:
- Request an interview. Indicate when you will be available and how you can best be reached.
- End on a positive note.

Dear __________:

I am writing to apply for the position of sales manager at Baxley Laboratories, advertised recently in *Sales Quarterly*. Your advertisement calls for an "energetic, self-starter" with previous sales and management experience, and a college degree. I am well-qualified for this position, meeting all criteria.

Experience
As the attached resume demonstrates, I have excellent experience both as a manager and as a sales representative. I am presently employed by Fine Furniture as a sales administrator, reporting directly to the vice president for sales. Fine Furniture is the leading furniture manufacturer in the United States. In my current position, I supervise a staff that conducts showroom and plant visitations, oversees the creation of new sales territories, and monitors the progress of many sales initiatives.

Prior to my promotion to sales administrator, I was a highly successful sales representative. In my five years in that position, I increased sales in my territory by an average of 30% annually, added more new customers during 1986–1991 than any other representative, and was three times named "Sales Representative of the Year."

Education
I have completed both BSBA (1985) and MBA (1992) degrees from Xavier University during nights and weekends, while holding down full-time positions. I maintained better than a 3.5 average in both degree programs, a testament to my intellectual and time management skills.

Energy
I am also highly energetic. In addition to the above accomplishments, I have served three terms as a city councilman and headed up the most successful United Way campaign in my division's history.

I am very interested in the sales management position at Baxley Laboratories and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the position more fully. Please call me at 555–1111 to arrange an interview.

Model #7: Resume

An effective resume demonstrates that you have the education, work experience, and personal characteristics necessary to meet the criteria for a position for which you have applied. It should show a clear relationship between your experience and education and the job objective you have listed; stress your accomplishments; be one or two pages long; and be neatly typed, error-free, and designed to be easily scanned.

Orientation:
- Put your name, address, and telephone number first on the resume. This tells the reader who you are and how to get in touch with you.
- Next write either a reasonably specific, employer-oriented objective, or a personal summary that describes what kinds of contributions you can make to an organization.
- Provide data in the remainder of the resume that supports the claims made in this section.

Analysis/Data:
- Use headings to separate the major categories of your resume, including education, work experience, and personal interests.
- Use design techniques to make it easy for readers to find out this information: a complete sequence of dates for your work experience as well as your education; the sequence of positions you have held; and the sequence of companies for which you have worked.
- Position facts positively.
  —**Use action verbs to describe your work.** For example, you'll project a more active image of yourself if you say you "successfully managed inventories in the warehouse as well as the store floor" than if you say you were "responsible for managing warehouse and store floor inventories."
  —**Include accomplishments,** such as paying for 100% of tuition through grants and part-time work; making the Dean's List; being nominated for a customer service award; receiving a most valuable player award; being elected president of a community organization; and receiving promotions.

Follow-up:
- If you have room, close the resume with a follow-up statement that "references are available upon request."

HOWARD JONES
100 Clenay Drive
Cincinnati, Ohio 45205
(555) 745–2025

OBJECTIVE: Position as a managment trainee in a people-oriented organization where excellent customer relations are desired.

EDUCATION: Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio; College of Business Administration, B.S.B.A. Management.
To graduate December, 1988 with high honors.

- Major GPA 4.0, overall 3.73; Dean's List all semesters.
- Admitted with distinction, recipient of Trustee Scholarship (4 year) awarded for academic achievement.
- Financed education through academic scholarships, part-time employment and student loans.
- Fall 1987 achieved a 3.83 GPA (eighteen hours) while working ten to twenty hours weekly.
- Experience in BASIC computer language.

6/86-5/87 La Sorbonne—Universite de Paris, Paris, France

- Financed in part through the Fredin Memorial Scholarship given by Xavier University.
- Read, write, and speak French proficiently.
- Discovered the value and pleasure of travel.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

12/87 to present — Associate—Tender Sender at **Lazarus,** Cincinnati, Ohio.

- Completed customer requests quickly and professionally.
- Assumed new responsibility to accurately record data.
- Identified as a "good worker" and "very personable."
- Implemented new techniques in serving customers more quickly and with improved quality.
- Achieved and maintained sales averages above expected levels.
- Entrusted to handle entire department alone.

6/87 to present — Message Center Operator—**DuBois Chemicals**, Cincinnati, Ohio.

- Assisted disgruntled clients in an effective manner while maintaining an amiable, business-like attitude.
- Promoted after probation period with a 6.25% raise.

Summers 1983–1985 — Swim Coach/Instructor, Lifeguard, Pool Maintenance—**Delhi Swim Club**, Cincinnati, Ohio.

- Promoted in three years from head lifeguard to assistant swim team coach and swim lessons instructor.
- Coached approximately 50 children through two seasons of competition, leading the team from fourteenth place to a seventh place finish in league championships.

ACTIVITIES:

- Coached several St. Francis Parish Soccer teams.
- Member of St. Francis Singers and St. Francis Church Choir.
- Member of Xavier University Scholar's Program and Marketing Club.

INTERESTS: Enjoy singing, swimming, and coaching.

Marcus Riley
3030 Autumn Way Court
Cincinnati, Ohio 45238
Home: (555) 530–9871
Work: (555) 767–1168

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Goal-oriented, enthusiastic individual looking for challenge.
- 14 years experience in the chemical industry.
- Liberal Arts Degree from Xavier University in December 1993.
- Associate Degree in Business Management from Miami University.
- Strong industrial marketing, sales and research background.

EXPERIENCE

1991 to 1992 DUBOIS USA—DIV. OF DIVERSEY CORP., Cincinnati, Ohio
Manufacturing Specialist

- Coordinated marketing activities for Dubois' large account development program.
- Conducted customer audits and plant surveys; submitted numerous proposals resulting in new and additional business.
- Developed and presented complete training program for selling industrial lubrication.
- Monitored progress and promoted new products from research.
- Promoted to project manager for new target areas in steel mills and printing, July 1992.
- Fostered growth in lubrication product lines with development and introduction of new specialized equipment.

1990 to 1991 DUBOIS USA—DIV. OF DIVERSEY CORP., Cincinnati, Ohio
Product Manager

- Managed a line of 25 industrial greases.
- Promoted and provided support for a full line of industrial lubricants.
- Introduced five new greases into the industrial market which had a positive impact on the sales and growth of the lubrication line for DuBois.

1990 DUBOIS CHEMICAL—DIV. OF CHEMED CORP., Cincinnati, Ohio
Applications Engineer

- Monitored and performed troubleshooting functions for new and existing customers in the plant pretreatment area.
- Assisted in technical service and training functions in DuBois' research facility.

(continued)

Marcus Riley *Page 2*

1989 to 1990 DUBOIS CHEMICALS—DIV. OF CHEMED CORP., Columbus, Ohio
Industrial Sales Representative
- Sold and serviced a full line of industrial specialty chemicals to central Ohio region.
- Sold and serviced over 50 major industrial accounts with no lost accounts and positive increases in every sales quarter.
- Opened several new accounts that are still active DuBois accounts today.

1987 to 1989 DUBOIS CHEMICALS—DIV. OF CHEMED CORP., Cincinnati, Ohio
Chemist
- Maintained and improved lubricant testing service and support for 800 sales representatives and a product line of 50 specialty lubricants.
- Participated in many sales support activities.
- Formulated synthetic chain lubricants and heat transfer oils for the industrial marketplace.

1979 to 1987 DUBOIS CHEMICALS—DIV. OF W. R. GRACE, Cincinnati, Ohio
Various titles and positions
- Held a variety of positions in the research center for DuBois. Steadily progressed in responsibility with each position while attending night school at Miami University.

EDUCATION

Xavier University, Cincinnati Ohio
BLA—Bachelor of Liberal Arts, December 1993
Major: Liberal Arts
Minor: Marketing
GPA: 3.46
Dean's List

Miami University, Oxford and Hamilton Campuses
AAB Associate of Applied Business, May 1986
Major: Management of Business Technology
GPA: 3.20

COMPUTER SKILLS

Proficient in the following software packages:

Word Perfect, Lotus 123, Microsoft Works, Microsoft Excel, DBase 3+ Reflex, Show Partner, Harvard Graphics, First Publisher.

REFERENCES

Available upon request.

Model #8: Thank You Letter

In the thank you letter, you have two objectives: to express your gratitude and to promote your business objective, whether to help advance a job application, provide additional sales, or strengthen a positive working relationship. When writing thank you letters, provide specific information that reinforces your purpose. For example, in a follow-up to a job interview, point out a new fact about yourself that proves you have a quality the interviewer mentioned was crucial for the position; in a letter to a customer, summarize what you perceive as the mutual benefits of your partnership; in attempting to cement a good working relationship, be specific in identifying exactly what you find to be rewarding about your relationship.

Orientation:	■ Say thank you.
Analysis/Data:	■ Provide specific data that contributes to your purpose in writing the thank you letter.
Follow-up:	■ Express gratitude; when appropriate, indicate you are willing to take extra steps to further strengthen your positive relationship.

Dear __________:

Thank you for the time you took out of your busy schedule to interview me. During the interview you indicated you were looking for a director of nursing who could skillfully initiate a strong cost control program while maintaining a high level of esprit de corps among fellow workers.

I am such a person, having already achieved these twin goals while employed at St. Vincent's Hospital in Indianapolis. During my tenure there, I effectively reduced total compensation costs for both pharmaceutical and registry nursing staff while maintaining the highest level of retention and lowest level of turnover in the hospital. Part of my success is attributable to an effective cross-training program I initiated.

As we discussed, I am challenged by the opportunity to help you establish a "business mentality" in the nursing area to help contribute to General's fiscal viability while also assuring that the care you deliver meets the highest standards.

I am confident that General Hospital will benefit from my leadership skills.

I will call on February 4 to discuss your decision, unless I hear from you sooner.

Model #9: Management Letter

In the management letter, your objective is to state a series of recommendations, politely and in a language and format easily understood by your readers. Two examples of management reports follow. The first, focused on a single topic, uses a series of toplines to allow readers to quickly scan the logic of the argument. The second, a report covering a variety of issues, uses headings to help readers easily locate topics of interest.

Orientation:
- The opening should clearly orient readers to the key dimensions of the report, including answers to the what, why, and when questions. In long reports you should also forecast the development of the report in the opening.

Analysis/Data:
- The body should use headings, lists, indentation, and, when appropriate, numbered, underlined sentences to subdivide topics and indicate the support provided for each recommendation. When using an outline form, check carefully to make sure your lists are all in parallel structure.

Follow up:
- Close with a statement of goodwill and an offer to address any questions or concerns about your report.

Subject: BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS OF THE AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT

Dear __________:

This report explains the amendments Congress enacted to the federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA). As a result of ADEA, companies are now required to meet clear criteria in both benefit and early retirement decisions.

Given that many employers are currently (a) attempting to hold down the escalating costs of medical, disability, and retirement benefits and (b) contemplating downsizing their workforces, it is important to be aware of the business implications of these amendments.

IMPLICATIONS FOR BENEFIT DECISIONS

1. Companies must make benefits available equally to older and younger employees.

   The government made this rule to forbid age discrimination in employment benefits. As a result:
   - Retirement eligibility cannot be a basis for denying either severance pay or disability benefits.
   - Medical coverage must be the same for all members of the group.

2. Companies are allowed to make two significant exceptions to these rules.
   - The present value of retiree medical coverage and the value of pension "bridge" benefits may be used to offset severance payments in some circumstances.
   - Age-related differences in benefits may be justified if they can be demonstrated to be based on sound actuarial principles.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EARLY RETIREMENT

3. Early retirement systems are legal only if companies can prove the decision to retire is voluntary.

   The following factors may prove voluntariness.
   - The amount of time given employees to consider the decision.
   - Whether the information provided on benefits available under the option was accurate and complete.
   - Whether threats, intimidation, or coercion accompanied the offer.

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4. The new law restricts the employer's ability to secure a waiver from employees of any future age discrimination claims.
To be considered voluntary, waivers must now:
- be written so they are easily understood;
- not waive later-arising claims or rights;
- refer to the ADEA act by name;
- include a severance benefit of value to which the employee is not otherwise entitled;
- advise the employee to consult a lawyer, prior to executing the waiver;
- give 21–45 days to consider the waiver;
- include a provision that the waiver can be revoked within seven days of its execution.

5. These requirements may cause some companies to not seek releases and not provide severance pay.

Companies might take such action to avoid possible future age discrimination lawsuits. Ironically, this may make separation for some employees far more traumatic than it would if the previous rules for waivers were still in effect.

Should you want more information on how this act applies to your company, please telephone me at 555-0000, and I will be pleased to make an appointment to discuss it with you in person.

We will continue to update you on this and other issues.

Dear __________:

The following is the report you requested analyzing your company's internal controls and accounting systems for the year ended December 31, 1985.

The report is divided into two parts. Part One lists a series of recommendations in the areas of internal control, fixed assets, cash management, life insurance, and computer usage, which, we believe, when implemented, will make your already good accounting systems even better. Part Two is a profit analysis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

INTERNAL CONTROLS

1. Paperwork controls:
   - Use prenumbered receipts to improve control over cash received and to reduce the possibility of omitted sales or collections.
   - Prenumber purchase orders to reduce the likelihood of double payment of purchases.
   - Use voucher numbers on bank reconciliations to speed up the reconciliation process.
   - Prepare written purchase requisitions for equipment and send a copy to the receiving department to ensure that the correct items are received.
2. Collections:
   Improve collections (and cash flow) by sending monthly statements to customers with outstanding balances over 60 days.
3. Petty Cash:
   - Assign one person to be solely responsible for the petty cash fund.
   - Prohibit employees from cashing payroll checks at the company. This will reduce the funding needed in petty cash and could also improve controls over payroll.
4. Fire and Theft:
   - Store stock certificates and securities offsite to protect against fire or theft.
   - Make backup copies of software and store them offsite to protect against fire and theft.

FIXED ASSETS

1. Capitalize all fixed assets over a certain amount and expense items under that amount.
2. For the machine remake kits which were capitalized, maintain each kit as a separate item, but reference it to the piece of equipment with which it is associated (for example, machine number 000-A).

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CASH MANAGEMENT

1. Reduce your cash balance by investing additional cash in short-term securities which earn market interest rates.
2. Deposit cigarette money daily both to earn additional interest and to reduce the risk of theft.
3. Make voluntary payments to the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services. Had you contributed $191 in determining your 1986 contribution rate, it would have resulted in Ohio unemployment tax savings amounting to at least $425.

LIFE INSURANCE

Update one of your life insurance policies so that Allman is listed as the beneficiary, not Bennett.

COMPUTERIZATION

Use your IBM PC-XT to help you complete more business functions. Its applications (some of which require enhancements) include the following:

- a fixed asset depreciation and maintenance program
- a budgeting program
- a financial projection program
- an investment tracking program
- a word processing program.

PROFIT ANALYSIS

The profitability of the company improved largely because of the following three items:

1. Gross profit increased because sales increased at a much higher rate than did the cost of sales.

2. In 1985 the company recognized a gain on the sale of securities. It also showed a lower loss on the sale of its fixed assets as a result of faster depreciation methods implemented in 1983.

3. Supplies expense was reduced substantially because during the audit it was determined that the kits that had been previously expensed should be capitalized.

Should you want to discuss further any of the items contained in this report, please let us know. We will be happy to answer any questions, and we can help you implement any of the recommendations.

Congratulations on a successful year, a success which we believe you can extend into 1986 and beyond. We thank you and your employees for the helpful and professional attitude exhibited during the audit, and we look forward to a continuing and rewarding relationship in the future.

Model #10: The Letter Proposal

The objective of a letter proposal is to persuade a person or organization to purchase a product or service. Given that most proposals are submitted in a competitive environment, they must convince readers that your organization can do a better and more cost-effective job of satisfying the client's needs than can the competition. Thus, the focus of the proposal must be on meeting client needs.

Letter Proposal Outline

1. **Opening paragraph(s)**
   The opening paragraph should contain both a goodwill statement and a benefit statement including:
   - A positive first sentence that expresses goodwill toward the client
   - A statement expressing confidence in your company's ability to meet the client's needs
   - A forecast of the contents of the proposal.
2. **Results paragraph(s)**
   The results paragraph should expand on exactly what needs your service will fulfill, with a clear focus on the benefits to the client.
3. **Fees paragraph**
   The fees paragraph should be as concise as possible, and near the end of the document. To expend significant space on fees or to put a discussion of fees up front would suggest more interest in being paid than in meeting client needs.
4. **Mutual Responsibilities paragraph(s)**
   The mutual responsibilities paragraph provides additional details to your proposal, including when you plan to initiate and complete the work, the people to call with questions, guarantees of confidentiality, potential risks, and possible alternatives to the proposal.

   This paragraph also spells out the client's responsibilities if the proposal is accepted.
5. **Action Steps**
   The action steps paragraph suggests next steps, such as a time and place to discuss the proposal further. It also expresses confidence that acceptance of this proposal will continue (or initiate) what has been (or will be) a mutually profitable association.

Dear _________ :

We enjoyed talking with you last week and learning about the public accounting needs of Fred Smith Automobile. Littlejohn & Cohen specializes in serving Tri-State automobile dealerships. In fact, the 45 dealerships which currently employ us are testimony to the fact that we provide excellent accounting services—at highly competitive fees.

The proposal below describes the results we will achieve, our estimated fees, and the mutual responsibilities for the engagement.

<u>RESULTS</u>

We will provide Fred Smith Automobile with:

- year-end audit and tax reporting,
- year-end LIFO reporting, and
- management advisory services, as requested.

<u>Audit and Tax Reporting</u>

We will examine your financial statements in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards for the period ending December 31, 1990, and subsequently report to the board of directors of Fred Smith Automobile.

In addition, we will prepare all federal, state, and city corporate income tax returns for the year ended December 31, 1990.

In relation to the above returns, we would examine any assessment notices relative to those returns, and we would advise on income tax matters generally.

<u>LIFO Reporting</u>

LIFO can be performed on all new vehicles and on parts inventories. All necessary computations will be based on our cost information obtained from the company's secretary/treasurer.

(continued)

Management Advisory Services

At your request, we will provide management advisory services. We have successfully provided such assistance to dealerships in the following areas:

1. Parts inventory operational audit and evaluation.
2. Periodic accounting operational audits above and beyond the normal audit work.
3. Acquisitions or dispositions of dealerships.
4. Personal financial planning.
5. Qualified retirement plan design and administration.
6. Any other management advisory services that you would request.

FEES

Our fees for these services will be no more than $5,500 for audit and tax reporting services, $1,500 for the new vehicle LIFO work, $300 for the parts inventory LIFO work. Management advisory services are billed at the hourly rate of the individuals performing the work. We match the experience of the individuals with the experience needed on a particular job so that you receive the best available expertise at an appropriate cost. Our hourly rates range from $35 per hour to $200 per hour.

MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

We propose to begin this work in early March so that our reports will be ready for the March 25 meeting of your board of directors.

Benjamin Cohen will be responsible for managing all the work proposed and he and his staff will report directly to you. All of our findings will be kept in the strictest confidence.

To help keep your costs to a minimum, our proposal assumes that you make available to us prior to the beginning of field work copies of the following:

- all agreements and organizational documents;
- a listing of all equipment, along with vendor invoices;
- details of all unwritten agreements and loans;
- schedules of any income receivable as of December 31, 1990;
- schedules of all expenses payable as of December 31, 1990.

We will be in touch with you in the next week to arrange a time when we can discuss this proposal with you and answer any questions that you may have. We look forward to working with you.

WRITING MEMOS AND REPORTS

When writing to colleagues within your company, use formats which make it easy for readers to immediately understand your meaning, easily retrieve information from your document, and clearly perceive the logic of your argument.

1. Subject line and opening paragraph:	■ The subject line should clearly announce the What of your message and the opening paragraph should concisely summarize the document, indicating the What, Why, and When as well as other information needed to predict the remainder of the document.
2. Background:	■ When necessary, the background paragraph should include facts that clarify the context in which the document was generated. It should be written in an objective tone.
3. Body:	■ The body should use headings, lists, indentation, and, when appropriate, numbered, underlined sentences to subdivide topics and indicate the support provided for each point. Be sure to use parallel constructions when writing in an outline form.
4. Further discussion:	■ When appropriate, discuss issues not previously addressed, such as alternative solutions rejected, risks, and constraints.
5. Action steps:	■ Indicate what follow-up will or should take place as a response to the memo or report. Typically this section should answer the "Who does What, When, and Why" questions.

Meeting Announcement

Given that many people identify attending meetings as a key waste of their time on the job, take time to write meeting announcements that highlight the significance of the issues to be discussed. Make sure you use highlighting to allow readers to find the time and place of the meeting easily. And inform readers of how you expect them to prepare for the meeting.

Meeting Announcement Outline

1. **Subject line**
   The subject line should announce the topic of the meeting and highlight meeting details, including time and place.
2. **Opening paragraph**
   The opening paragraph should highlight the purpose of the meeting, including:
   - A first sentence that requests readers to attend the meeting
   - A clear statement of the purpose of the meeting
   - When appropriate, a description of guest speakers or guest attendees
   - A description of attachments
3. **Importance of decision paragraph**
   This paragraph should further emphasize why this meeting is significant to those attending.
4. **Actions requested paragraph**
   This paragraph should indicate what participants should do in advance of the meeting to be prepared to participate in it.

Subj: MEETING TO DISCUSS THE PURCHASE OF WILSON LAPTOP COMPUTERS

When: October 28
3:00–4:00 pm, with Dr. Gooding
4:00–5:00 pm, without Dr. Gooding

Where: Conference Room 6

Purpose of the Meeting

Please clear your schedules so you can attend a meeting with Dr. Marsha Gooding, a field representative with Wilson Computers. She will be demonstrating the value of using Wilson Laptops and Wilson Audit Software when conducting field audits at remote sites. Given our agreement to purchase laptops this year, your input into which model laptop and which software to purchase is important to our decision process.

Attached is a copy of the Wilson proposal, as well as descriptions of their products.

Importance of this Decision

We will be spending $50–60,000 for laptops this fiscal year. Once we have agreed on a supplier, we will be committed to using their products for at least three years. So we want to make the right choice! And we need your insight at this meeting.

Actions Requested

1. Please write a concise report summarizing your reaction to the Wilson proposal by 1 October. I will summarize the feedback from all field auditors and distribute it prior to the Wilson meeting. This will allow us all to ask informed questions.
2. If you cannot attend the meeting, let me know who you are sending in your place.

Meeting Summary Report

The purpose of a meeting summary report is to clarify the relationship among the objectives of a meeting, the decisions made at the meeting, and the next steps agreed to by the meeting participants.

Meeting Summary Report Outline

1. **Opening paragraph(s)**
   The opening paragraphs should serve as an orientation to the entire document, including:
   - A first sentence that states the date and purpose of the meeting
   - A clear statement of the objectives of the meeting
   - A list of participants
   - The location of the meeting, when appropriate.
2. **Background**
   Background should provide details clarifying Why the meeting was held.
3. **Decisions**
   The Decisions section summarizes agreements; it should be organized deductively, meeting the following criteria:
   - *Easy to scan summaries of agreements*—a series of numbered, underlined topic sentences which clearly relate each agreement to the objective.
   - *Effectively sequenced toplines*—toplined agreements organized to make sense when scanned.
   - *Logically developed points*—explanations of each topline are organized so their relationship to meeting objectives is clear. The explanations provide both a rationale for the toplined claim and data to support it.
4. **Topics Requiring Additional Discussion**
   The Topics Requiring Further Discussion section highlights topics that require further data or additional discussion before decisions can be made. This section should be organized according to the same principles as the Decisions section.
5. **Indicated Action**
   The Indicated Action section lists the steps the committee has agreed to take. This section should answer the Who does What When questions, and, when appropriate, the objective to which each step contributes.

Subject: WEIGHT REDUCTION TEST MEETING, 1/18/94

This summarizes the results of a meeting on 1/18/94 between the SweetFree team and Drs. Morris Black and Laura DuBois regarding the planning of a study on the effectiveness of noncaloric sweeteners as weight reduction agents. The objective of the study is to determine if the substitution of a noncaloric sweetener for sugars in diets leads to weight loss. As detailed below, a variety of decisions were made on how to proceed.

Background
Drs. Black and DuBois represent Mountaintop Laboratories, the research laboratory the SweetFree team previously agreed to hire to advise us on appropriate methods for conducting the tests using state-of-the-art methods. Research indicates that the rat is the best research subject for the test objectives and test methods being used in this study.

Decisions

1. The study will initially use two dozen 3-week old Harvard rats. Mountaintop will use these rats to investigate weight gain using SweetFree artificial sweetener in place of sugar in rat food. The Harvard rats were selected because they best meet the weight and age requirements of the test. The Cambridge rats also meet the minimum requirements for weight and age.
2. The rats will be weaned on a special experimental diet formulated by Oxford Labs. They will need this diet for two weeks because Harvard rats are usually weaned between four and five weeks on a normal rat diet. During the acclimation week, the weaning diet will be reduced by incrementally mixing it with a special diet that will be formulated by Oxford Labs Inc. Past experience indicates the rats will accept such a regimen.

   In response to Dr. Black's observation that the original diet formulated at Oxford Labs lacks the proper amount of protein needed for rapidly growing rats, we are developing, with Anne Smith and others at the laboratory, a higher protein formula. Once we confirm that the diet has the proper amount of protein, we will order a supply of the diet from Oxford Labs.
3. Special skills, supplied externally, will be used to evaluate the rats' weight gain. Brown Laboratories, which has substantial experience in this area, will administer the diet and conduct the tests at our facilities.

   The rats will be divided into two groups, a control group fed a diet with substantial amounts of sugars in it and an experimental group fed the same diet with noncaloric sweeteners substituted for the sugars. A two week test will be used to determine if the substitution of a noncaloric sweetener will lead to weight loss if other dietary factors are held constant.

(continued)

-2-

4. The rats will be housed in white mouse cages.
   The animals will be housed in white mouse cages for the duration of the pilot study. The cages will be fitted with special trays to collect the feces and urine.
5. The study can begin no earlier than 6/5/94, the earliest date by which the company can receive an adequate stock of Harvard rats.
   Assuming we place the order this week, Budding Laboratory in New Jersey will send the rats on a truck in an environmentally controlled trailer. Other suppliers that we considered either could not guarantee comparable delivery or were located too far away to guarantee the delivery of healthy rats.

Issues Requiring Further Discussion

1. The committee agreed to further discuss housing, following an investigation into the availability and cost of glass metabolism caging large enough to hold the Harvard rat.
   Some committee members expressed concern that the rats could not adjust comfortably in cages designed for white mice. D. B. Jones agreed to investigate this issue and bring his findings to the next meeting.
2. The committee also agreed to further discuss the laboratory preparation needed for the tests.
   A concern was raised that the group needs to carefully schedule time and space so that concurrent projects would not compete for the same space and manpower resources. J. L. Paretti agreed to gather information on this topic for discussion at a future meeting.

Indicated Action

A document confirming the above protocol will be sent to Drs. Black and DuBois.

Trip Report

The purpose of a trip report is to summarize what you have learned during a visit to a plant or office site, a supplier, a customer, or a convention that will help your organization better meet one or more of its objectives.

Trip Report Outline

1. **Opening paragraph(s):**
   The opening paragraph(s) should contain these items:
   - The location or locations you visited
   - Date(s) of the trip
   - Company objectives met by the trip; these may be included in opening paragraph or in a separate paragraph following the opening paragraph
   - When appropriate, brief evaluation of trip
   - When relevant, others who made the trip.
2. **Background paragraph(s)**
   Background may include the following:
   - Information that clarifies the context of the trip, such as details about why you or others were selected to make the trip
   - Description of event, such as the stated purpose of a convention and the number and types of people attending the convention.
3. **Key Learnings**
   The key learnings section should be organized deductively meeting the following criteria:
   - *Easy to scan summaries of learnings*—a series of numbered and underlined topic sentences which clearly relate your learnings to the objectives stated in the opening.
   - *Effectively sequenced toplines*—toplined learnings are sequenced in a logical order, so they make sense when scanned separately from the text that follows them.
   - *Clear, relevant argumentation*—explanations of the learnings which follow the toplines are organized so that their relationship to division and company goals is clear. The explanations provide both a rationale for the toplined claim and data for it.
4. **Indicated Action**
   The Indicated Action section suggests appropriate next steps. It should suggest one or more steps as follow up to each learning, assigning, where appropriate, the responsibilities and timing for each step.

Subj: KEY LEARNINGS FROM OFFICE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

I have written this report to summarize my learnings from attending the Office Technology Applications Show held in San Antonio on August 2, 1988.

OBJECTIVES

I attended this show to learn if ABC could apply any voice processing technologies to its current communication systems.

BACKGROUND

The Office Technology Applications Show is an annual event sponsored by Office Clearinghouse, the publisher of *Office Update Newsletter*. It brings together people who conceive, develop, create, manufacture, sell, and purchase office technology.

KEY LEARNINGS

1. Voice mail technologies could be applied immediately to our communication system.

   We can use voice mail immediately with our telephone answering machines, and, with some adaptation, use it in conjunction with our electronic mail system. This system could prove to be a major benefit to our international businesses, reducing the communication problems we have faced because of time zone differences.

2. Current voice recognition and speech synthesis technologies are not sufficiently developed to be of immediate value to ABC.

   - Voice recognition: Current products lack (1) speaker independent voice recognition; (2) continuous speech recognition; and (3) large vocabularies. A number of leading computer manufacturers, including ABM, are working to perfect this technology over the next five years.
   - Speech synthesis: The quality of speech synthesis output is poor, both in intelligibility and naturalness. Henri Dupuy, associate professor of speech at Ohio State University, claimed speech synthesis will not be commercially acceptable until the voices sound natural. His evidence indicates office employees have low tolerances for talking and listening to computers that sound like computers.

STEPS

1. I will recommend the formation of a task force to apply voice mail learnings throughout the company.
2. I will continue to read articles and books on improving office technologies and will issue additional key learnings reports to update you on further developments in this area.

Progress Reports

The progress report has two main purposes: to summarize significant events of a period of time and to indicate what you plan to accomplish in the month or months ahead. To meet reader needs, summarize key accomplishments in the opening, use headings and other forms of highlighting in the body to make it easy for readers to find the details about each topic, and in the closing provide a list of actions being undertaken in the current month, or that will be undertaken in the future.

In the three examples of progress reports that follow, the first is a simple monthly report covering a variety of issues under the responsibility of the author. The other two are focused reports, the first reporting bimonthly share results, the second progress on a long-term scientific project.

Monthly Report Outline

1. **Opening Paragraph**
   The opening should summarize the entire document, including a statement indicating what progress has been made.
2. **Analysis/Data**
   This section provides data on the progress made. It should be well-designed, using headings and indentation in simple reports, and toplined, summarizing sentences in more complex reports.
3. **Indicated Action**
   This section spells out for readers what is being done currently toward objectives, as well as what future plans have been made in pursuing these objectives. In highly complex or very long reports, actions steps may be placed immediately after analysis. When this is done, the action steps should be indented from the rest of the text or in some other way presented, so the reader can scan through the action steps alone to get a sense of what the total package of planned actions look like.

Re: <u>MIS Monthly Report for March, 1991</u> Date: April 9, 1991

We have completed Phase I and started Phase II of the MIS Projects. We also improved the MIS data base in three areas: estimated revenues from uninvoiced shipments; initial lumber business data; and PC data transfer. We ordered a software product to improve retrieval response time.

I. <u>Phase I and Phase II MIS Projects</u>
   A. The Phase I MIS project is complete, and upper management is now using the system.
   B. Phase II of this project, estimated to take six months to complete, has been initiated. This project will emphasize: (1) broadening the data available from the MIS; (2) extending use of the system to additional members of the organization; and (3) working jointly with accounting to study the feasibility of streamlining administrative information flows in the division.

II. <u>Development of MIS Data</u>
   A. <u>Estimated Revenues for Uninvoiced Shipments</u>: Improvements were made to the accuracy of estimated revenues for uninvoiced shipments. Manufacturing costs, which have formerly been stored as monthly unit costs ($/ton), are now stored as both unit cost and total costs. This change permits weighted average costs to be easily calculated (using total cost and total production) over user-selected time periods.
   B. <u>Business Data</u>: An initial set of lumber business data now resides in the MIS. Included are fairly high-level summaries of lumber shipments, prices, sales dollars, production, and inventory status. A standard structure has been recommended for storing Woodlands cost data in the MIS. Accounting is reviewing the feasibility of establishing standard divisional Woodlands operating expenses statements, which would be the source of such data for the MIS.
   C. <u>PC Data Transfer</u>: Work is nearly complete on data upload capability to move automatically data prepared on HP150 personal computers to the MIS data base. This important capability will simplify the acquisition of considerable data which are currently prepared on PC's, including shipment forecasts and pricing P&L data.

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III. Improved MIS Data Retrieval Response Time
   A. FASTRAN is a new commercial software product which improves the efficiency of programs written in the TRANS-ACT/3000 language, such as the MIS. Tests conducted to date demonstrate MIS data retrieval times to be reduced by a factor of 3 to 4 using FASTRAN.
   B. We now have the FASTRAN package on order, and we expect to install it for use by the MIS by May 1.

Goals for April 1991
- Continue work on Phase II MIS project
- Continue developing lumber business data base
- Complete PC data transfer capability
- Begin installing Fastran software

SUBJECT: DISPOSABLE RAZOR SHARE RESULTS, SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER, 1992

This summarizes September–October, 1992 disposable razor shares, as they compare with previous results in the past year. Overall, ABC's Nielsen Share of 53.4% was up 4.4% versus year ago, but down –.8 points versus previous period.

DISPOSABLE RAZOR CATEGORY SHARE RESULTS
SO '92 AS COMPARED TO PREVIOUS RESULTS

		Recent Share Trends		
	SQ 92	vs. prior 2-mo	vs. prior 6-mo	vs. YAG
1. SmoothSkin	37.8%	–1.2%	+2.7%	+8.2%
2. FreeRazor	20.2%	+3.3%	+12.8%	+20.8%
3. Balance	17.6	–4.5	–10.2	–12.6
4. Ladies Ch	15.6	+0.4	–4.7	–3.8
5. TOTAL ABC	53.4%	–0.8%	–2.1%	+4.4%
6. McQueen	29.1%	+1.1%	+1.6%	–3.7%
7. All Other	17.5	–0.3	+0.5	–0.7
8. TOTAL OTHER	46.6%	+0.8%	2.1%	–4.4%

Total Market Growth in Disposible Razor Market vs. YAG

9. Mkt. Grth	–1.1%	–1.5%	+2.0%	–1.1%

MARKET— In SQ'92, the total disposable razor market was down 1.1% versus year ago, largely because of a 1.5% decrease in the target population for the last three months vs. YAG.

Action: The Brands will continue to monitor changes in the market.

SmoothSkin— SmoothSkin share at 37.8 is +8.2 points vs. YAG, but –1.2 points versus previous period, a decline attributable to losses in our nonpromoted business.

The loss versus previous period traces entirely to our nonpromoted business (–4.0) as our Free Razor business was +2.8 behind the convenience pack introduction. The decline in our business stems from a 21¢ pricing disparity versus McQueen since all our promotion/sales support was directed toward our Free Razor promotion.

Action: We are rebuilding our regular business by beginning with a joint sales merchandising strategy and by continuing our focus on merchandising and couponing activity through JFM.

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Ladies Ch —	Ladies Ch share of 15.6 is +.4 vs. previous period reflecting growth behind a Jumbo Pack introduction, but share is –3.8 points versus YAG because of product and pricing disparities. Ladies Ch 0.8 share point increase versus previous period reflects initial growth behind the 8/25/92 Ladies Ch Jumbo Pack introduction. Despite share progress behind Jumbo Packs, business results remain driven by two factors: (a) basic product inferiority with both SmoothSkin and McQueen, both in regular and Convenience Packs, and (b) Ladies Ch SQ'92 ScanTrack Convenience pricing disadvantage versus McQueen (–$.20/carton) and SmoothSkin (–$.25/carton). Action: To increase share, the brand is introducing Ladies Ch Convenience and basic sizes on January 5, 1993. To address pricing, the brand is taking the following measures—a 12/1 $2.00 mailed coupon, a 1/12 $2.00 FSCI, and a 3/1 $3.00 cash refund offer to complement the already strong JFM'93 promotion plan.
McQueen —	McQueen share of 29.1 was +1.1 versus previous period, due largely to increased spending levels and couponing. McQueen share is –3.7 versus YAG. This gain versus previous period reflects McQueen increased spending levels (up to $4.00 OI in some districts) resulting in a strong pricing advantage versus Ladies Ch (+$.20/carton) and parity pricing with Ultra SmoothSkin (during their Ultra Convenience Pack introduction). Additionally, targeted couponing behind the accelerated SuperSmooth rollout (in 85% U.S. by 12/31/92) hurt both Ladies Ch and SmoothSkin.
NOV–DEC — FORECAST	We expect a total ABC share of 52.8, with the SmoothSkin share holding steady at 37.8 and the Ladies Ch share declining to 15.0. Gains in SmoothSkin business will probably be offset by losses in the Ladies Ch business. Similarly, we project a .6 decline in Ladies Ch share because of expected losses in the convenience pack market.

Subj: CLEENUP POLYMER DELIVERY TEST

This report summarizes progress to date in identifying which solvent is optimum for CleenUp window cleaner. This research is part of the polymer delivery subteam's objective of identifying low-cost delivery media for the CleenUP polymers which also meet flow rate and other formula criteria.

Results to date indicate more technical testing of Formula X is needed to determine if it meets the criteria for use in the CleenUp formulation.

Initial Test Results

- Initial tests indicate Formula X produces an easy flow for the window cleaning polymer.

  Test results suggest Formula X fits with CleenUp's system. Product viscosities, feel tests, and shine retention tests were performed on two test formulations, the current CleenUp formula and the All-surface CleenUp formula. Formula X worked well in each.

Tests In Progress

- Additional tests we are now conducting have been designed to create a data base to determine the best use of Formula X in the CleenUp formulations.

Specifically the tests do the following:

—Measure viscosities on varying levels of polymer in Formula X. This information will be useful for plant scale polymer processing.

—Submit CleenUp formulations with varying levels of Formula X through the battery of technical tests, such as drying time and surface feel. This information will provide understanding of how much Formula X can be tolerated in a formulation.

Future Tests

- Assuming this approach is successful, the CleenUp team will move ahead on the three key issues listed below.

  —Delivery media for the CleenUp polymer
  —Processing options for the formulation
  —Formulation approaches of the new product

Please call me at 555-4444 if you have any questions.

Procedural Memo

The purpose of a procedural memo is to highlight steps to be taken to fulfill a company objective. Effective procedural memos allow readers to do both “big picture” and “little picture” thinking. Use a chronologically ordered series of numbered and underlined sentences to highlight each discrete step in the process. Then use a list format to clarify the criteria for fulfilling each toplined step.

Procedural Memo Outline

1. **Opening paragraph(s):**
   The opening paragraph(s) should contain these items:
   - An orientation statement, highlighting the What and, when relevant, the Why
   - A statement indicating When the procedures should be started and finished.
2. **Background paragraph(s)***
   Background includes information that clarifies the context of the procedures, such as details as to why these procedures are being implemented and how the decision was made.
3. **Guidelines**
   The guidelines section should be organized deductively meeting the following criteria:
   - *Easy to scan summaries of steps*—a series of numbered and underlined topic sentences which clearly describe a step in the procedure. Each should start with a verb.
   - *Effectively sequenced toplines*—toplined procedures are sequenced in a chronological order, so they make sense when scanned separately from the text that follows them.
   - *Clear, relevant argumentation*—explanations of how to implement each step are organized so that their relationship to the toplined step is clear.
4. **Indicated Action**
   The indicated action section suggests appropriate next steps. Typically a procedural memo lists a phone number to call if the reader has further questions about the memo.

Subject: SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR RENTAL VEHICLES

Please follow the inspection procedures below before every one-way and local rental of ABC trucks. These guidelines have been implemented to both protect the company and its franchisees from litigation and to ensure that our customers enjoy a trouble-free rental.

Background
The audit committee devised these guidelines in response to a study which revealed that consumer lawsuits brought against ABC cost the company and its licensees over $20 million annually to litigate. All 3,000 ABC rental agencies will follow these guidelines.

Guidelines

1. Check lights, tires, gauges, and fluids.
   - Circle the truck, checking turn signals, brake lights, and headlights.
   - Be sure tire tread meets the company standard of 1/2" safety depth and tire pressure is at 30 lbs.
   - Lift the hood and check fluids, including engine and transmission oils, as well as coolants and windshield wiper fluids.
   - Make sure the fluid levels agree with the levels shown on the gauges on the inside dashboard.

2. Review truck operating guidelines with customers.

   Some customers are not familiar with the differences between operating a car and a large truck.
   - Carefully explain how to use side mirrors while backing up and while changing lanes.
   - Describe the importance of making sure that all overpasses are higher than the height of the truck.
   - Explain how a driver must make a wider than normal radius when turning because of the length of the truck.

3. Explain the benefits of ABC insurance policies.

   In the rental contract, the customer has two options for insurance. Be sure the customer understands the implications of each choice.
   - By accepting the insurance on the truck for $15 per day, the customer will be fully covered by ABC in case of an accident.
   - By declining the insurance, the customer is fully liable for all costs and damages sustained by the vehicle.

Future improvements

An updated safety guide will be available for distribution to customers on August 31. This guide will contain emergency numbers and a list of safety tips.

I appreciate your cooperation in implementing this program. Please call me at (513) 555–8252 with questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Recommendation Memo

The purpose of a recommendation memo is to request approval to change your organization in some way, such as changing a policy or procedure to save time or improve efficiency, or spending money to purchase equipment or fund an advertising program. Your objective is to show that the change you are proposing is advantageous as compared to the current system and alternative systems.

Recommendation Memo Outline

1. **Opening paragraph(s)**
   The opening paragraph(s) should contain these items:
   - A one sentence statement of exactly What action is being recommended and When it is to be implemented.
   - A statement showing how this effort is aligned with a higher level Company Why.
   - A summary of benefits.
   - A statement of costs, including, when relevant, the payback period and a statement of whether the money is already budgeted.
   - A listing of names of those who concur with your recommendation.
2. **Background paragraph(s)**
   Background may include the following:
   - A concise summary of historical facts that clarify why the memo is being written now.
   - A statement linking the recommendation to previous documents the readers have received on the topic.
3. **Recommendation paragraph(s)***
   The recommendation paragraph(s) should:
   - Expand upon the one sentence description in the opening paragraph, precisely describing What is being proposed, and briefly, How it is to be carried out.
   - Not contain any "why" or benefit statements.
4. **Rationale for Recommendation paragraphs**
   The rationale for the recommendation section should be organized deductively, meeting the following criteria:
   - *Toplined summaries of benefits*—statements summarizing each of the benefits of the proposal compared to the current situation. Each benefit statement should be numbered, underlined, and written in a full sentence. Each should make sense when

read in sequence as well as when the word "because" is inserted between the recommendation and each reason. Include at least two and no more than three reasons.

- *Alignment with opening paragraph:* Each of the benefit statements should be predicted by the benefit summary in the opening paragraph and should be discussed in the same order as stated in the opening paragraph.
- *Effective proof:* Facts and reasons should be positioned and interpreted so that the recommendation makes sense. The argument should show a positive impact upon the business, especially highlighting relationships to department, division, and company goals. The argument should be supported by good evidence, including precedent, past company experience, quantitative and qualitative proof, as well as "this makes sense" reasoning.

5. Details/Discussion*

Discuss in this section issues not previously discussed, such as:

- *Implementation details*, an expansion on how it will be accomplished, including, where relevant, timing, quantities, costs, personnel, and any other basic assumptions that should be kept in mind.
- *Constraints*, a discussion of the risks from external forces, such as government agencies, trade customers, consumers, and competitors, as well as internal constraints such as budget issues, training, and potential technical problems.
- *Payback*, when appropriate, a calculation of how long it will take a proposal to pay back its investment.
- *Alternative solutions rejected*, an outline of alternatives and reasons why they were not chosen.

6. Indicated Action

Orient readers to what they are to do—and when they are to do it—to authorize implementation of the recommended actions.

*These paragraphs not always required. Use a separate recommendation paragraph when you have concluded that your one-sentence description in the opening paragraph inadequately describes exactly the plan you are proposing.

Subject: RECOMMENDATION TO PURCHASE PC'S FOR COST STUDY GROUP

The Cost Accounting Department requests a $31,000 authorization to purchase four ABM 3000 personal computers and six cost-estimating software packages. Using the PC's will increase our productivity by improving the speed and accuracy of our cost analyses.

We will bring the PC's on-line within three weeks of approval and will begin training within one week of approval. The $1,000 training costs are provided in our current year budget. We estimate a payback period of one year. M. Andersen and S. Rashid concur.

BACKGROUND

Our four cost accountants currently do 800 cost studies per year, all computed on a desktop calculator. A survey we conducted revealed that they spend approximately four hours on each cost study. When changes are made to a cost study, the entire calculation must be refigured; often the new results are not available until the next day.

Our survey also revealed that about 700 of our cost studies used similar formulas and therefore were excellent candidates for computerization.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

1. We will complete cost studies faster.

Our research indicates we can complete the average cost study in 10–15 minutes on the ABM PC's, compared to a 3–4 hour average doing the analyses manually. In fact, *Modern Machine Newsletter* cites a case in which a machine tool company averaged only 10 minutes per cost analysis after computerization, versus five hours on a calculator. A demonstration by an ABM sales representative confirmed that the ABM PC's can achieve a similar result.

2. We will improve the accuracy of our cost studies.

The PC's promise error-free cost studies because the formulas for each type of cost study will be carefully checked prior to their initial use. From then on, we can be assured the correct formulas will be used each time. A review we conducted of our current system indicated about 8% of our current cost analyses contained mistakes because of an incorrect entry of a formula in the calculation.

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IMPLEMENTATION

Our maintenance group will install the PC's, with the assistance of ABM's service representative.

The training classes will be taught by Abacus Computer Training, at a cost of $1,000.00. The classes will consist of three one-day sessions, with one half-day devoted to each of the six software packages appropriate to the type of cost studies we conduct.

To make sure we are using the computers correctly, we will complete both manual and computerized cost analyses for one week.

PAYBACK

We estimate a payback period of one year. This figure is based on a savings of 2,100 hours per year, as we conservatively estimate we will save at least three hours on approximately 700 studies per year. As our cost analysts are paid an average of $15.00 per hour, we estimate a $31,500 annual savings.

ACTION STEPS

May we have your immediate approval to purchase the ABM PC's and arrange with Abacus for the computer training?

Plan Description

Plan description reports describe the key elements of a plan of action, such as plan objectives, rationale, obstacles, and implementation steps. It answers questions such as: What objectives is this plan designed to achieve? What strategic assumptions support the plan? How will the plan be implemented?

Two examples of plan descriptions follow, one written in full memo form, the other as a "forwardable outline," a report form preferred at some companies because readers can so easily scan its logic and evidence. When using this outline form in particular, proofread to make sure your lists are in parallel constructions.

Plan Description Outline

1. **Opening paragraph**
   The opening paragraph should serve as a concise summary of the entire document, including a description of the What and the Why(s) of the plan.
2. **Background paragraph***
   The background paragraph provides historical data about why the plan was developed and when it was approved for implementation.
3. **Analysis/Data paragraphs**
   The analysis/data paragraphs should be organized deductively, meeting the following criteria:
   - *Easy to scan descriptions of plan strategy and plan details*—a series of numbered, underlined topic sentences which clearly communicate the logic of the plan and the major steps needed to undertake the plan.
   - *Effective proof*—facts and reasons positioned so the plan makes sense. Each argument should be supported by good logic and evidence.
   - *Effectively sequenced toplines*—toplined analysis organized to make sense when scanned.
4. **Plan Obstacles***
   The plan obstacles paragraphs describe the limitations of the plan, especially in light of limiting variables you have identified.
5. **Next Steps**
   The next section answers the "Who does What and When" questions.

*not always required

Subject: Wake Up SALES PLAN IN CHARLOTTE REGION 21

In response to your request, I have outlined the sales plan for the Charlotte Region 21. Its objective is to reach a 6 share over the next 4–5 months. We are executing this plan to increase reach, trial and share through temporary price reductions, wet-sampling, and a Nascar sponsorship.

This cost-effective, consumer-oriented strategy is designed to offset the distribution, trade dollar, share of voice, and display advantages of Roberta Morrison (RM) and Sunshine. Plan details and obstacles follow.

PLAN DETAILS

1. Deep-cut feature pricing will increase trial and share.

   This program will allow retailers to feature Wake Up at $1.39/2.49, 50–60 cents below competitive prices in January–February. Company experience shows this level of price cut doubles share initially, as current users stock up and competitive brand users buy Wake Up in place of their normal brand.
2. A wet-sampling plan will encourage trial and also reinforce the price reduction strategy.

   Free samples, actively given out at 100 stores over a two-day period in January, will encourage trial by (1) effectively demonstrating the superior taste of Wake Up, (2) directly promoting the purchase of the product, and (3) calling attention to the reduced feature price of Wake Up.
3. An entire season of Nascar sponsorship will help Wake Up reach a target market currently dominated by competitors.

   This sponsorship will cost effectively bring our name in front of a key target market: race car enthusiasts. Research shows this group to be heavy coffee drinkers, with a preference for R & G brands, which currently hold 38% share. Past experience with sponsorships demonstrates their effectiveness in expanding reach and encouraging trial, especially when feature and promotion activity is tied into them directly.

(continued)

PLAN OBSTACLES

Experience shows it takes constant sales and merchandising pressure to gain and hold share in this category. The brands currently holding lead shares have major trade advantages with retail clients. In addition, the relatively limited scope of our District 21 program suggests it will take a relatively longer time to achieve share objectives than it has for programs with wider distribution and trade dollar incentives.

1. We offer fewer total trade dollars and have a smaller share of voice than RM or Sunshine.

   For example, Kroger Roanoke's RM's trade funds are $600M annually, whereas Wake Up's soluble and ground funds are $70M. So although we match our larger competitors on a per case and dollar purchase basis, accounts see us as offering far fewer total dollars.

   Reports from Sales representatives in this area also suggest Wake Up has considerably less share of voice than either RM or Magpie.

2. Wake Up's distribution is less than RM or Sunshine, which limits the effectiveness of Wake Up's promotions, feature, and display.

   Given our test geography, we are not participating in all stores of many accounts, thus precluding us from inclusion in chain-wide promotions.

   In addition, an independent audit of distribution shows us at 95% ACV, not the 70–80% Nielson quotes, indicating that our current display and feature efforts have been less effective than previously believed.

3. The limited product line and reduced trade dollars make it unlikely this event will be as immediately effective as the Uptown rollout in Dallas.

   In the Dallas event an entire line, over 20 SKU's, was introduced, and initial trade spending was three times higher than what we have planned for the Charlotte district.

NEXT STEPS

The sales force is confident it will make this plan work and that Wake Up brands can sustain a "6" share in 4–5 months.

BUILDING RAISIN CANDY MINIPAK BUSINESS

Objective: Build minipak business by reducing out-of-stock by 50% and by improving packaging.

Strategy: Use sales force to implement low-cost strategies in districts with greatest out-of-stocks.

Expected payoff: 25M additional cases per year. This calculation is based on shipments per distribution point.

Analysis:

- Current minipak out-of-stock level up +2% vs. last year represents a major business loss.

  Due to low consumer loyalty, Out-of-Stocks mean lost sales because consumers will purchase another brand rather go to another store.

- High minipak out-of-stock stems from insufficient minipak inventory.

  The trade maintains an average of only 5 days supply of minipak with 1.5 days in reserve. By contrast, the Trade maintains an average of 10 days supply of bar size with 4.1 days supply inventory in reserve.

Raisin Candy Inventory Levels
(Avg. Past 6 Mos.)

	Days supply	Days supply on Shelf	Days supply in Back Room
Bars	10	5.9	4.1
Minipaks	5	3.5	1.5

- Sales reports that minipak current packaging is not clearly enough distinguished from bar packaging.

  Reports from the field indicate that store managers have commented that the similarity of packaging of bar and minipak has led to stocking difficulties.

(continued)

Details of Plan:
The program will concentrate on the 11 districts with an Out-of-Stock level of 10% or greater.

First Stage:

1. Communicate to sales force in the spring promotion package how to achieve low minipak out-of-stocks.
   - Target for increase of on-shelf inventory to 7 days supply.
   - Outline shelving principles that have reduced low minipak Out-of-Stocks in several districts (see Exhibit II).
     First choice: 2–3 facings on base shelf next to bars.
     Second choice: 2–3 facings on the shelf right above bars.
2. Differentiate minipak's cardboard case from bar case to make stocking easier.
   - Increase size of THE MINIPAK flag.
   - Use different color inks on bar and minipak cases.
   - Increase size of minipak label.

Second stage:

3. Optimize use of sales time spent on minipak with an aggressive minipak out-of-stock reduction program in next national expansion of a minipak line extension.

Case:
Case change: No cost if done concurrently with 1/90 changeover to laser reading technology.

Next Steps:

1. Incorporate minipak out-of-stock plan in spring promotion package to be released 1/9/90.
2. Work with technical packaging to make case changes.
3. Plan second stage to coincide with introductory effort behind next minipak line extension.

Test Results Report

The purpose of the test results report is to interpret the meaning of test results. It answers the questions: What test was conducted? Why was it conducted? What were the results? What do these results mean? What steps should the company take next?

Test Results Report Outline

1. **Opening paragraph(s)**
   The opening paragraph(s) should serve as a concise summary of the entire document, including:
   - A concise description of the test, including where and when the test was conducted.
   - A concise rationale for the test, including its relationship to Company goals.
   - A one-sentence summary of the test results.
   - A one-sentence description of follow-up steps.
2. **Background and Methods paragraph(s)**
   Background and Methods should be brief, factual, and objective, including:
   - Historical facts that clarify why the data is being collected.
   - A justification of why the researcher believes that methods selected were the right ones given the question the data was gathered to answer.
   - A description of the methods used in carrying out the test.
   - Numbered steps, separated from succeeding steps with white space.
3. **Conclusion**
   The conclusion should be an evaluation of what the test results mean; it should contain an evaluation term, such as *successful*, *unsuccessful*, *confirm*, *do not confirm*, and *inconclusive*. The conclusion should be phrased so that it is consistent with the action steps section.
4. **Findings**
   The findings section should be organized deductively, meeting the following criteria:
   - *Toplined summaries of results*—statements which introduce data, telling readers what each set of data mean. Each summary of findings is numbered, underlined, and written in a full sentence.

- *Effectively sequenced toplines*—each topline should make sense both when scanned and in sequence; each should also logically follow an implied "Because" between the conclusion and each finding.
- *Clear, relevant argumentation*—explanations of data that follow the toplines are organized so that their relationship to the conclusion is clear. The explanations provide both a rationale for the toplined claim and data for it.

4. **Discussion**

   Discussion includes issues not previously addressed, such as risks or limitations of measurement instruments.

5. **Indicated Action**

   The indicated action section should tell readers what you intend to do in response to your interpretation of the findings and when you intend to do it. It can also highlight what you believe others in the organization should do in response to these findings.

Subject: Analysis of Welcome Wagon Coupon Test

This summarizes research conducted in July 1988 to determine if a Welcome Wagon Coupon (WWC, sample attached) would increase trial of our refrigerator deodorant among consumers who had moved.

In this test, WWC proved to be an effective vehicle both in redemption and in reach. Additional tests are being conducted.

Mr. Sabatelli of Market Research agrees this summary is technically correct and consistent with the findings.

BACKGROUND

The Welcome Wagon program supplements our Appliance Sample program, which packs a box of our deodorant in new refrigerators to generate trial among new owners. This program does not reach consumers who move to residences which already provide a refrigerator, or those who have moved their own refrigerator.

We tested the Welcome Wagon idea in Dayton, Ohio; Jackson, Missouri; and Altavista, Virginia. The coupon distributed was redeemable for a free box of our refrigerator deodorant.

CONCLUSION

We have concluded that the Welcome Wagon coupon is an effective way of reaching new consumers and additional testing should be undertaken.

FINDINGS

1. The Welcome Wagon coupon generated significant increases in trial.

   47% of the specially marked coupons were redeemed, with a high of 55% in Dayton and a low of 35% in Altavista. This compares to a 4% redemption on our average Sunday newspaper coupon.

2. The Welcome Wagon Coupon reached a significant number of movers.

   Coupons were distributed to 4,375 households. This constitutes 35% of the 12,500 estimated moves during April–June in these three cities. This estimate is based on the total number of new residential telephone numbers issued during 1987.

INDICATED ACTION

Given the promising tests results, we are conducting further tests using the WWC in six additional cities over the next three months. If we achieve a comparable success in these cities, we will forward a recommendatoin for a national trial of the WWC.

Subject: RESULTS OF TEST DESIGNED TO REDUCE DUST LEVELS AT THE SACRAMENTO PLANT

From: Date: 1/22/92
To: Retention Date: 1/25/93

This memo reports the results of an experimental test conducted at the Sacramento oat cereal production facility on January 18, 1992. The test was conducted to evaluate the effect of adding water to the cereal recipe on the dust level in the plant. No differences were found in the trial. Follow-up tests are being conducted. Tower operation results are attached.

BACKGROUND
The dust level at the Sacramento facility exceeds ABC standards by up to 25% and represents a potential problem for oat cereal expansion plans. We hypothesized that using additional moisture in the cereal recipe would prevent a significant amount of oat dust from entering the plant's atmosphere.

METHODS
- We added 10 gallons of water to the regular recipe in the oat cereal mixer and monitored the effect on dust for 2 hours. Prior to this run, we monitored the control recipe for 2 hours.
- We collected dust samples every fifteen minutes for evaluation.
- We also collected a drum of the moistened recipe, with an average moisture of 22%, and one of our current recipe with an average moisture of 15%. These drums will be used for storage stability tests.

CONCLUSION
The test was inconclusive. We need to conduct further tests to reduce undesirable dust levels in the Sacramento plant.

FINDINGS
1. Both products had comparably high dust levels.
   - At Cenco moistures of 18-26% the dust grades on both products were in the range of 7.5–9.0 units, well in excess of our 7.0 standard.
2. Test conditions may have affected the results.
   - We had trouble measuring the effect of the test recipe because the operator had difficulty controlling moisture and density throughout the production period of both products.

NEXT STEPS
1. We will replicate the test as soon as we determine ways to better control moisture and density in the control and experimental recipes.
2. We are placing storage tests to determine the effect of the new recipe on the freshness of our baking mixture.
3. We will monitor dust levels with additional levels of moisture to see if that will reduce the dust level of the plant.

TOWER OPERATION

	CONTROL PROD. X	PROD. X	CONTROL PROD. X	PROD. X
	RANGE	RANGE	AVERAGE	AVERAGE
FINISHED PRODUCT RATE (#/HR.)	38–40	40–42	39	41.0
NOZZLE CONFIGURATION TOP/MIDDLE/BOTTOM	2-2-4	2-2-4	2-2-4	2-2-4
HIGH PRESSURE DISCHARGE PSI	880	860–880	880	870
NOZZLE PRESSURE DISCHARGE PSI	900–940	880–960	920	913
TOWER INLET TEMP. °F	685–700	670–700	693	690
TOWER EXHAUST TEMP. °F	165–170	150–180	168	167
BASE-OF-TOWER TEMP. °F	183–200	185–195	192	190
DROP TANK TEMP. °F	172–174	162–174	173	169

Employee Evaluation Reports

Reports which evaluate the performance of coworkers are difficult to write because they are likely to evoke strong reactions from those evaluated. This section provides examples of three evaluation reports, the first, intended to be a positive document, and two intended as negative evaluations, one which summarizes a disciplinary interview and one which is a request for report compliance.

The first, focused on a single subject, uses underlining to allow an easy scan of key points; the last two, which cover a variety of topics, use headings to allow readers to locate information easily.

Positive Performance Evaluation Report Research tells us that employees are motivated to perform best when given four positive strokes for every one negative stroke. Yet many in American management practice "management by exception," the idea of focusing solely on actions that are below standard. Thus, in writing a balanced appraisal of an employee's performance, focus on praising good performance. Indicate what future positive behaviors should replace substandard past performances.

Positive Performance Evaluation Report Outline

1. **Opening paragraph**
   The opening paragraph should include a goodwill statement, an orientation statement, and an invitation to speak further about the issues raised in the report.
2. **Analysis/Data paragraph**
   The analysis/data paragraphs should topline agreed upon future behaviors, meeting the following criteria:
   - *Toplined summaries of key performance principles*—statements summarizing each of the principles of behavior appropriate in this situation. Each principle should be underlined, numbered, and written in a full sentence. Each should make sense when read in sequence. Cover no more than five principles.
   - *Parallel structure*—each principle should be stated as an action sentence, starting with an action verb.

- *Good reasoning and data*—each toplined summary should be followed by an explanation of why the principle is appropriate in this situation; data should follow rationale, consisting of either an example of how the principle was put into effect to good result, or how a poor result occurred because the principle was not adhered to. Putting negative data in the context of a positive principle focuses the report on desired future behavior, rather than on negative past behavior.

3. **Goodwill closing**
   The closing should express confidence in the reader's ability to successfully implement the toplined standards of performance.

Subject: FIELD TRAINING REVIEW: 5/5/91

I enjoyed accompanying you on sales calls in southwest Fresno. Your success in selling our product is a reflection of your growing enthusiasm, confidence, and professionalism. Below I recap the key steps we agreed should be taken to continuously improve your performance as an ABC representative. Call me if you have any questions or comments about these recommendations.

KEY LEARNINGS

1. Continue to practice excellent fundamental selling skills.

These skills constitute an excellent platform on which to build future sales successes. I observed that you demonstrated an aptitude to set objectives, make six-step calls, and sell with enthusiasm.

2. Check your performance against selling procedure criteria after each call.

This procedural review will help you understand what you did correctly in the sales interview as well as where you will be able to improve in the future. The best way to conduct the review is to compare your results to your objectives, following the six-step format we discussed.

3. Focus on selling customer benefits to clients.

Customers buy from companies that consistently deliver benefits to them. Look at the sales interview from the customer's point-of-view and tailor your presentation to what you have learned are the client's "hot buttons." As we discovered, selling benefits to ABC or to yourself does not produce sales.

4. Improve your preplanning.

Preplanning will save you time while also making your sales calls more efficient and effective. Organize documentation in advance of each day's calls. I suggest planning against a written checklist to ensure that you have brought your pitch book, point-of-sale information, pictures of display pieces, and all needed surveys in the store on your first trip.

(continued)

5. Continue to hone your skills at answering objections.

Overcoming objections is key to effective selling. You answered objections customers raised well. For example, when a customer objected that promotions were running together, you were able to show that we have a distribution system which will allow deliveries to avoid overlap. And I was particularly pleased when you walked a manager through the store to overcome an objection that the store had too little space for our product. Your plan for stocking our product in existing space was convincing and well executed. Good job!

Helen, congratulations on great strides you are making as a sales rep. I was impressed with your high enthusiasm and professional selling skills. I am confident that by following the guidelines above, you will see even more positive results in the future.

Keep up the hard work! We appreciate your effort.

Disciplinary Memo When writing up a violation of company policy, write in a highly factual, objective tone. Include a discussion of the specifics of the violation, the company policy, a summary of the discussion, a summary of disciplinary actions, and a statement of confidence that this violation will not reoccur. Avoid including positive statements about other aspects of the employee's performance as they will limit your company's ability to use the report in future disciplinary or termination actions.

Disciplinary Memo Outline

1. **Opening paragraph**
   The opening paragraph should serve as a concise summary of the entire document. It should include the What and Why of the report, as well as a forecast of the development of the rest of the document.
2. **Policy Violations paragraph**
   The policy violations paragraph should discuss the following:
   - The specifics of the violation
   - The company policy violated
   - A justification for the company policy
   - A statement indicating the disciplinee knew the company policy
   - A summary of the disciplinee's explanation as to why the violation occurred
   - A summary of the action plan which will be put into effect to prevent future violations
3. **Disciplinary Actions paragraph**
   The disciplinary actions paragraph should indicate the following:
   - The disciplinary action taken in response to the violation
   - The possible consequences of future similar violations
4. **Goodwill paragraph**
   The goodwill paragraph should indicate confidence that the agreed upon plan will prevent future violations.

Subject: <u>File memo summarizing December 4 meeting with John Doe to discuss violations of company policies on authorized breaks from work</u>

To: John Doe
From: Your Name
Copies: Personal file
Date: December 11, 1991

This is to record the issues in our conversation about strictly adhering to the time limits for morning, lunch, and afternoon breaks. The meeting discussed the specifics of the violations, the company policy violated, Mr. Doe's explanation for why the violations occurred, the consequences of the current and of future violations, and a mutually agreed upon plan of action to correct the problem.

<u>Policy Violations</u>
Your supervisor reported that you were 5 minutes late returning from your morning break and 20 minutes late returning from your lunch break on December 4, 1991. As discussed in the company manual, Section 3.1.1, and by your supervisor with you during orientation, your morning and afternoon breaks may not exceed 15 minutes and your lunch breaks may be no more than 30 minutes. This policy is important to the orderly and efficient operation of our business, and applies equally to all sales representatives at ABC, unless a specific exemption is authorized.

You explained that you did not wear a watch that day and lost track of time. You have agreed to wear a watch to work from now on and to carefully adhere to the time limits on breaks in the future.

<u>Disciplinary Actions</u>
Given that this is the second violation since you began work on October 28, 1991, a formal written reminder has been added to your file. This is in addition to the oral reminder I gave you on November 22, 1991. The oral reminder will now be placed in your working file along with the written reminder. Both will be part of the evidence considered during your performance review and will remain there for one year. They will be removed at that time if there are no further policy violations.

Additional violations will lead to additional corrective actions, including the possibility of dismissal.

I am pleased that we took the time to speak about this issue, and I am confident that you are taking steps to ensure that all future breaks you take will adhere to company guidelines.

Negative Performance Evaluation Report When writing to a poor performing employee about a number of topics, you may choose to use headings rather than toplined sentences to communicate your meaning. With this procedure each heading introduces a "mini-memo," organized in a What, Why, How format.

Negative Performance Evaluation Report Outline

1. **Opening paragraph**
   The opening paragraph should answer the What, Why, and When questions. It should forecast the development of the rest of the document and indicate the importance of compliance to a positive performance appraisal.
2. **Analysis/Data paragraphs**
   The analysis/data paragraphs should consist of a series of headings. Each heading should be followed by a statement of the performance expected, why it is important, and how to comply.
3. **Follow-up paragraph**
   If necessary, list additional follow-up that is necessary. Express confidence the reader will meet your performance expectations in the immediate future.

Subject: SUPERVISION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Please send me by July 31 the following reports: (a) store check forms and supervision letters; (b) letter of direction on promotion activities and objectives for the most recent period; (c) retail coverage action report for all units; (d) display activity action plan; (e) sales career evaluations. They are already past due.

The information in these documents is vital to our division's short, intermediate, and long-term decision making—and, therefore, part of your evaluation as a sales manager includes the completeness, thoughtfulness, and timeliness of these reports.

STORE CHECK FORMS AND SUPERVISION LETTERS

Store check forms, supervision letters, and weekly field recaps are essential to an accurate understanding of the competitive environment.

To review, whenever you are working with a sales person or a unit manager, furnish this office with a copy of a store check form for each store visited, as well as a recap of the supervision. The letter should highlight the outstanding activity of the sales representative or unit manager as well as direction on areas of improvement.

LETTER OF DIRECTION AND OBJECTIVES FOR PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY

In advance of each promotion period, prepare a memo which indicates to all sales reps and unit managers the direction you expect them to take to achieve total retail sales volume versus objectives. Always copy me on this field memo. This report helps us evaluate whether the activities of all units are in alignment with company sales objectives.

RETAIL COVERAGE REPORT

Send me a report of the steps you are taking to ensure that retail coverage meets our objectives, especially in light of the substandard coverage in some units.

DISPLAY ACTIVITY REPORT

In concert with unit managers, develop a written plan of action for ensuring that stores in your unit meet objectives for display of our products. Currently display activity in all units is well below expectations—in some cases by as much as 50%. Communicating a clear strategy and effective tactics to meet agreed-upon targets is a prerequisite to effective action in the field.

SALES CAREER EVALUATIONS

Send me a report in which you (a) list sales reps whom you believe would be effective sales managers, (b) justify your selections, and (c) describe what special projects you have or will be giving them to test and develop their managerial talents. These reports provide information which is essential in developing good human resource plans.

Call me if you have questions or comments. I look forward to reading these reports in the near future.