Memorandum

Date: April 10, 2019

To: BCOM 3113 & BCOM 3443 Students

From: Marla Mahar, BCOM Lecturer

Subject: Short Report Assignment, Due May 3, 2019

The main purposes of this assignment are for you to

- Gather information for specific readers and purposes,
- Organize and format information, and
- Demonstrate your ability to apply all the principles of effective written communication.

Short Report Topic

Choose one of the three options below for your short report:

1. **Helping Your Boss Promote Mindfulness:** You’re a management major on co-op with a large customer-data company. Your company sells technology that collects detailed records of what customers buy, at what price, and when, and then crunches those data to help companies improve their revenue. The employees include computer engineers, salespeople, client consultants, customer support staff, technicians, and professionals in other business areas. You’ve been assigned to various areas of the company to “learn your chops,” so to speak, and you’re currently reporting to Jennifer Sachs, the director of communications. One of Jennifer’s duties is to work with the president to write the script for his monthly video to the employees. Jennifer has been coming across more and more articles about the detrimental effects of multitasking and the benefits of focused, “mindful” work, so she thinks she’ll recommend that the president’s next talk be on this subject. That’s where you come in. “See what you can find out about mindfulness on the job,” she asks you. “Find out what it means, how to have it, what its benefits are, who’s practicing it.” Cite your sources, so they can be accessed, if needed.

Send your memo report to Jennifer, as an email attachment to a transmittal message, answering her (and the president’s) likely questions and helping them see what approach to take with this topic in the video.
2. **Recommending a Charity for Your Company to Support:** You’re part-time assistant to the business manager of a successful veterinary clinic with four locations in the greater _____ area (you pick the city). The practice’s three owners have been building the clinic’s image as a strong supporter of the community. They have created a thriving employee-volunteer program, they sponsor community events, and they convey their genuine interest in animal welfare in their advertising.

Now they want to add another piece to their social-responsibility portfolio: adopting a charity to support.

They’ve asked your boss to come up with three charities who would make worthy recipients of donations from the company. From these, they will choose one. Since you’re a college student with good writing and research skills and free access to your university’s extensive online resources, she asks you to tackle this task. You decide you’ll start your research by consulting your library’s resources on corporate philanthropy and on veterinary philanthropy in particular. You’ll also look at the websites for various relevant charities. Once you believe you’ve found everything useful, you’ll digest it, interpret it, and present the results in a well-organized, well-written report that your boss can hand over to the owners during her meeting with them next month. Be sure to include your sources so your readers can consult them if they want.

*Send your memo report to your boss, Martha Reeves, as an email attachment to a transmittal message.*

3. **You work in the human resources department of a clinical research organization with about 2,000 employees.** Like other companies in this industry, your company arranges, runs, and reports on clinical trials of new drugs, biomedical devices, and promising medical treatments. Your company recently expanded beyond U.S. borders for the first time by opening a new research facility in Seoul, South Korea.

Your boss wants to be sure that all U.S. employees who will be interacting with the Korean employees understand that South Korea, and Seoul in particular, has its own culture. Toward that end, he has asked you to prepare a short report on what people should keep in mind when conversing with those that manage and work in the Seoul branch. For example, how formal are the Koreans in their correspondence? Do they value directness or indirectness, or does it depend on the circumstances? What is their attitude toward hierarchy? What might be topics or wording to be careful about? When visiting the Korean site, what should U.S. employees know about the business and social protocol that is likely to be used there?

Write him a report in which you convey a helpful, accurate picture of the culture in Korea and offer well-researched advice for U.S. employees that he can share with them as he sees fit. Cite your sources – and be careful to use reliable ones.

*Send your memo report to your boss, Brian Connolly, as an email attachment to a transmittal message.*
Format

Remember these tips as you are composing your short report:

- Organize your information in an easy-to-read memo report. Memo format example in textbook, page 401. Short Report:
  - This will be the memo report attached to your e-mail.
  - You will compose in memo format – Follow heading format as it appears on page 449 of your text.
  - Design a business logo for the top of the memo that is related to the business in your chosen prompt. Type Memo Report underneath the logo.

- Your first page will be your transmittal message in e-mail format. An example of a transmittal in letter format is on page 438.
  - An e-mail message to your boss
  - Length will be ½ to 1 Page
  - E-Mail Format -
    From: 
    To: 
    Cc: 
    Subject:

- Keep in mind your reader’s interests and the purpose for the information. The report will probably be about two – four pages, although it may be more depending on the amount of information you include.
- Avoid overly casual language, explain well, since the report will be read by your boss and may be passed on to other supervisors or executives.
- Decide how to carefully organize the information in a functional, helpful way with appropriate headings for each section of the report. You may use bulleted lists or other graphic aids, such as graphs, charts, or pictures, if they will help present the information concisely and clearly. Chapter 4 of your textbook includes many tips on using visuals.
- Remember that when memos are more than one page, you should use continuation-page headings, BCOM textbook, page 83.
- Keep all information accurate and up-to-date!

Research

Please follow these guidelines for your informal short report:

- Use Chicago Style (Notes-Bibliography) Format
- Use at least three sources.
- Do not forget to cite sources within your report using citation footnotes
- Do not plagiarize!
Helpful Sources for Guidelines:

Business Communication eBook: Reference Chapter B (Footnotes references under N)

Chicago Style Format: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/ or http://content.easybib.com/citation-guides/chicago-turabian/

Footnotes and Headings: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/ or http://content.easybib.com/citation-guides/chicago-turabian/footnotes/

Lab Work Day – April 22, 2019

Bring the draft of your short report with you in electronic form (flash drive). We will be doing more research, working on the format, going over how to do footnote citations, and I will be answering any questions you may have about your informal short report.

Conferences – April 29 & 30, 2019

Sign up on my office door for a 15-minute time slot. The sign-up sheet will be posted on the door of BUS 441 beginning November 26. Bring a rough draft of your informal report for individual consultation about the informal report assignment.

Lab Day for Short Report – May 3, 2019

Bring all your drafts with you in both paper and electronic form (flash drive), and bring your folder. You will peer edit your completed rough draft with a partner and turn in your rough and final drafts to me and submit your final draft to D2L Dropbox.

Evaluation Criteria

Remember that the most important aspect of a report is usability. The information must be well-organized, clear, 100% accurate, and verifiable. This report must be in your own words.

Please use the Message Planning Checklist, page 29, Figure 2-1: Planning – Drafting – Revising!

Grade: Transmittal Message – 15 points
Informal Short Report – 100 points

Points will be assigned based on how well you apply the principles of business communication discussed in the textbook and in class (see the Scoring Rubric in the syllabus).