

MES 000 Memo

Date: 01 January 9999

To: Professor In Charge

From: Alan Smithee

Re: How to write a lab memo.

Writing a technical memo is not an easy undertaking. The writer must be able to summarize the major points in a full report so that the information will fit on one page of text. A memo can be thought of as an extended abstract.

The following information should appear in a lab memo:

- 1 Objective/purpose. State clearly what experiment was conducted and the reason for performing such experiment.
- 2 Means. How was the objective met? If an apparatus was used then name the apparatus without describing it in too much detail.
- 3 Results. Report the results.
- 4 Discussion. Discuss your results as pertain to your objective. Be concise and to the point.
- 5 Conclusion. State how well you met your objective/purpose. May include recommendation.

A memo should be limited to one page of writing (excluding supporting documents) using normal text and format. Graphs, data, sample calculations, and any other supporting documents may be attached to and referred to. For example, the memo may refer to a figure showing a schematic diagram of the experimental apparatus. The figure, however, should not be on the memo page itself.

It cannot be stressed enough that a memorandum is not a quick write up job. It requires more planning than writing a full technical report. Important information contained in a report must also be in the memo but in a much shorter, more concise form.

One last point, do not forget to sign or initial the memo (by the Name). A memo is not official without it.