

## PROBLEM 8

### MEMORANDA CRITIQUES

In section or in class you will be given copies of the memoranda prepared by one or two of your fellow students. While reading each of them, jot down two sets of notes:

- (1) One set of notes will be simply for your own benefit. What can you learn from the memorandum? What good ideas does it contain that might be of help to your own work? Does it illuminate weaknesses in your own memoranda?
- (2) The second set of notes will be for the author of the memoranda. They should discuss:
  - a) the strengths of the memos, where you think each is particularly persuasive, clear, or well-organized and why;
  - b) those aspects that seem less persuasive, confused, disorganized, or missing entirely, and why; and
  - c) suggestions for how the memo could be improved. These suggestions should cover areas such as:
    - i) the content of the proposal,
    - ii) the way it is developed and explained,
    - iii) the style of writing, and
    - iv) the neatness and clarity of typing and organization.

In this regard, some good questions to ask are:

- At some point in a memo is it clear what the present section is about and why it is included?

#### Analysis Memo

- If charts are used, are they integrated into the flow of argument? Are they repetitious? Are conclusions drawn from each that further the narrative?
- Are the transitions from one tool to another smooth or abrupt?
- Does the general approach develop naturally from the diagnostic section or does it seem to sprout full-grown from nowhere?
- Are other options besides the recommended one discussed and dealt with if that seems indicated?
- Is the reader left with any important unanswered questions?
- Does the proposal ultimately seem realistic in light of the full presentation?

#### Action Memo

- If you were the entry point, would you be intrigued by this memo or at least pleased that you had taken the time to read it?
- Is there anything "up front" to distinguish this memo from the rest of the mail?
- Will it be clear to the entry point what the author wants him or her to do? (Should it be clear?)
- Does this Action Memo do what the Analysis Memo said it would? If not, why not? How could it be improved?
- Is the memo neatly typed? Well-organized? Succinct?
- Do you see any way to improve the chances of a favorable reaction from the entry point?

Come to section with two (2) copies of the notes you have prepared on each of the memos you have read. Give one copy of each set to the author of the memos and one to your section leader as your worksheets for Problem 8.