CSE/ISE 300 Communication  F11

• Time: Tue/Thur 5:20-6:40PM
• Location: Room 102  Light Engineering
• Required Book: The Elements of Style, 4th edition (2000), Authors: Strunk and White $10 (or $4 2007 reprint by Coyote)
• Online Technical Writing, Author: David A. McMurray  http://www.io.com/~hcexres/textbook/
• Recommended Textbook: Pocket Guide to Technical Communication, 5th ed. (2011). Author: Pfeiffer $42 list; $33 Amazon ($26+$4 used)
• Instructor: Professor Larry Wittie    TA: Sean Munson
• Office: CS Building, Room 1308    TA Office: 2110 CSB
• Phone: 631-632-8750 (not 2-8456)    TA Hours: 11AM-1PM, Weds
• Email: lw@ic.sunysb.edu
• Office Hours: 3:45-5:15PM Tue & Thu or by appointment
• Course Homepage: http://www.cs.sunysb.edu/~lw/teaching/cse300

Paper 1  My Weekend with Irene, graded and back last Tuesday, 9/27.
Commented draft of your Memo2 handed back Tuesday, 10/4/11.
Memo2 is an English essay due Thursday, 13 Oct 2011
Memo2 is an English essay due Thursday, 13 Oct 2011 as one printed copy in class & a .doc file emailed to lw@ic.sunysb.edu

Subject: 300 memo2  Why I Need a New Work Computer.

Put a title, your name and the paper’s last print date centered on a cover page for your “2.2-page” memo. Use 1.5 lines spacing. Make memo lines 6 inches long with 30 lines per page of text. Make the text of your memo from 60 to 75 lines (2 to 2.5 pages, 850 to 1150 words). Address your boss politely. Number your pages.

Assume the reader is your computer-savvy, but non-expert boss in a company with 20 or fewer employees. The boss has announced that the firm will buy new computers for some employees, those most needing one for their jobs. Justify why the firm will benefit from buying you (or your team) new computer(s). Be specific on why you need a new machine, what computer model with what features, and what price from what source. After the 2.2 pages of memo text, list all web and printed references used for your paper.
CSE/ISE 300
Two-Page Memo2: Paper & Email due 13 Oct.

Write a technical essay in English on the topic: Why I Need a New Work Computer

Explain why you need a new computer, what type, and how it will increase your value to the firm. (In doing so, let me know what is the business of your company, but in a way that will not bore your boss, who knows about the business, but not why you need a new machine for your own job.) Describe the key features of the new computer and why they are critical. Tell what brand, model, cost, and vendor precisely. (List websites with these details in a References section at the end.) Convince your boss to spend a little money.

(Cover page, salutation, headings, and the final References list do not count in the 2 to 2.5 pages. Just memo paragraphs count as text; feature lists, quoted material, and images do not. Headings do help your grade by improving the organization of your memo.)
CSE/ISE 300
Writing Center Help

The Writing Center in located in 2009 Humanities Building. Their telephone number is (631) 632-7405. It is a service of the Program in Writing & Rhetoric. They will give you free help with writing papers and reports, but you must make an appointment before you go to them for help. There may be a delay of several days.

ABC Format 10: Recommendation Report

Abstract
- Purpose of report
- Brief reference to problem to which recommendations respond
- Capsule summary of recommendations covered in report

Body
- Details about problem
- Well-organized description of recommendations
- Data that support recommendations (with reference to attachments)
- The main benefits of recommendations
- Any possible drawbacks

Conclusion
- Brief restatement of the main recommendations
- The main benefit of recommended change
- Your offer to help with the next step

Helpful Hints
Recommendation reports must be more persuasive than reports such as problem analyses. Yet any recommendations in your report must be well supported by facts and analysis. You want readers to see your recommendations as ideas that flow naturally and inevitably from facts in the report.
GCC
GENERAL
CONSULTING
CONTRACTORS

April 22, 2006
Big Muddy Oil Company, Inc.
12 Rankin Street
Abilene, TX 79224

ATTENTION: Mr. James Smith, Engineering Manager

SHARK PASS STUDY
BLOCK 15, AREA 43-B, GULF OF MEXICO

INTRODUCTORY SUMMARY
You recently asked our firm to complete a preliminary soils investigation at an offshore rig site. This report presents the tentative results of our study, including major conclusions and recommendations. A longer, formal report will follow at the end of the project.

On the basis of what we have learned so far, we believe that you can safely place an oil platform at the Shark Pass site. To limit the chance of a rig leg punching into the seafloor, however, we suggest you follow the recommendations in this report.
WORK AT THE PROJECT SITE

On April 16 and 17, 2006, GCC’s engineers and technicians worked at the Block 15 site in the Shark Pass region of the gulf. Using GCC’s leased drill ship, Atlantis, as a base of operations, our crew performed these main tasks:

- Seismic survey of the project study area
- Two soil borings of 40 feet each

Both seismic data and soil samples were brought to our Houston office for laboratory analysis.

LABORATORY ANALYSIS

On April 18 and 19, our lab staff examined the soil samples, completed bearing capacity tests, and evaluated seismic data. Here are the results of that analysis.

Soil Layers

Our initial evaluation of the soil samples reveals a 7–9 ft layer of weak clay starting a few feet below the seafloor. Other than that layer, the composition of the soils seems fairly typical of other sites nearby.
Memo and Report Examples: Pfeiffer 5th Ed. Text pg 73a

James Smith
April 22, 2006

Bearing Capacity

We used the most reliable procedure available, the XYZ method, to determine the soil's bearing capacity (that is, its ability to withstand the weight of a loaded oil rig). That method required that we apply the following formula:

\[ Q = cNv + tY \]

where

- \( Q \) = ultimate bearing capacity
- \( c \) = average cohesive shear strength
- \( Nv \) = the dimensionless bearing capacity factor
- \( t \) = footing displacement
- \( Y \) = weight of the soil unit

The final bearing capacity figure will be submitted in the final report, after we repeat the tests.

Seafloor Surface

By pulling our underwater seismometer back and forth across the project site, we developed a seismic "map" of the seafloor surface. That map seems typical of the flat floor expected in that area of the gulf. The only exception is the presence of what appears to be a small sunken boat. This wreck, however, is not in the immediate area of the proposed platform site.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of our analysis, we conclude that there is only a slight risk of instability at the site. Although unlikely, it is possible that a rig leg could punch through the seafloor, either during or after loading. We base this opinion on (1) the existence of the weak clay layer, and (2) the marginal bearing capacity.

Nevertheless, we believe you can still place your platform if you follow careful rig-loading procedures. Specifically, take these precautions to reduce your risk:

1. Load the rig in 10-ton increments, waiting 1 hour between loadings.
2. Allow the rig to stand 24 hours after the loading and before placement of workers on board.
3. Have a soils specialist observe the entire loading process, to assist with any emergency decisions if problems arise.

As noted at the outset, these conclusions and recommendations are based on preliminary data and analysis. We will complete our final study in three weeks and submit a formal report shortly thereafter.

GCC enjoyed working once again for Big Muddy Oil at its Gulf of Mexico lease holdings. I will phone you this week to see if you have any questions about our study. If you need information before then, please give me a call.

Sincerely,

Bartley Hopkins, Project Manager
ABC Format 11: Equipment Evaluation

Abstract
- Purpose of report
- Capsule summary of what report says about the equipment

Body
- Thorough description of equipment being evaluated
- Well-organized critique, either analyzing the parts of one piece of equipment or contrasting several pieces of similar equipment
- Additional supporting data, with reference to attachments

Conclusion
- Brief restatement of major findings, conclusions, or recommendations

Helpful Hints
Equipment evaluations give objective critiques about how equipment has functioned. Possible topics include machinery, tools, vehicles, software, and office supplies. Like a problem analysis, the equipment evaluation may focus on problems. Or, like a recommendation report, it may suggest a change. In any case, it must provide well-documented observations of the manner in which equipment has performed.
DATE: July 26, 2006
TO: Melanie Frank, Office Manager
FROM: Hank Worley, Project Manager
SUBJECT: Evaluation of Best Choice Software

INTRODUCTORY SUMMARY
When the office purchased one copy of Best Choice Software last month, you suggested I send you an evaluation after 30 days’ use. Having now used Best Choice for a month, I have concluded that it meets all our performance expectations. This memo presents our evaluation of the main features of Best Choice.

HOW BEST CHOICE HAS HELPED US
Best Choice provides five primary features: word processing, file management, spreadsheet, graphics, and a user's guide. Here is my critique of all five.

Word Processing
The system contains an excellent word-processing package that the engineers as well as the secretaries have been able to learn easily. This package can handle both our routine correspondence and the lengthy reports that our group generates. Of particular help is the system's 90,000-word dictionary, which can be updated at any time. The spelling correction feature has already saved much effort that was previously devoted to mechanical editing.

© 2011 Pearson Education, Inc.
File Management

The file-manager function allows the user to enter information and then to manipulate it quickly. During one three-day site visit, for example, a field engineer recorded a series of problems observed in the field. Then she rearranged the data to highlight specific points I asked her to study, such as I-beam welds and concrete cracks.

Spreadsheet

Like the system’s word-processing package, the spreadsheet is efficient and quickly learned. Because Best Choice is a multipurpose software package, spreadsheet data can be incorporated into letter or report format. In other words, spreadsheet information can be merged with our document format to create a final draft for submission to clients or supervisors, with a real savings in time. For example, the memo I sent you last week on budget projections for field equipment took me only an hour to complete; last quarter, the identical project took four hours.

Graphics

The graphics package permits visuals to be drawn from the data contained in the spreadsheet. For example, a pie chart that shows the breakdown of a project budget can be created easily by merging spreadsheet data with the graphics software. With visuals becoming such an important part of reports, we have used this feature of Best Choice quite frequently.
User’s Guide

Eight employees in my group have now used the Best Choice user’s guide. All have found it well laid out and thorough. Perhaps the best indication of this fact is that in 30 days of daily use, we have placed only three calls to the Best Choice customer-service number.

CONCLUSION

Best Choice seems to contain just the right combination of tools to help us do our job, both in the field and in the office. These are the system’s main benefits:

• Versatility—it has diverse functions
• Simplicity—it is easy to master

The people in our group have been very pleased with the package during this 30-day trial. If you’d like, we would be glad to evaluate Best Choice for a longer period.