

MEMORANDUM

TO: MCOM Students
FROM: Ashley Keller Nelson, Professor
DATE: September 9, 2013
RE: Memo Report Assignment Due: Wednesday, September 25

The first written assignment for MCOM is a memo. The details regarding the assignment's situation, guidelines, and deliverables follow. The purpose of this assignment is for you to demonstrate the communication strategies we discussed as we opened the session coupled with strong organizational skills and business writing style. This formal memo has research requirements which will be documented using APA style with a citation section following the concluding paragraph. You will use in text citations throughout the paper.

Situation for the Assignment and Company Selection

You are a research analyst for one of the managing partners for a venture capital (VC) fund (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_venture_capital_firms - pick an American fund).

NOTE: Institutional venture capital comes from professionally managed funds that have \$25 million to \$1 billion to invest in emerging growth companies. Institutional venture capitalists demand significant equity in a business. The earlier the investment stage, the more equity is required to convince an institutional venture capitalist to invest. The range of funds typically available is \$500,000 to \$10 million, and these institutional venture capitalists are choosy where they place its capital.

Your main function is to support your managing partner, and your new assignment is to research the hot market areas for entrepreneurs in 2014 which leads to investments from your firm. During your research you find these two articles:

1. <http://www.techdrawl.com/post/best-startup-categories-entrepreneurs-and-investors-%E2%80%93-2014-edition>
2. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/billconerly/2013/09/02/economic-assumptions-for-your-2014-business-plan/>

You get with another analyst in your department and work on this project together.

After you research the business markets for 2014, you have to compile a concise memo report for a managing partner. In the report, you will suggest:

1. One key market to keep investing in,
2. One new (new to fund) market to investment in, and
3. One market that it currently invest in and but should not or greatly reduce for 2014.

Be sure to add supporting details and build your case based on economic assumptions for 2014. You are NOT suggesting current companies to invest.

You will need to **research the firm** you select to work for and discover its market strategies. Each VC has different strategies and industry preferences. Use these preferences to see if they have an area that matches the future trends. Keep track of all sources used for research even if you do not cite it in the memo you may use the ideas to form your opinions.

Remember your audience analysis tactics. What does your reader want to know?

Guidelines for Memo Assignment for Completion

Follow the guidelines below as you write your memo:

- Research, research, research - Incorporate research into your document to back up your statements, cite examples – begin research now; list all other sources used for background knowledge to educate yourself
- Begin with a clear statement of purpose and preview; develop your paragraphs...topic sentence, back up sentences, concluding sentence...add transitions...strong conclusion
- Organize the document into clear sections using parallel, talking headings (level two)
- Use bullets in one section (bullets stress importance) for each writer
- Will be graded on **content, grammar, organization, and appearance** – avoid using words such as : our company, I, We; use active voice and refrain from past tense unless necessary
- Avoid separating headings from their text by a page break. See *BWH*, **design and layout** for an explanation of widows and orphans.
- Do *not* indent the first line of a new paragraph and have a blank line between paragraphs.
- Follow professional memo format – **NO TEMPLATES - two pages**, single space maximum
- Introduce material in the document properly. Example: According the *Washington Post* (Washington Post, 2012). Always introduce material **WHENEVER** you cite a source
- Include a Works Cited page in APA format and use parenthesis to document your sources. For formatting information, you can refer to a section on BlackBoard. You should have **at least four sources**.

If you follow these guidelines, you will have a well-written memo report.

Deliverables for Students to Have for Assignment

This information pertains to what you will turn in for the assignment.

- Single space copy (staple) and drafts you reviewed with the writing coach
- Double spaced copy (staple pages)

I look forward to reading your assignment submissions. I will pick up the memos at the beginning of class; students should prepare ahead of time and print their materials before class, not during the beginning of class and arrive late.

Workshop for Helping Writers Produce a Better Paper

(Mandatory – 20% reduction if you do not attend the workshop with your partner)

Bring a single and double spaced copy of your memo to class on **Wednesday, September 18**. The memo should be 80%+ completed. This workshop is geared for grammar and set up, not content.

Also, students may want to make an appointment to see a writing coach (in the MCC) before the assignment is due. The writing instructor will take a look at your paper for set up and grammar; the coach will not assist with content. **Sign up NOW!**