

WRTG 394 students,

In preparation for Writing Assignments #3 and #4, you have identified a problem or need in your workplace or in your community for which you would like to recommend a solution.

For Writing Assignment #3 you will write a *proposal to conduct research*. This proposal will be in the form of a memo.

For this assignment, you will prepare a business memo to a decision-maker(s) *requesting authorization to conduct primary and additional secondary research* for your final report.

- Step 1: Identify the decision-maker or group of decision-makers to whom you will write this proposal memo (WA#3) *and* your final report (WA#4)
- Step 2: Identify primary research (and any additional secondary research) to be conducted for your final report.
- Step 3: Write the memo using the template provided below.

The Role of This Assignment in Your Research-Based Final Report:

This proposal memo is a preliminary step you take prior to writing your final paper, which is the research-based report (writing assignment #4). Remember, your final paper in WRTG 394 will be a report in which you:

- define a problem in your workplace or community persuasively and accurately
- propose a solution or solutions to the problem or issue

As part of defining the problem and proposing a solution, you must conduct **primary** research. You might also need to conduct some additional secondary research. In Writing Assignment #3, the proposal to conduct research, *you are persuading a decision-maker or group of decision-makers to authorize you to begin conducting this research that will end up in your final report.*

The main purposes of the research proposal memo are to:

- demonstrate that the problem you've identified for Project #4 is significant enough to warrant investigation
- present a feasible plan or blueprint for your research
- set forth potential benefits to the organization or community from the research that justify the use of time and resources

Template for Submitting Your Proposal

Note: Please use the format outlined below, including the headers provided in bold, for the memo.

To: [Decision Maker Name(s) and title]
From: [Your Name and title]
Date: [Today's Date]
Subject: Request to Conduct Research on [...]

Summary

[Provide a brief summary identifying the purpose of writing this memo.]

What the Problem Is and Why It Needs to Be Investigated

[In a series of paragraphs, describe the problem to which you are going to propose a solution and explain why you think this problem is important.]

What Secondary Research I Have Conducted about the Problem

[In one paragraph describe secondary research you have conducted on the problem and solution.]

What Primary Research I Will Conduct about the Problem

[In a series of paragraphs, describe primary research you will conduct on the problem and solution.]

What Benefits Will Result from My Research

[In one or two paragraphs, describe the potential benefits to your organization or community of authorizing the research.]

Preliminary Ideas for Solving This Problem

[In a series of paragraphs, describe your recommendations to the problem/situation you are describing.]

Conclusion

[In one or two sentences, conclude your memo by repeating the request for authorization and reminding of the benefits of your conducting the research.]

Length:

Your memo should be 800-1100 words in length.

Advice on Conducting Primary Research:

When considering primary research, consider the various forms of research outlined in the chapters from Markel and Bovee and Thill. Consider the following examples:

- For a report suggesting that an improved training program be established for certain employees, you might conduct interviews with fellow workers on the topic to see how and why they might benefit from certain training.
- If you are proposing that email be used less frequently for communication and that another application be used to improve communication, you might interview fellow employees on the situation, and you might take screen captures of alternative communication tools to illustrate how they work and would improve communication in your office.
- For a report on proposing a new traffic light, you might take pictures of the community area to show where such a playground could be built, and you might interview residents to get their perspective on the traffic light idea.
- For a report on recycling facilities, you might take pictures of the office environment to show that current recycling facilities are inadequate, and you might interview fellow workers about whether they find it easy to recycle materials at your office.

Examples of How to Make Topics Specific for the Final Report in WRTG 394:

If you write a report to your manager at work suggesting that a better training program be established for certain employees, you cannot simply prepare a report on employee training. You must show that the specific type of training you are advocating will solve a specific problem or problems with regard to employee training in your organization.

If you wish to write a report to your supervisor at work suggesting that email be used less frequently for communication and that another application be used to improve communication, you cannot simply prepare a report on the benefits of social media in the workplace. You must establish that your specific office has problems in communicating by email and indicate the benefits of using alternative communication systems for your workplace environment.

If you write a report to your neighborhood community association that a traffic light be posted at a particular intersection, you cannot simply prepare a report on the benefits of traffic safety. You must show that the specific intersection in your neighborhood needs a traffic light in order to improve safety.

If you wish to write a report to the manager of your unit at work noting that recycling facilities in the workplace should be improved, you cannot simply prepare a report on the benefits of recycling or of good recycling facilities in offices. You must show that your specific work environment lacks adequate recycling facilities and show how it will benefit from improved recycling facilities.

Rubric

Word Length	800-1100 words	700-799 words	600-699 words	500-599 words	fewer than 500 words
The memorandum meets the minimum word length	5 points	4 points	3.5 points	3 points	0 points
Formatting of the memo	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs improvement	Does not pass
The memorandum follows standard conventions for its header, including the To, From, Date, and Subject lines	4 points	3.2 points	2.4 points	2 points	1 point
Audience	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs improvement	Does not pass
The memorandum is written to a specific decision-maker	6 points	4.8 points	4.2 points	3.6 points	3 points
Headings and Body	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs improvement	Does not pass
Summary	5 points	4 points	3.5 points	3 points	0 points
What the Problem Is and Why It Needs to Be Investigated	15 points	12 points	10.5 points	9 points	8 points
What Secondary Research Has Been Conducted About the Problem	5 points	4 points	3.5 points	3 points	0 points
What Primary Research You Will Conduct About the Problem	10 points	8 points	7 points	6 points	5 points
What Benefits Will Result From Your Research	10 points	8 points	7 points	6 points	5 points
Preliminary Ideas for Solving This Problem	5 points	4 points	3.5 points	3 points	0 points
Conclusion	5 points	4 points	3.5 points	3 points	0 points
Grammar, mechanics, writing strategies	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs improvement	Does not pass
The conventions of Standard Written English, including usage and punctuation, are maintained throughout the document	10 points	8 points	7 points	6 points	5 points
Paragraphs fully support a precise topic sentence with specific details.	10 points	8 points	7 points	6 points	5 points
Sentences are clear and concise with the appropriate use of active or passive voice	10 points	8 points	7 points	6 points	5 points
Overall Score	Excellent 90 or more	Good 80 or more	Fair 70 or more	Needs Improvement 60 or more	Does not pass 0 or more