

Memo Writing Advice

- Presenting recommendations
 - What do you believe your client should do?
 - *Why?*
 - Emphasize both the advantages and disadvantages of what you are suggesting they do
 - Make sure your recommendations follow from your assessment of alternatives
 - Don't lose sight of your goals
 - Does all included information contribute to the points you want to make?
 - Identify clear set of instructions to the client on what they should do if they follow your advice

Memo Writing Advice

- Keeping the client's attention
 - *Put your recommendation and key findings up front*
 - What follows should support your recommendation
 - Use transitions
 - Make clear how your arguments flow
 - Make comparisons across options
 - Don't leave this work to the reader
 - Say what you found, not how you found it
 - Your reader is interested in results, not methodology

Memo Writing Advice

- Use tables and figures
 - Avoid putting too many numbers in the text
 - “Between 59 and 177 people earning less than \$11 will lose their jobs as a result of the minimum wage increase. Approximately 41-122 people earning the minimum wage (\$7.25) will lose their jobs . Around 2-7 people earning \$7.75 will lose their job and 4-11 people will lose their job earning \$8.25 per hour. Around 18-53 people will lose their job earning \$9.75, 10.25, and \$8.75 per hour”

Wage group	Jobs lost (low)	Jobs lost (high)	# remaining unemployed (low)	# remaining unemployed (high)	Effect on non-covered wages
\$7.25/hr	41	122	41	122	N/A
\$7.75/hr	5	14	3	7	-\$0.20
\$8.25/hr	8	23	4	11	-\$0.17

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- Use tables and figures
 - Avoid putting too many numbers in the text
 - While you should not repeat the data in the text, your text should refer to any tables and figures and explain to the reader how they should be interpreted
 - Explain the key takeaway message from your data
 - Decide what information is important and *why* it is important
 - Don't expect the reader to sort through your data and figure out what is important

Memo Writing Advice

- Writing advice
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 - “We find that the cost is greater than the benefit.”
 - Not: “In our analysis, it was found that cost is greater than the benefit.”

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 - Be concise
 - Wordy: “in the most effective manner possible”
 - Concise: “effectively”

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- Writing advice
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 - Not: “In our analysis, it was found that cost is greater than the benefit.”
 - Be concise
 - Wordy: “in the most effective manner possible”
 - Concise: “effectively”
 - Keep jargon to a minimum
 - Explain in language you would have understood before taking this course
 - Instead of: “The elasticity of gasoline demand is 0.5.”
 - Say this instead “Economists find that for every 10% increase in price, consumers will purchase 5% less gasoline.”
 - Similarly, rather than saying that demand or supply will “shift”, you can say that “demand will be higher, which in turn will lead to higher prices.”