

# CHAPTER 14:

## The Official Memorandum

***This chapter covers:***

- The Heading Section
- The Text of the Official Memorandum
- The Closing Section
- Additional Information
- Attachments
- The Official Memorandum: Examples
- Spelling Checkers: Before You Sign

Memorandums are used to communicate throughout the DoD and with other Federal agencies as well as to conduct official business outside the Government with vendors or contractors when a personal letter is inappropriate. Official memorandums may be addressed to specific officials, single offices, multiple offices, multiple offices IN TURN or to DISTRIBUTION lists. *Follow the guidance of this chapter when preparing any official memorandum, beginning with these basic format requirements:*

1. Use printed letterhead, computer-generated letterhead, or plain bond paper.
2. Type or print using black ink.
3. Follow AFI 31-401, *Information Security Program Management*, applicable executive orders and DoD guidance for the necessary markings on classified correspondence.
4. Use 1-inch margins on the left, right and bottom for most memorandums. For shorter communications, you may adjust the margins.
  - a. 20 lines or more → 1 inch margins
  - b. 10-19 lines → 1 to 1 1/2 inch margins
  - c. 1-9 lines → 1 1/2 to 2 inch margins

5. Use 12 point Times New Roman font for text. Smaller sizes, no smaller than 10 point, may be used when required to control page breaks. For example, shrink the font of all text in the memorandum to prevent a page break between the body and closing elements (signature block). The signature block is never on a page by itself.

For most documents, the guidance for the specific elements on the following pages needs no adjustments; however, for short communications, you may adjust the top margin in order to balance the content toward the vertical center of the document by moving all elements from the date to the last line of the closing to achieve visual balance and avoid a top-heavy appearance.

## The Heading Section

The heading section is composed of these elements: date, MEMORANDUM FOR, ATTENTION, FROM, SUBJECT and References. Each element is described in detail, below.

### Date

**Placement and Format:** Place the date **1 inch from the right edge, 1.75 inches from the top** of the page. Use the “Day Month Year” or “DD Mmm YY” format for documents addressed to a military organization. In the “DD Mmm YY” format, the month and year are both abbreviated for consistency. For civilian addressees, use the “Month Day, Year” format. Finally, unless the date of signature has legal significance, date the original and all copies of the correspondence at the time of dispatch.

### Examples:

Military Addressees–Day Month Year	15 October 2014
Military Addressees–DD Mmm YY	15 Oct 14
Civilian Addressees–Month Day, Year	October 15, 2014

### “MEMORANDUM FOR”

**Placement:** Place “MEMORANDUM FOR” on the **second line below** the date. **Leave two spaces between “MEMORANDUM FOR” and the recipient’s organization abbreviation and office symbol (ORG/SYMBOL).** If there are multiple recipients, two or three office symbols may be placed on each line with the second and following lines aligned under the first recipient. If there are numerous recipients, use the “DISTRIBUTION” element.

- **When addressing one office,** enter the organization/office symbol in uppercase letters. To indicate the memorandum is for a specific person, enter the organization/office symbol followed by the person’s rank and name in parentheses—all in uppercase. Another option is to use the “ATTENTION” element—see guidance below.
- **When addressing several offices,** align subsequent addressees under the first address. If the office symbols are fairly short and you have several for the memorandum, you may include two or three on a single line by aligning each additional line of recipients under the recipients in the first line in like fashion. Be consistent with your format: write out all organization names or use all organization/office symbols.

- **When addressing several offices IN TURN**, use the “IN TURN” format to distribute the official memorandum to several individuals or offices in sequence. The only difference is the format of the “MEMORANDUM FOR” element, as shown below.
  - “IN TURN” Originators: Prepare an “IN TURN” memorandum when the final addressee or OPR must see the coordination or action of all addressees. Use the official memorandum format. Type “IN TURN” in uppercase, one line below the last address of the “MEMORANDUM FOR” element aligned with the addressees.
  - “IN TURN” Recipients: When you receive an “IN TURN” memorandum, strike through your organization abbreviation and office symbol, then type, sign or initial, and date. Type “Concur,” “Nonconcur,” “Comments attached” or “Comments sent by separate correspondence to” next to the date. Prepare a separate memorandum for a lengthy comment. Attach comments to the “IN TURN” memorandum if the remaining addressees need them; otherwise, forward comments directly to the final addressee. Forward the “IN TURN” memorandum to the next address and “cc” the OPR for tracking purposes.
- **Using a distribution element or list.** When the address list is too long to include in the “MEMORANDUM FOR” element, use the distribution element or list. Simply leave two spaces after “MEMORANDUM FOR” and add “DISTRIBUTION” in uppercase letters. Include the addressees in the “DISTRIBUTION” element or on a separate page attached to the memorandum.

**Headquarters or HQ:** The term “Headquarters” and “HQ” are a part of the official title of units at the group level and above. Use HQ as part of the organization abbreviation and office symbol when corresponding with staff elements at MAJCOM and HQ USAF organizations. ***Do not use the term “Headquarters” or “HQ” when corresponding with the office of MAJCOM commanders and vice commanders.***

**Examples:**

MEMORANDUM FOR 79 FS/DO (LT COL JORGE TORRES)			
MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF OF STAFF DIRECTOR, INSTALLATIONS AND LOGISTICS GENERAL COUNSEL			
MEMORANDUM FOR	42 ABW/JA [SECOND LINE] [THIRD LINE]	42 ABW/SE [SECOND LINE] [THIRD LINE]	42 ABW/XP [SECOND LINE] [THIRD LINE]
MEMORANDUM FOR	HQ USAF/A4 HQ USAF/A3 HQ USAF/A1 IN TURN	[This format applies to all field units when sending memorandums to HQ USAF. Air Staff and Secretary of the Air Force staff offices follow Headquarters Operating Instruction 33-3.]	
MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION			

## “ATTENTION:”

**Placement:** The attention element is **aligned under the address or office symbol** in the “MEMORANDUM FOR” line. The attention element is used when a memorandum is intended for both an office and the attention of a specific person in that office. The format of the attention element is to place “ATTENTION:” or “ATTN:” or “THROUGH:” with the abbreviated rank and last name **in uppercase** on the line immediately below the “MEMORANDUM FOR” line.

### Example:

MEMORANDUM FOR 36 FS/DO ATTENTION: MAJ JONES
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## “FROM:”

**Placement:** Place “FROM:” in uppercase, flush with the left margin, on the **second line below** the last line of the MEMORANDUM FOR element (or the ATTENTION element, if used). After the “FROM:” element, leave two spaces followed by the organization abbreviation and office symbol (ORG/SYMBOL) of the originator.

**Contents:** If the complete mailing address is printed on the letterhead or if all recipients are located on the same installation as the originator, then only a single line FROM element consisting of the organization abbreviation and office symbol is used.

If the complete mailing address is not printed on the letterhead or if the recipients are on another installation, then the FROM element contains the full mailing address of the originator. This enables recipients to easily prepare and address return correspondence.

- The *first* line of the FROM element includes the organization abbreviation and office symbol separated by a virgule and typed in uppercase.
- The *second* line of the FROM element is the delivery address of the originator in upper and lower case.
- The *third* line of the FROM element includes the city, state and ZIP+4 code (without a comma between the city and state). For some installations, the city or installation name may be used interchangeably, as shown in the examples, below. Consult your local United States Post Office for details. The standard format for spacing between the state abbreviation and the ZIP code is two spaces.

### Examples:

FROM: 20 FW/CC	[Sender and receiver on same installation]
FROM: HQ SOC/CC 125 Chennault Circle Montgomery AL 36112-6430	[Sender and receiver on different installations]  [City State option]
FROM: HQ SOC/CC 125 Chennault Circle Maxwell AFB AL 36112-6430	[Sender and receiver on different installations]  [Installation State option]

## “SUBJECT:”

**Placement:** In all uppercase letters place “SUBJECT:”, flush with the left margin, on the **second line below** the last line of the FROM element. After “SUBJECT:”, type two spaces followed by the title; capitalize the first letter of each word except articles, prepositions and conjunctions. *Be brief and clear to focus readers*; if you need a second line, align it under the first word of the subject.

- When writing about an individual/employee who is not the addressee, include rank/grade and full name in the subject line. If you refer to the person again in the text of the memorandum, use only the rank/grade and surname.
- Do not include names in the subject line when writing about two or more individuals.
- When writing about several people, state their full names with rank/grade in the text of the memorandum the first time the names appear.
- SUSPENSE items: Include the suspense date in the subject line by typing “SUSPENSE:” or “SUSP:” with the date in parentheses after the title. If additional information for the suspense is necessary, include it in a separate paragraph—not in the SUBJECT line.

## Examples:

SUBJECT: Official Memorandum Format Standards
SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation (SSgt Angela Harkins)
SUBJECT: Self-Inspection Checklist Completion (SUSPENSE: 23 September 2014)
SUBJECT: The Format for a Subject Line That is Too Long for a Single Line Must Wrap and be Aligned Under the First Word of the Subject in the Subject Line

## “References”

**Placement:** There are two options for placement of the references element—within the subject line or below the subject line. Cite a single reference to a communication or a directive in parentheses immediately after the subject title. For two or more references, type “References:” on the **second line below the last line of the SUBJECT element**. Capitalize the first letter of every word except articles, prepositions and conjunctions.

**Citation Format:** In general, identify references within the DoD by organization, type of communication, date and title. The organization and type of document within the DoD are included in the document’s identification (e.g., an AFMAN is an Air Force Manual; a DoDD is a DoD Directive) and need not be written out in the “References” section. For referencing commercial publications, use the notes entry format from AU-1 *Style and Author Guide* or use *The Chicago Manual of Style* (AU-1 is based on *The Chicago Manual of Style*). AU-1 is available online from the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC). In general, the notes entries include the author’s name, publication title, publisher, date, and the paragraph or page number.

**Examples:**

SUBJECT: PACAF Work Center Standard (PACAF Memo, Same Subject, 6 June 2012)
<p>SUBJECT: Preparation of Memorandums</p> <p>References: (a) AFMAN 33-326, 25 November 2011, <i>Preparing Official Communications</i>.          (b) SAF/CIO A6 Memo, 12 October 2011, Air Force Guidance Memorandum to AFI 33-360, <i>Publications and Forms Management</i>.          (c) DoDM 5110.04-M-V2, October 26, 2010, <i>DoD Manual for Written Material</i>.          (d) William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White, <i>The Elements of Style</i> (NY: MacMillan Publishing Co, 1989), 70.</p>

**Additional Information for References:** When completing the reference list, consider the questions the recipients might have based on the memorandum you sent to them. For example, if it can be assumed that the recipient is unfamiliar with the publication or form cited, write out the title the first time you reference it. Also, you may want to attach a copy of the reference, or instructions on how to obtain it, if the reader does not have it. Finally, if the reference was not sent to all addressees previously, type not to all “(NOTAL)” after the citation for the referenced item. The table below summarizes these tips and several other specifics for citing referenced materials.

<i>When you refer to:</i>	<i>Show it in this format:</i>
Unfamiliar references	Write out the title the first time you reference
Familiar references	Attached or instructions on how to obtain
References sent to some, but not to all	[Reference citation] (NOTAL)
Other correspondence	AF/A1 Memo, 23 March 2012, Military Training Program
A publication when the communication is addressed within the Department of Defense	AFI 33-360, <i>Publications and Forms Management</i> , paragraphs 2.1 through 2.35
A publication when the communication is addressed outside the Department of Defense	Air Force Handbook 33-337, <i>The Tongue and Quill</i>
A Government form	AF Form 74, <i>Communications Status Notice/Request</i>
A commercial publication	Strunk and White, <i>The Elements of Style</i> (NY: MacMillan Publishing Co, 1989), 70
An item in a magazine, newspaper, or book	“New Optimism About Aging,” <i>The Washington Post</i> , 9 September 1993, p.1.

## The Text of the Official Memorandum

Begin the text of the memorandum on the **second line below the subject** or references (if used).

1. **Spacing paragraphs and subparagraphs.** Single-space the text, but double-space between paragraphs and subparagraphs (one blank line between all paragraphs and subparagraphs). *You may double-space the text of a one-paragraph memorandum less than eight lines.*
2. **Numbering paragraphs.** Number and letter each paragraph and subparagraph. A single paragraph is not numbered. If your organization is a part of Headquarters Air Force (the Air Staff and the Secretariat), follow the guidance in HQ Operating Instruction 33-3, *Correspondence Preparation, Control, and Tracking*.
3. **Formatting short subparagraphs.** Use a run-in method of listing subparagraphs when the subparagraphs consist of short sentences or phrases. The run-in method has several advantages: (a) it's compact, (b) it highlights ideas, and (c) it saves space.
4. **First Line of Text.** The first paragraph is never indented; it is numbered and flush left, two line spaces below the last line of the SUBJECT element (or the References element, if used). Indent the first line of sub-paragraphs to align the number or letter with the first character of its parent level paragraph. Each sub-level is likewise indented to align its paragraph number or letter with the first character of its parent level paragraph.
5. **Subsequent lines of text.** All second and subsequent lines of text for all paragraphs at all levels begin flush with the left margin; ***do not indent***.
6. **Punctuation.** Use conventional rules of English grammar for punctuation in the body.
7. **Word Division.** When dividing a word, separate between syllables.
8. **Quotations.** When quoting numbered paragraphs from another document, cite the source and paragraph numbers in your text.
9. **Suspense Dates.** If you include a Suspense date in the text of the memorandum and not in the Subject Element, emphasize it by placing it in a separate paragraph.
10. **Contact information.** Place contact names, e-mail addresses, fax numbers, and telephone numbers in the last paragraph of the memorandum text.
11. **Continuation Pages.** Use plain bond paper. Begin typing the text of the continuation page four lines below the page number. Type at least two lines of the text on each page. Avoid dividing a paragraph of less than four lines between two pages.
12. **Page numbering.** The first page of a memorandum is never numbered. You may omit page numbers on a one- or two-page memorandum; however, memorandums longer than two pages must have page numbers. Number the succeeding pages starting with page 2. Place page numbers 0.5-inch from the top of the page, flush with the right margin. Number the continuation pages of each attachment as a separate sequence.

## The Closing Section

The closing section of the document includes these elements: authority line, signature block, signature, attachments, courtesy copy and distribution.

## Authority Line

**Placement and Use:** The authority line informs readers that the person who signed the document acted for the commander, the command section, or the headquarters. If an authority line is used, add “FOR THE COMMANDER” (or appropriate title) in uppercase on the second line below the last line of the text and 4.5 inches from the left edge of the page or three spaces to the right of the page center.

<i>Use the authority line when any of these are true:</i>	<i>Do <u>not</u> use the authority line in any of these conditions:</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A commander’s designated representative signs for a specific action.</li> <li>2. A document represents the commander’s position or the coordinated position of the headquarters staff.</li> <li>3. Staff members sign documents that direct action or announce policy within their areas of responsibility.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The commander (or head of the organization) signs.</li> <li>2. The deputy or vice commander signs when the commander is temporarily away from the place of duty unless command action is directed by law and requires an indication of delegation.</li> <li>3. The correspondence expresses opinions of units, directorates, divisions, offices, or branches.</li> <li>4. The correspondence is addressed outside the DoD.</li> </ol>

## Signature Block

**Placement:** Start the signature block on the **fifth line below the last line of text** and 4.5 inches from the left edge of the page or three spaces to the right of page center. If the authority line is used, type the signature element five lines below the authority line. *If dual signatures are required, type the junior ranking official’s signature block at the left margin; type the senior ranking official’s signature block 4.5 inches from the left edge of the page or three spaces to the right of page center.* Do not place the signature element on a continuation page by itself. Consider correspondence received via e-mail, copied, or stamped //SIGNED// as authoritative as long as the signed copy is kept on file at the originating office.

1. **First Line.** Type the name in uppercase the way the person signs it (normally as it appears in the member’s official records). Include grade and service for military members or grade and “DAF” (Department of the Air Force) for civilians. In general, avoid using legal, educational, or ecclesiastical degrees or titles. *As a rule, the rank for colonels and general officers should not be abbreviated.*
2. **Second Line.** Type the duty title as identified in the “FROM” element. “Acting” may be added before the duty title of a *staff* position if the incumbent is absent or the position is vacant. In addition, *do not* sign “for” or “in the absence of.” *Do not* use “Acting” for any command capacity or where prohibited by law or statute (see AFI 33-321, *Authentication of Air Force Records*; and AFI 51-604, *Appointment to and Assumption of Command*).
3. **Third Line.** Type the name of the office or organization level if it is not included on the letterhead or the heading. Limit the signature element to three lines if possible; however, if a line of the signature element is too long, indent the next line to begin under the third character of the line above.



### Examples (First two lines of signature blocks):

Standard placement (4.5 inches from left edge):	MARGARETTE S. LEWIS, Colonel, USAF Commander
	RAYMOND L. KENNEDY, MSgt, USAF NCOIC Ground Safety
	ELLEN C. CAMPANA, GS-15, DAF Chief, Quality Assurance Branch
Standard placement with long duty title: (Overflow duty title line is indented to align under the third character of the line above)	JOSE V. MUNEZ, CMSgt, USAF Chief, Computer Systems and Information Technology Customer Service
Long name: (Signature block adjusted to the left)	MARTEL R. WESTHALLER III, Col, USAF, DC Base Dental Surgeon
("Colonel" is usually spelled out. Also, this official may elect to use only initials for his first and middle names with abbreviated rank; if so, the signature block fits in the standard location.)	
Signature block with credentials:	JANICE L. CROWE, Lt Col, USAF, MSC Chief, Family Practice
Air National Guard (Title 10 status)	SCOTT A. BROWN, Lt Col, USAF Operations Officer
Air National Guard (Title 32 status)	SCOTT A. BROWN, Lt Col, ANG Operations Officer
Air Force Reserve (IAW command guidance on using "USAFR")	ELLA M. NEAL, Lt Col, USAFR Commander
Air Force Reserve (IAW command guidance on using "USAF")	ELLA M. NEAL, Lt Col, USAF Commander

### Signature

**Placement:** Sign correspondence with permanent black ink. Use black typewriter ribbons, black printer toner, or black ink for rubber stamps or signature facsimile equipment. See AFI 33-321, *Authentication of Air Force Records*, for authentication of Air Force documents and how to use seals instead of signatures.

### Attachment or Attachments

**Placement:** Place "Attachment:" (for a single attachment) or "# Attachments:" (for two or more attachments) at the left margin, on the **third line below** the signature element. When there are two or more attachments, list each by number and in the order mentioned in the memorandum. Beneath "Attachment" briefly describe each attachment, but do not use general terms or abbreviations such as "as stated," "as described above," or "a/s." Cite the office of origin, type

of communication, date, and number of copies (in parentheses) if more than one. Include the subject of the attachment if the receiver will not get copies of attachments or if the subject is not already referenced in text. For classified attachments, show the assigned classification symbol in parentheses. Send a copy of the memorandum when you send the attachment (first example, below). If sending an attachment separately, type “(sep cover)” after the attachment label (see example, below). Do not divide attachment listings between two pages. If the listing is too long, type “Attachments: (listed on next page),” and list the attachments on a separate page.

#### Examples:

Attachment: ACC/CC Leave Policy Memo, 30 Jun 14	[Memorandum with a single attachment]
3 Attachments: 1. SAF CIO/A6 Memo, 30 Jun 12 (U)(2) 2. 380 FMS/CC Msg, 232300Z May 12 (NOTAL) 3. SAF/CIO Memo, 3 Aug 12 (S)	[Memorandum with 2 or more attachments]
2 Attachments: 1. AFI XX-XXXX, 26 Sep 12 2. AFI XX-XXXX, 14 May 12 (sep cover)	[Memorandum with attachments under separate cover]
12 Attachments (listed on next page)	[Memorandum with attachments listed on next page]

#### Courtesy Copy Element (“cc:”)

**Placement:** When sending courtesy copies to activities other than to addressee, place “cc:” flush with the left margin, on the **second line below** the attachment element. If the attachment element is not used, place “cc:” on the third line below the signature element. List the organization abbreviation and office symbol of the offices to receive copies. When the copy is intended for a specific person in the office, include the person’s Rank and Name in parentheses after the office symbol. If a courtesy copy is sent without including the attachments, type “wo/Atch” after the office. For paper copies, circle, underline, or highlight the office to indicate the recipient.

#### Examples:

cc: HQ AETC/A1 wo/Atch HQ USAFE/A1 Atch 2 only HQ PACAF/A1 (Atch under sep cover)	[Courtesy copies with attachment variations]
cc: 1 FW/CCP	[Courtesy copy to an office]
cc: 12 FS/DO (Capt Thomas Moore)	[Courtesy copy to a specific individual in an office]

If courtesy copies of a memorandum are not signed, write or stamp “signed” with black or dark blue ink above the signature block. Also, do not show internal distribution of courtesy copies on the original (or courtesy copy) for correspondence addressed outside your activity. However, you may show the distribution if one addressee needs to know who received a courtesy copy, or if correspondence is multiple-addressed and reproduced.

## Distribution Element

**Placement:** If “MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION” is used, place “DISTRIBUTION:” flush with the left margin, on the **second line below** the attachment element or the courtesy copy element, if used. If neither the attachment element nor the courtesy copy elements are used, place “DISTRIBUTION” on the third line below the signature element. Do not divide distribution lists between two pages. If the list is too long, type “DISTRIBUTION (listed on next page),” and list the organizations on a separate page.

## Additional Information

The automated file designator element is optional and it is frequently beneficial to show if a document is a record or coordination copy. If there are several documents in a package, they should be arranged for action and clarity. See below for further details on these items.

### Optional Automated File Designator (AFD) Element

The AFD element documents the storage location for data stored electronically. Type the AFD two line spaces below the courtesy copy distribution element. You may include the AFD in the identification line of talking, position, and bullet background papers. Contents of the AFD are based on the user’s needs and the system being used. For example, the element may include the file name, typist’s initials, and the uniform resource locator (URL) if stored on a website.

### Typeset Correspondence

You may typeset correspondence for a large audience (such as a memorandum to ALMAJCOM-FOA). Use an appropriate letterhead as with other official correspondence. You can use the full range of typesetting capabilities, including, but not limited to, two columns, italics, bold type, variable spacing, boxed inserts, and screened backgrounds.

### Record or Coordination Copy

This is the official record for your office files, so make sure it is fully legible. Type or write additional information of value only to the office of record on the record or coordination copy.

- **Showing Coordination.** Type or write the organization abbreviation and office symbol of each office that should coordinate across the bottom or right side of the record copy. The coordinating officials enter their last name and date.
- **Showing Internal Courtesy Copy Distribution.** List all internal courtesy distribution on the record copy unless it is listed on the original.
- **Identifying the Writer.** If identifying the writer is of value to the office of record, place the writer’s organization abbreviation and office symbol, name, telephone number, typist’s initials, the date the correspondence is typed, and, if desired, the document name/number at the top or bottom margin of the page. Do not repeat the writer’s name if the writer signed the correspondence. Use a new identification line, if desired, each time the correspondence is rewritten or retyped. Place the name of the person who rewrote it on the next line followed by the date it was retyped.

- **Annotating for Magnetic Storage Media.** Use the writer identification line to show document name, storage location, or file identification for reference and possible revision or reprinting.
- **Preparing a Memorandum for Record (MR).** When preparing a MR, whether it is for another office or when using it as your primary record, write or type on the record copy any information needed for the record. Continue on the back or a separate sheet if you need more space. The writer then signs the MR. (“MR” is the technical abbreviation for a memorandum for record; however, “MFR” is more widely recognized by Airmen.)

## **Attachments**

Many times you will need to attach supporting documents to your correspondence and the order of these documents has meaning for your correspondence. Placing supporting documents in the right order conveys levels of significance and relationships between documents to convey the context or background related to the issue in the correspondence. Understanding the context and background can be key information for decision makers to understand the issue and make good decisions.

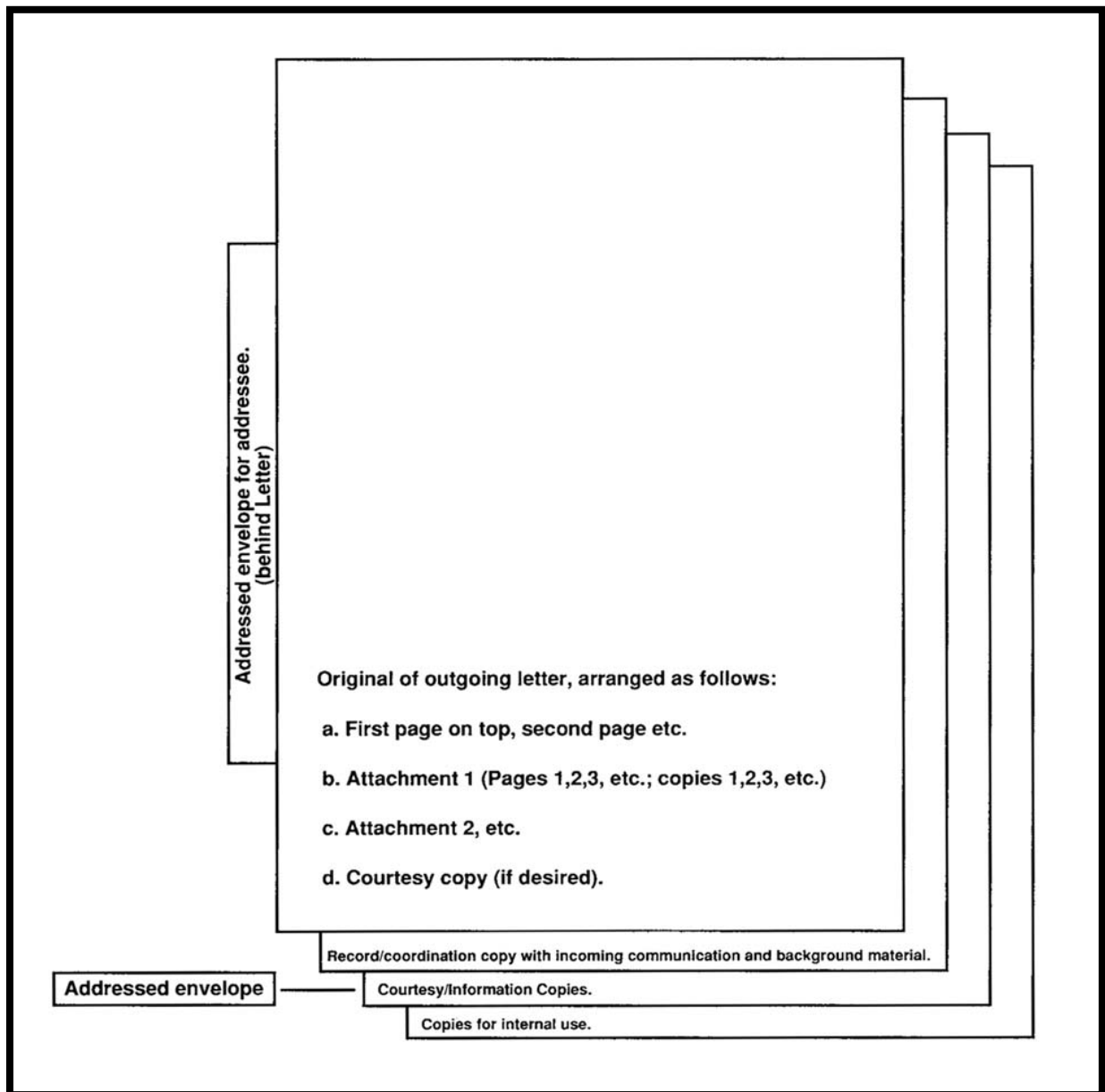
### **Arranging and Marking Attachments**

Attachment, appendix, annex, and exhibit all mean additional or supplementary material and indicate relative position within a correspondence package. The first addition to the document is an **attachment**; an addition to an attachment is an **appendix**; an addition to an appendix is an **annex**; and additions to an annex are **exhibits**. Indicate on the attachment, appendix, annex, or exhibit if there are appendices, annexes, or exhibits to it.

Type or write attachment markings in the same position as on the basic correspondence. Use pencil to allow renumbering and reuse with other documents. Mark attachments as follows:

- Attachments are marked in the lower right corner as Atch 1, Atch 2, Atch 3, etc.
- Appendices to attachments are marked as Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C, etc.
- Annexes to appendices are marked as Annex 1, Annex 2, Annex 3, etc.
- Exhibits to annexes are marked as Exhibit A, Exhibit B, Exhibit C, etc.
- For multiple-page attachments, number the pages of each attachment in a separate sequence. For example Atch 1 (1 of 3), Atch 1 (2 of 3), Atch 1 (3 of 3), etc.
- When sending more than one copy of an attachment, place the copy number (typed or handwritten) to the right and slightly above the attachment number to indicate the copy is the first, second, third, etc. For example Atch 1<sup>1</sup>, Atch 1<sup>2</sup>, Atch 1<sup>3</sup>, etc.

## Arranging and Marking Attachments (Graphic)

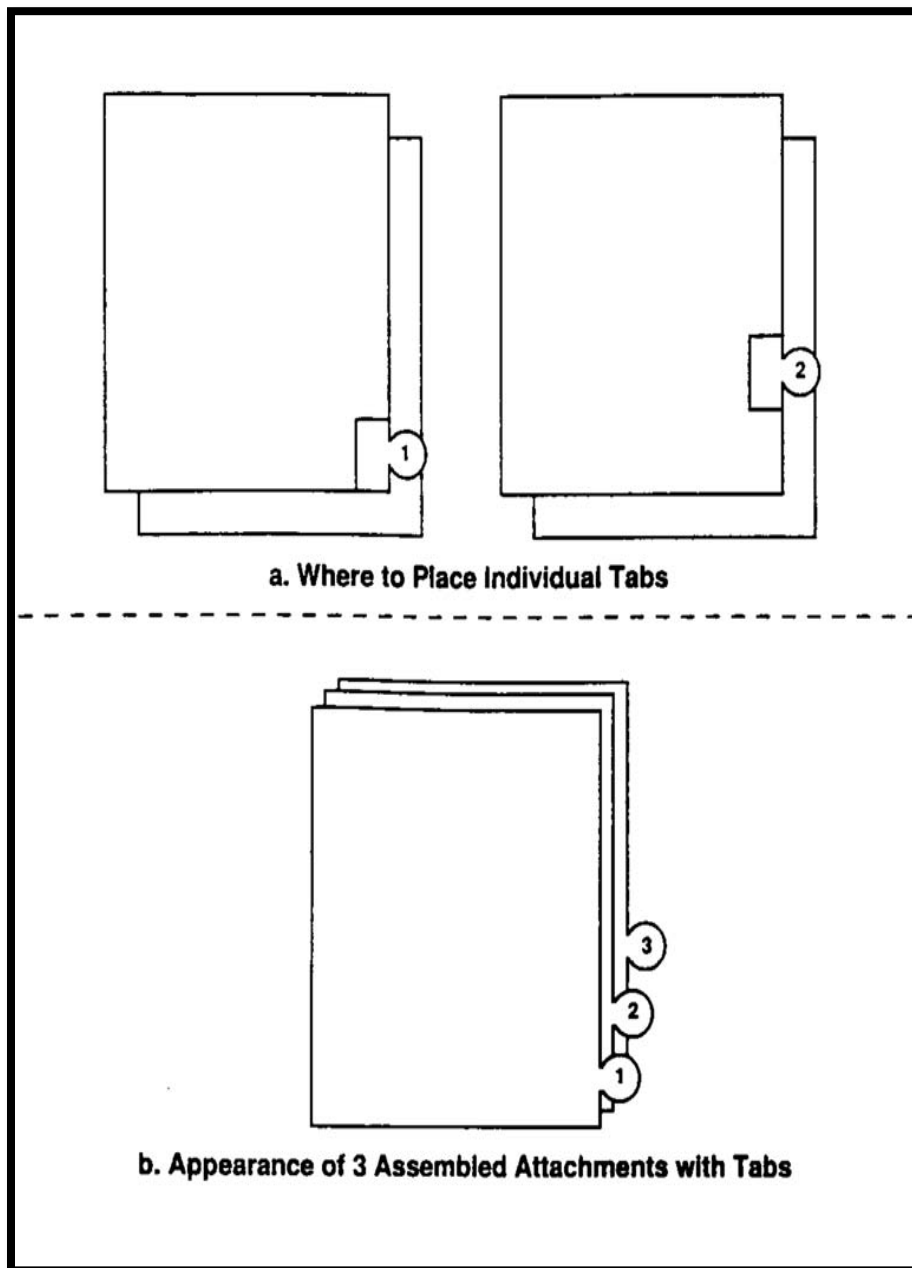


### Keep the Package Together

Staple a memorandum of more than one page, or with attachments, in the upper left corner before dispatch. If possible, arrange pages so that the reader can read information without removing the staples or paper clips; for example, turn landscape pages with top to the left. If required, prepare envelopes or facsimile cover sheets, and place them at the left side behind the copies for dispatch. Use a paper or binder clip to hold the packet together before dispatch. Organizations may specify alternate methods to suit their needs.

When using tabs, the first tab is located near the lower right corner and each successive tab is located slightly higher. Keep the spacing between three or more tabs equal for a professional look. The graphic for tab placement, below, depicts proper tab placement.

**Tab Placement (Graphic)**



## The Official Memorandum: Examples

The official memorandum is a powerful tool that can be used in many ways to accomplish many tasks. The official memorandum informs single and multiple receivers; personnel within and between organizations; leaders up and down the chain of command; and documents actions. The following official memorandums examples are based on many of the typical situations where Airmen need to make an official, written record of an event, decision or action.

- **Format:** The format guidance for an official memorandum written as an official memorandum with visual cues for placement and spacing of the elements described in this chapter shown in grey.
- **Subdividing Paragraphs:** The rules for subdividing paragraphs in the official memorandum are presented in an official memorandum.
- **Indorsement:** When the official memorandum must be signed to acknowledge receipt or action, the indorsement format should be used. The indorsement format has many uses, such as staff coordination, requests for training or disciplinary actions.
- **Letter of Reprimand:** The letter of reprimand (LOR) is a specialized indorsement memorandum. Refer to *The Military Commander and the Law* and your local legal office for more guidance on disciplinary letters.
- **IN TURN:** When the official memorandum needs a record of review without the formality of the indorsement format, the IN TURN format provides reviewer tracking.
- **After-Action Report:** When an action has been completed, the official memorandum can inform others about the results of the action, operation or mission.
- **Trip Report:** The trip report is another form of an after-action report that is commonly used in the Air Force. The trip report concisely conveys information about the trip's purpose, travelers, and itinerary after the trip is concluded. A more detailed discussion of relevant information from the trip is presented followed by any recommendations and/or conclusions. In short, the trip report should answer the who, what, when, where, why and how questions in a concise, orderly format. The trip report should convey everything the addressees need to know about the trip, especially as it relates to the unit's mission and any recommendations or costs.
- **Short Note Reply:** Reply to an official memorandum by adding your short note reply directly to the original memorandum. The short note reply is less formal than other response formats but is entirely appropriate when used correctly.
- **Memorandum for Record (MFR or MR):** The MFR is less formal than the official memorandum but records important information, questions or actions quickly. There are several formats for the MFR depending on the time and space available.

*The Tongue and Quill* recommends users follow the guidance of this chapter when preparing any official memorandum. This guidance includes checking for command supplements or commander preferences in preparing official memorandums. The examples that follow are just a few of the possible uses for the official memorandum. The goal is to standardize the format so Airmen can focus on the substance to communicate clearly and inform others.

## Format of the Official Memorandum



### DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE [APPROVED ORGANIZATIONAL LETTERHEAD]

[1.75 inches from top of page; flush with the right margin] 15 January 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR ORG/SYMBOL ¶ [Second line below date]

FROM: ORG/SYMBOL ¶ [Second line below MEMORANDUM FOR]

Organization

Street address (see paragraph 4)

City ST 12345-6789 (see paragraph 4)

SUBJECT: Format for the Official Memorandum ¶ [Second line below FROM]

References: (a) AFM 33-326, 25 November 2011, *Preparing Official Communications*. ¶

(b) DoDM 5110.04-M-V2, October 26, 2010, *DoD Manual for Written Material*. ¶

1. Use only approved organizational letterhead for all correspondence. This applies to all letterhead, both pre-printed and computer generated. Reference (a) details for the format and style of official letterhead such as centering the first line of the header 5/8ths of an inch from the top of the page in 12 point Copperplate Gothic Bold font. The second header line is centered 3 points below the first line in 10.5 point Copperplate Gothic Bold font. ¶

2. The standard location for the date element is 1.75 inches from the top of the page and flush with the right margin whether it is placed by word processor, typewriter, or date stamp. ¶

3. Place "MEMORANDUM FOR" on the second line below the date. Leave two spaces between "MEMORANDUM FOR" and the recipient's office symbol. If there are multiple recipients, two or three office symbols may be placed on each line aligned under the entries on the first line. If there are numerous recipients, use a "DISTRIBUTION" element. ¶

4. Place "FROM:" on the second line below the "MEMORANDUM FOR" line. Leave two spaces between the colon in "FROM:" and the originator's office symbol. The "FROM:" element contains the full mailing address of the originator's office unless the mailing address is in the header or if all the recipients are located on the same installation as the originator. ¶

5. Place "SUBJECT:" in uppercase on the second line below the last line of the FROM element. Leave two spaces between the colon in "SUBJECT:" and the subject. Capitalize the first letter of each word except articles, prepositions, and conjunctions (this is sometimes referred to as "title case"). Be clear and concise. If the subject is long, try to revise and shorten the subject; if shortening is not feasible, align the second line under the first word of the subject. ¶

6. Body text begins on the second line below the last line in the subject element and is flush with the left margin. If the Reference element is used, then the body text begins on the second line below the last line of the Reference element. ¶



[Page numbers are placed 0.5 inches from the top and flush with the right margin] 2

a. When a paragraph is split between pages, there must be at least two lines from the paragraph on both pages. Similarly, avoid single-sentence paragraphs by revising or reorganizing the content. ¶

¶

b. Number or letter each body text paragraph and subparagraph according to the format for subdividing paragraphs in official memorandums presented in the *Tongue and Quill*. When a memorandum is subdivided, the number of levels used should be relative to the length of the memorandum. Shorter products typically use three or fewer levels. Longer products may use more levels—but use only the number of levels needed. ¶

¶

7. If the memorandum is three pages or longer, place the page number 0.5 inches from the top of the page at the right margin for page 2 onwards. The first page is never numbered. The second page of a two-page memorandum may be numbered at the discretion of the originator. ¶

¶

8. Follow the spacing guidance for between the text, signature block, attachment element, courtesy copy element, and distribution lists, if used carefully. Never separate the text from the signature block: the signature page must include body text above the signature block. Also, the first element below the signature block begins on the third line below the last line of the duty title: this applies to attachments, courtesy copies, and distribution lists, whichever is used first. ¶

¶

9. The example of this memorandum applies to many official memorandums that Airmen may be tasked to prepare; however, there are additional elements for special uses of the official memorandum. Refer to the *Tongue and Quill* discussion on the official memorandum for more details, or consult published guidance applicable to your duties. ¶

¶

¶

¶

¶

¶ [Fifth line below text; 4.5 inches from left edge] FIRST M. LAST, Rank, USAF

¶

¶ [Indent to align under third character above] Director, Information Management and

¶

¶

2 Attachments: ¶ [Third line below last line of duty title] [If none, delete entire element]

1. [Attachment description, date] ¶

2. [Attachment description, date] ¶

¶

cc: ¶ [Second line below last line of attachment element or third line below signature block]

[Rank and name, ORG/SYMBOL, or both] [If none, delete entire element] ¶

¶

DISTRIBUTION: [\* If none, delete entire element] ¶

[Organization name or ORG/SYMBOL] ¶

[Organization name or ORG/SYMBOL] ¶

¶

¶

¶ [Use 1-inch left, right, top, and bottom margins for page 2 onwards]

*First M. Last*

FIRST M. LAST, Rank, USAF  
Director, Information Management and  
Publications Policy

\* If used, the DISTRIBUTION element begins on the second line below the attachments or courtesy copy; however, it begins on the third line below last line of signature block if the attachment and courtesy copy elements are *not* used.

## Format for Subdividing Paragraphs in Official Memorandums



### DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE [APPROVED ORGANIZATIONAL LETTERHEAD]

12 June 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMINISTRATORS

FROM: ORG/SYMBOL

SUBJECT: Format for Subdividing Paragraphs in Official Memorandums

1. Introductory paragraph with purpose, statement, and overview. Single-space within paragraphs; double-space between paragraphs. Indent only the first line of subparagraphs: all paragraphs wrap to the left margin at all levels.
2. First main idea. [The first line of a first level paragraph is not indented.]
  - a. Fact and reasoning supporting this idea. [The first line of all sub-paragraphs is indented. The sub-paragraph letter or number is aligned under the first character of the first word in the first line of its superior paragraph. All other lines for all paragraphs are flush with the left margin. In this example, the "a." is aligned under the "F" of "First main idea."]
    - (1) Fact and reasoning to support a. [First line aligned under "F" in "Fact..."]
    - (2) Additional fact and reasoning to support a.
      - (a) Support for (2). [First line aligned under "A" in "Additional fact..."]
      - (b) Additional support for (2).
        - 1 Support for (b). [First line aligned under "A" in "Additional support..."]
          - a Support for 1. [First line aligned under "S" in "Support for (b)"]
          - b Additional support for 1.
            - [1] Support for b. [First line aligned under "A" in "Additional..."]
            - [2] Additional support for b.
        - 2 Additional support for (b).
    - b. Additional fact or reasoning to support 2 (first main idea).
      - (1) Support for b.
      - (2) Additional support for b.

3. Second main idea. Your narrative should flow smoothly from one idea to another with each idea being clearly supported.
  - a. Fact and reasoning supporting this idea.
  - b. Additional fact and reasoning supporting this idea.
4. The cardinal rule of subdivision.
  - a. Subdivision, by its name and nature, requires there be at least two subordinate elements if an idea or support for an idea is subdivided
  - b. When subdividing paragraphs, never use a “1” without a “2” or an “a” without a “b.”
  - c. The cardinal rule of subdivision applies to all correspondence, reports, background papers, outlines, briefings, or presentations: it is fundamental to outlining and content organization.
5. Optional closure and point of contact information. If contact information is used, provide the digital switched network (DSN) and commercial telephone numbers and an email address.

*First M. Last*  
FIRST M. LAST, Rank, USAF  
Director, Information Management and  
Publications Policy

## The Indorsement Format



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE**  
**[APPROVED ORGANIZATIONAL LETTERHEAD]**

2 April 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR 374 OG/CCE [Office symbol for 1st Indorsement official]  
ATTENTION: CAPT CATCH [1st Indorsement official, if required]

FROM: 374 AW/CCE [Originator]

SUBJECT: Indorsement Memorandum Format

1. The indorsement memorandum is useful when documented history of action is required, such as when gathering formal comments for a document or in handling legal and disciplinary actions. As such, indorse official memorandums only, not personal letters.

a. Use the indorsement format within or between US military organizations or between US Military organizations and civilian organizations under contract with the Air Force. When space allows, place indorsements on the original memorandum or a previous indorsement page.

b. Number each indorsement in sequence (1st Ind, 2d Ind, 3d Ind, ...). Begin the first indorsement on the second line below the last element of the original memorandum. Begin subsequent indorsements on the second line below the last element of the previous indorsement. Follow the indorsement number with your office symbol.

2. Please pass this sample to the 374 OSS/CCE. If you have any questions, you can reach me at DSN 888-9999, commercial (555) 888-9999, or by e-mail at [noman.hauler@us.af.mil](mailto:noman.hauler@us.af.mil).

[Originator's signature block]

*Norman B. Hauler*  
NORMAN B. HAULER, Major, USAF  
Executive Officer, 374th Airlift Wing

1st Ind, 374 OG/CCE [Office symbol for 1st Indorsement official]

4 Apr 14

MEMORANDUM FOR 374 OSS/CCE [Office symbol for 2d Indorsement official]

Please review. If you have questions, please contact me first.

[1st Indorsement official's signature block]

*Macon D. Catch*  
MACON D. CATCH, Captain, USAF  
Executive Officer, 374th Operations Group

2d Ind to 374 AW/CCE, 2 Apr 14, Indorsement Memorandum Format

374 OSS/CCE [Office symbol for 2d Indorsement official]

8 Apr 14

MEMORANDUM FOR 374 AW/CCE [Originator]

Reviewed. I have posted the sample on the 374 OSS shared drive.

[2d Indorsement official's signature block]

***Justine L. Master***  
JUSTINE L. MASTER, 1Lt, USAF  
Executive Officer, 374th Operations Support  
Squadron

Use a separate-page indorsement when there isn't space remaining on the original memorandum or previous indorsement page. The separate-page indorsement is basically the same as the one for the same page except the top line always cites the indorsement number with the originator's office, date, and subject of the original communication; the second line reflects the functional address symbol of the indorsing office with the date. An example is at the top of this page.



2 Jan 14

[1-inch left, right, and bottom margins]

## The After-Action Report



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
AIR UNIVERSITY (AETC)**

25 March 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR SOC/DE

FROM: SOC/DER

SUBJECT: After-Action Report, Squadron Officer School (SOS) Class 14B

1. Overview. This memorandum documents the end-of-term review (EOTR) for Squadron Officer School (SOS) Class 14B. This review considers student performance, feedback on the curriculum, guidance affecting the curriculum, and course director analysis.
2. Student performance. ...
3. Feedback on the curriculum. ...
  - a. Feedback from students. ...
    - (1) "What were the most beneficial aspects of the course?"
    - (2) "How could we improve the course?"
  - b. Feedback from instructors. ...
4. Guidance Affecting Curriculum. ...
5. Course Director Analysis. ...

*Vicki C. Williams*

VICTORIA C. WILLIAMS, Major, USAF  
Course Director, Squadron Officer School

Attachment:  
Spaatz ESS/XA Feedback Report, 15 March 2014

Style Note: If the date format used in the attachment element matches the date format of the memorandum, as is done in this example, the document presents a consistent, professional look.

## The Trip Report



### DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE AIR UNIVERSITY (AETC)

14 July 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR AIR FORCE SENIOR NCO ACADEMY STAFF

FROM: AFSNCOA/CO

SUBJECT: Trip Report Format

1. PURPOSE: Briefly state the reason for the trip (answer the *why* question). [The remaining paragraphs of the trip report should answer the *what*, *when*, *where*, and *how* questions.]
2. TRAVELER(S): Include rank, first name or initial, and surname. Provide position titles if travelers are from different offices or organizations. You may list names of members present in two columns to save space.
3. ITINERARY: List location(s) visited, inclusive dates, and key personnel contacted. This content may be presented as narrative text, columns, or another format that best communicates the information clearly and concisely.
4. DISCUSSION: Base the amount of detailed information you include here on the knowledge level of your intended readers. Always include the trip objective, problems encountered, findings, future commitments made and your contribution to the event. This paragraph may need several sub-paragraphs to cover all the pertinent information. Attach meeting minutes or other background documents that provide more detailed information, if needed.
5. CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS: Summarize your findings and/or recommended actions. If there are several findings and/or recommendations, use sub-paragraphs numbered and/or lettered in accordance with the format for sub-paragraphs in an official memorandum.

*Laurence M. Patrick*  
LAURENCE, M. PATRICK, CMSgt, USAF  
Commandant, AF Senior NCO Academy

Attachment:  
Professional Military Education Conference Minutes, 8 July 2014



## The Short Note Reply



### DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND

16 June 2014 ¶

¶  
MEMORANDUM FOR HQ 2 AF/CCS ¶

¶  
FROM: HQ AETC/CCS ¶  
1 F Street, Suite 1  
JBSA-Randolph TX 78150-4324

¶  
SUBJECT: Use of the Short Note Reply ¶

¶  
1. Official memorandums and staff packages sometimes generate additional questions during the staffing process. Some of these questions require additional staff research or a revised staff package to answer while others may be answered directly with a short note reply. The short note reply is a time-saving method to respond to questions directly on the official memorandum and to keep a staff package moving towards a decision. ¶

¶  
2. The format for a short note reply is simple. Just write or type the short note reply flush with the left margin on the original memorandum if space allows; if not, put it on a separate page, attach it to the original memorandum, and keep a copy for your files. ¶

¶  
3. If you have any questions, please feel free to call at DSN 888-9999, Comm (333) 555-9999, or via email at [margaret.wick@us.af.mil](mailto:margaret.wick@us.af.mil). ¶

¶  
¶  
¶  
¶  
*Margaret C. Wick*

MARGARET C. WICK, GS-11, DAF ¶  
Executive Assistant to AETC Commander ¶

¶  
Memorandum For HQ AETC/CCS ¶ [Use upper- and lower-case "Memorandum For"]

¶  
Please let the command know the key element of the short note reply is brevity. Following the "Memorandum For" of the reply is a short note of one or two sentences and an abbreviated signature block (name and short duty title or office symbol). ¶

¶  
ANDREA NAYFA ¶ [USE ALL CAPS FOR NAME]  
2 AF/CCS ¶

## The Memorandum for Record



### DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE [APPROVED ORGANIZATIONAL LETTERHEAD]

17 February 2014

#### MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: The Memorandum for Record

1. The memorandum for record, commonly known as a memo for record, MR, or MFR, has three forms: (a) the separate-page memorandum, (b) the explanatory note, and (c) the compact note. The form used is determined by the purpose for the MR and the needs of the writer.
2. The formats for each of the three types of MR are simple. This is the **separate page MR**. It is based on the official memorandum but omits the "FROM:" element since the writer is both the sender and the receiver. The separate page MR also uses a modified signature block by using the organization abbreviation and office symbol rather than the duty title. The formats for the explanatory note MR and compact note MR, shown below, have even fewer required elements to accommodate specific purposes, limited space, or both.

*Bestin D. Blue*  
BESTIN D. BLUE  
ACSC/CCS

#### MEMO FOR RECORD

18 Feb 14

This is an **explanatory note MR**. It omits the subject when it is added to the record copy (as shown in this example). If space permits, type "MEMO FOR RECORD" and the date on the second line below the signature block. If the explanatory note will not fit on the bottom of the record copy, simply type "MR ATTACHED" or "MR ON REVERSE" on the bottom of the record copy and put the MR on a separate sheet or on the back of the record copy. Number the paragraphs as you would in an official memorandum when there is more than one paragraph. No signature block is required; merely sign your last name after the last word of the MR.

*Blue*

MR: The **compact note MR** is the shortest format for a memorandum for record and is useful when space is limited. Sign your last name and put the date following the last word.

*Blue*  
*19 Feb*

MR ATTACHED

## The Memorandum for Record: Separate Page Attachment



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE**  
**[APPROVED ORGANIZATIONAL LETTERHEAD]**

20 February 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Additional Information on the Memorandum for Record

Reference: MFR, The Memorandum for Record, 17 Feb 14

1. Summary: People working together every day frequently pass information back and forth verbally—even in the social media world of today—but sometimes the information needs to be documented in a memorandum for record (MR or MFR).
2. Format: Follow the format for the official memorandum. If there are multiple paragraphs, they are numbered or lettered, and indented, according to the format for subdividing paragraphs in the official memorandum. The margins are the same (1.75 inches on the top and one (1) inch on the left, right, and bottom) as is the font style (Times New Roman) font size (12 points). The reference line must clearly identify the document (a previous MFR in this case) being referenced.
  - a. The separate page MFR documents information that is usually first presented orally, such as telephone calls or verbal tasks from leaders, as a record of the event for later reference or to informally pass the information to others. The separate page MFR also serves as “a note to self” to document tasks, disciplinary, or other legal actions.
  - b. The explanatory note MFR adds a “MEMO FOR RECORD” line to any correspondence and can be used to target a specific addressee. The explanatory MFR gives the reader a synopsis of the purpose of the original memorandum, tells who got involved and provides additional background information not included in the original memorandum. By reading the original memorandum and the MFR, readers should understand enough about the subject to coordinate or sign the memorandum without having to ask for more information.
  - c. The compact note MFR is the most compact version of the MFR. When there is very little space at the bottom of the correspondence and you need to make a recorded note, use the compact note format.
3. MFRs are flexible and important tools for today’s Airmen to document and record events. They are simple to create and adaptable.

*Deborah A. Woodson*  
DEBORAH A. WOODSON  
SOC/CCS

## Spelling Checkers: Before You Sign

Before you—or your boss—signs an official memorandum (or a personal letter)—run your spell checking software and READ the document again. The extreme examples below may never happen to you; however, there are some very embarrassing spelling checker suggestions for some military terms not recognized by the software.

READ the document; avoid embarrassment.

### Spell Chequer

Eye halve a spelling chequer

It came with my pea sea

It plainly marques four my revue

Miss Steaks eye kin knot sea.

Eye strike a key and type a word

And weight four it two say

Weather eye am wrong oar write

It shows me strait a weigh.

As soon as a mist ache is maid

It nose bee fore two long

And eye can put the error rite

Its rarely ever wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it

I am shore your pleased two no.

Its letter perfect in it's weigh

My chequer tolled me sew.

-Sauce Unknown

# CHAPTER 15

## The Personal Letter

***This chapter covers:***

- The Heading Section
- The Text of the Personal Letter
- The Closing Section
- Forms of Address, Salutation and Complimentary Close
- Military Ranks and Abbreviations
- The Personal Letter: Examples

Use a personalized letter when your communication needs a personal touch or when warmth or sincerity is essential. You may use it to write to an individual on a private matter for praise, condolence, sponsorship, etc. Keep it brief, preferably no longer than one page, and avoid using acronyms. For envelopes, always use United States Postal Service (USPS) abbreviations for addresses. For further information, see USPS Publication 28, *Postal Addressing Standards*.