



# **MEMORANDUM (MEMO) AND LETTER WRITING**

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# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- DEFINITION OF MEMORANDUM
- PURPOSE OF MEMORANDUM
- KEY FEATURES OF A MEMORANDUM
- SOME PITFALLS IN MEMORANDUM WRITING
- DEFINITION OF OFFICIAL LETTER
- PURPOSE OF OFFICIAL LETTER
- KEY FEATURES OF A LETTER
- SOME PITFALLS IN LETTER WRITING
- CONCLUDING REMARKS



# DEFINITION OF MEMORANDUM

- Memorare
  - To mention
  - Call to mind
- Internal means of communicating
- Information exchange
- Instructions
- Reminder



# SOME PITFALLS IN MEMORANDUM WRITING

- Referencing for record keeping
- Inappropriate language
- Long and verbose language
- Using a memo for reports/write-ups



# KEY FEATURES OF A MEMO

- To
- From
- Reference
- Date
- Subject
- Main body of Memo
- End with initial / signature



# DEFINITION OF OFFICIAL LETTER

- A means of communicating for the purpose of conducting Official Business.
- Formal approach to communication across organisations.
- Official rules and structure for such communication.



# PURPOSE OF OFFICIAL LETTER

- Information
- Directive
- Request
- Acknowledgement
- Acceptance
- Query
- Response
- Appointment etc.
- Guarantee preservation of information



# KEY FEATURES OF A LETTER

- Letter Head
- Reference Number
- Date
- Subject **Note Re:**
- Body of letter in paragraphs. Brief and concise.
- Salutation and complimentary close.
- Name, Designation and Signature (Status)
- Addressee
- Courtesy Copy.
- Application: Universal/widely used.
- Enclosures where applicable.
- Legal status (responsibility/liability of office)
- Use of language and grammar.





# SOME PITFALLS IN LETTER WRITING

- Poor construction of subject.
- Verbose language.
- Loaded ideas, subjects. (one letter, one key idea)
- Intemperate language.
- Incomplete ending sentence.
- Inappropriate signature/unauthorised mandate.
- Poor grammar and tenses.
- Use of informal language eg. Couldn't, wouldn't
- Inappropriate font and font size.



# CONCLUDING REMARKS

- Memos are the best means of keeping information flow internally whilst the official letter keeps information flow externally.
- Important for all to use memo in an organisation and document appropriately.
- Letters are a must for Public Service because of the guaranteed means of accountability.
- The organisational culture determines style of memo whilst the official letter maintains a predetermined structure and format for the Civil Service.



# CONCLUDING REMARKS

- Administrative Instructions provide further information on communication in the Civil Service.
- We all need to imbibe the attitude of writing and documenting key organisational issues, at least for reference purposes.
- Public Service is all about managing public resources and accounting for your stewardship.
- TAKE CARE ABOUT WHAT YOU DOCUMENT.



THANK YOU

