Four Rules for Effective Writing
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• Rule 1: Outline the key points you intend to make.
• Rule 2: Write topic sentences for each key point.
• Rule 3: Place your topic sentences in logical order.
• Rule 4: Provide additional supporting detail for each key point.
Rule 1: Outline the key points

Start the act of writing by creating bullet points for each of the key points you intend to make.

Do not try to write full sentences at first. Instead, just create a bullet point for each key point you intend to communicate.
Rule 2: Write topic sentences for each key point

A topic sentence states the main point of the paragraph.

Make sure your topic sentences are “concise” (clear and short).

At this point you will have a series of topic sentences waiting to be arranged into an effective paragraph.
Rule 3: Place your topic sentences in logical order.

This could be called “building your argument” or “making your case.”

Create a logical flow of topic sentences that most effectively communicates your message.
Rule 4: Provide additional supporting detail for each key point.

Finally, add supporting information that gives your reader more details about the point you’re making with any of your topic sentences. Some topic sentences require additional support detail—some will not.
Rule 4: Provide additional supporting detail

When you add supporting detail, make sure that your paragraphs are no longer than nine lines long. Readers skip over “dense word blocks” like long paragraphs.

Readers remember short paragraphs, especially one sentence paragraphs.
Standard Organization for a Business Memo

A memo is a business document that helps individuals throughout a business learn about an issue and/or make an important business decision.
Standard Organization for a Business Memo

1. **Issue**—concisely describe the issue or decision the memo will address.

2. **Recommendation**—indicate your conclusion

3. **Supporting details**—provide the logical points that support your recommendation. You can use bullet points instead of topic sentences.

4. **Next Steps**—indicate what needs to happen next if the readers agree with your recommendation.
Example of a Business Memo

- Multi-functional printer—fax, copy, print, scan
- Crisp, clean documents—Color laser
- Cost—$200-$300
- Two-year warranty
- Cost effective replacement ink cartridges—$50
- Free, two-day shipping
- Pay no taxes
Example of a Business Memo

The printer Vapor Electronics purchases must be multi-functional, such as the Samsung P406C printer. The printer must be capable of faxing, copying, printing, and scanning. The equipment must be a color-laser, which will provide the most crisp documents possible. The cost of the printer must fall in the range of $200-$400 and have at least a two-year warranty. Replacement ink cartridges must be easy to obtain and be purchased at a reasonable cost of under $50 for each color ink cartridge. The Samsung 406C printer meets these requirements and can be purchased on Amazon.com for $300, with free two-day shipping and no tax.