Business Correspondence

SPI 0601.3.12 Select the most appropriate format for writing a specific work-related text

(i.e., instructions, directions, letters, memos, e-mails, reports).

Types of Business Correspondence

When you become employed you will need to determine which type of communication you should use in different situations.

Examples:

- When is writing a memo appropriate?
- Should I write a formal letter?
- Are instructions necessary?
- Is an e-mail proper?

Instructions

- a message describing how something is to be done

- Think of these as orders, commands, advice, or directives.

Instructions

- Instructions lists steps for doing an activity or completing a task.
- Instructions may be sent to co-workers when you must be out of the office for an appointment or vacation outlining the tasks your job involves.
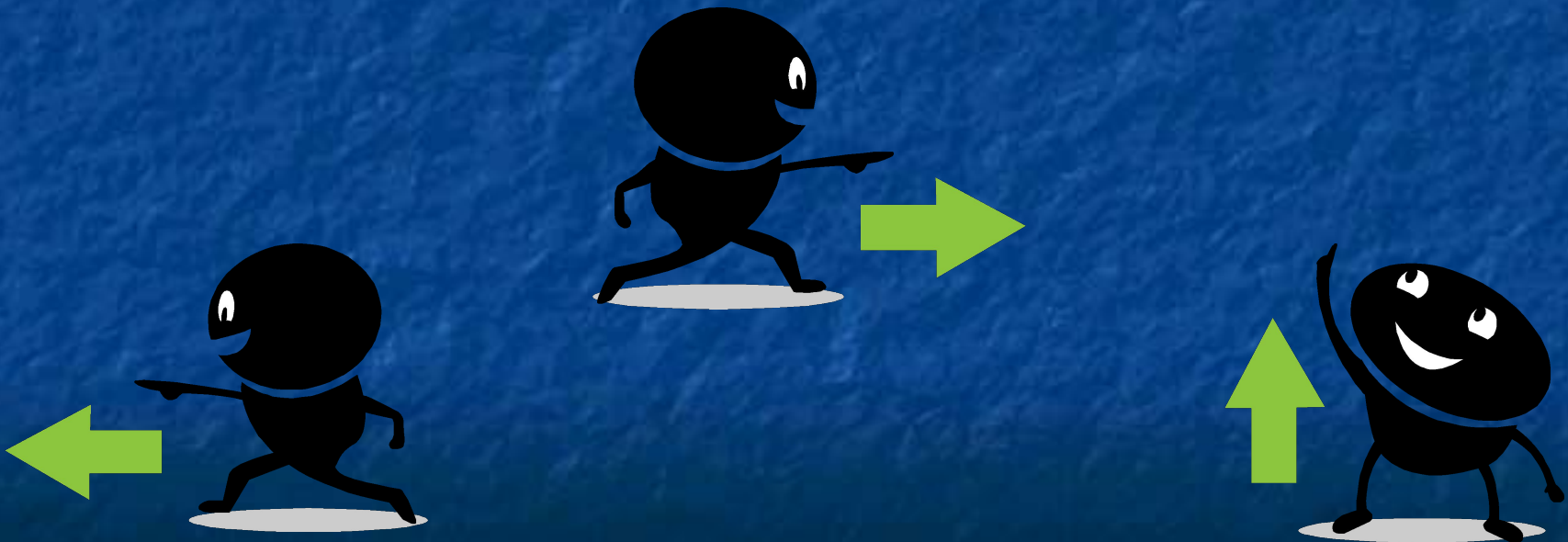
Tutorial on Writing Clear How-To Instructions

- http://www.wisc-online.com/Objects/ViewObject.aspx?ID=TRG700

Directions

- information, particularly as to how to reach a destination

Tutorial on Writing Directions

- http://www.wisc-online.com/Objects/ViewObject.aspx?ID=TRG2301

Letters

Business letters are formal messages following specific formats. They may be addressed to a particular person or organization. Most of the time business letters are sent outside of your company.

Memos

A memo is a document sent within a company. It is presented in short form, highlighting certain aspects.
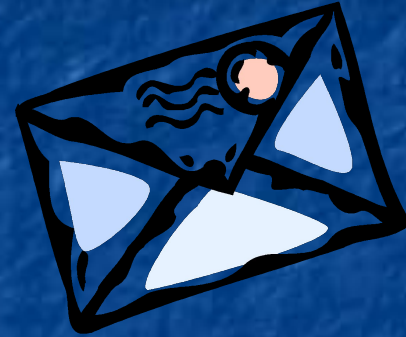
E-mail

An e-mail is a communication sent from one computer to another, usually via a network. It is the least formal method of written communication within a company.

So, when should I write

a business letter,

a memo,

or an email?

Business Letters

- most formal
- usually sent to someone from a different company than yours, or a different school, etc.

Memos

- less formal than letters, yet more formal than e-mails
- often filed as business correspondence
- use short sentences, less formal language, and bullet points to convey important information
- contain a header that tells who it is from, who it is to, the date, and the subject.

E-mails

- less formal - written in a conversational style
- sent to your work colleagues or fellow students/professors from the same school
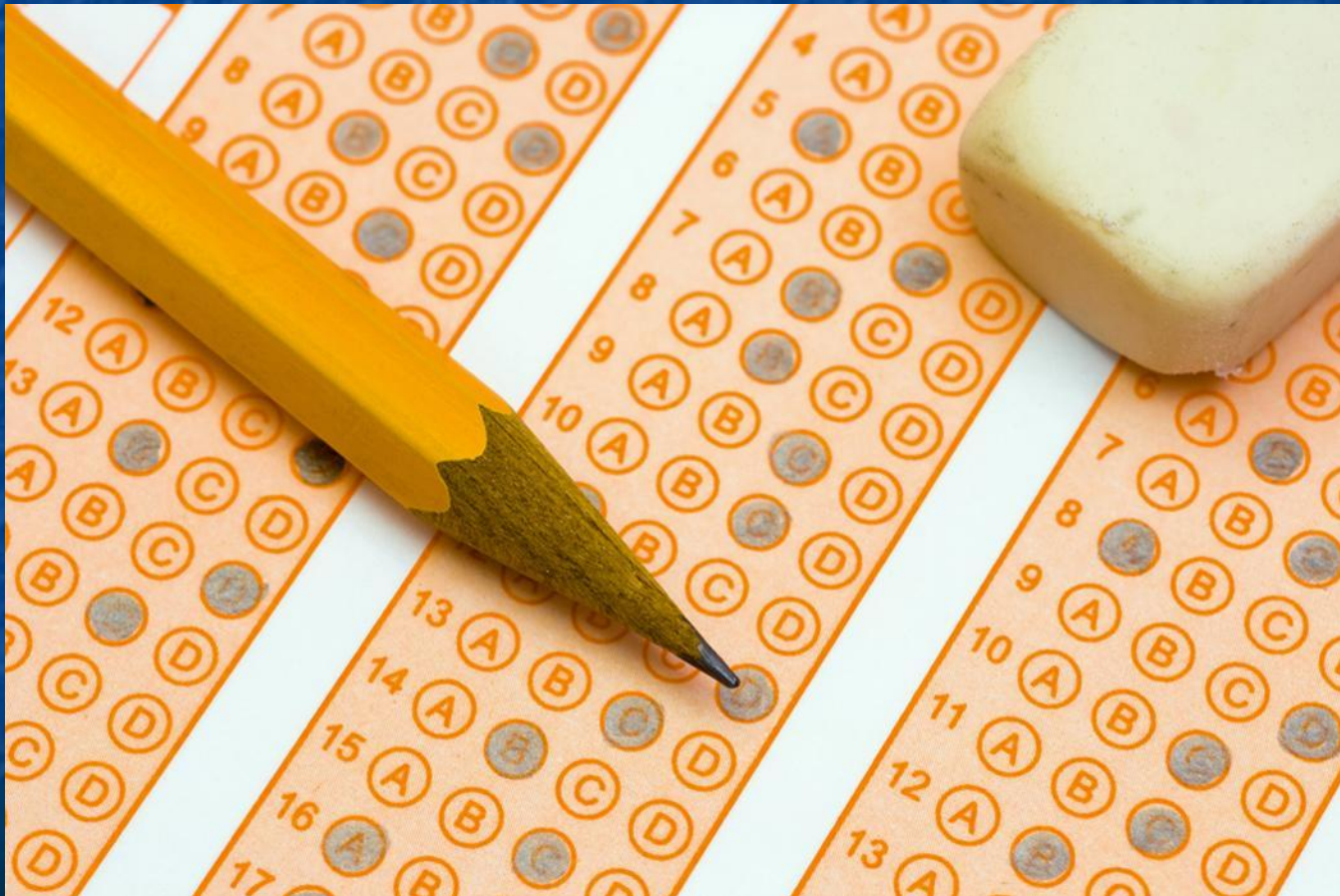
Tutorial on Creating a Memo

- http://www.wisc-online.com/objects/wcn3902/wcn3902.swf

Reports

- a written document describing the findings, results, or conclusions of some individual or group

Sample Test Questions

Performance Indicator: 0601.3.12 Select the most appropriate format for writing a specific work-related text (i.e., instructions, directions, letters, memos, e-mails, reports).

79 Mia wants to present a suggestion to her supervisor at work for the purchase of a new copy machine. Which format would be the <u>most</u> appropriate for her to use?

A a set of directions for using the new device

B a memo sent out to the entire department at her work

C an oral discussion after work one afternoon

D an e-mail with a Web site link to the new product

81 Carmen is planning a summer vacation. What steps should she take to make sure necessary arrangements are made for her absence at work?

A Carmen should write a letter to her boss requesting time off, and then she should send an e-mail to her coworkers letting them know the details of her vacation.

B Carmen should write a report of the work she has completed during the year, and she should e-mail the report to her boss before she leaves on vacation.

C Carmen should send an e-mail to her coworkers letting them know that she is planning to be out of the office for several days in the summer, and then Carmen should leave directions with her boss of where she will be traveling.

D Carmen should send an e-mail to her boss requesting time off for the days she will be out of the office and prepare a list of instructions for the person who will take over her workload while she is away.