



## **IT 520 Module One Short Paper Guidelines and Rubric**

This course includes five short business memos. These are designed to actively test your understanding and to apply that knowledge to potential real-world situations. These writing activities also provide practice in communicating your reasoning in a professional manner.

### **Prompt:**

#### **Team Building and Collaboration (Module One)**

International Gadgets is a company with offices throughout the United States and in Europe. There has been a history of miscommunication within office departments, between offices, and, most importantly, between the company and its wide customer base. You have been hired as a manager in the newly created communications department. The purpose of your position is to improve these problematic channels of communications.

#### **Company Background**

International Gadgets (IG) is a multinational company of 1,300+ employees and over \$4 billion in revenue. Headquartered in Manchester, New Hampshire, the company designs, manufactures, sells, and supports a variety of low- and high-tech business productivity tools.

IG has manufacturing facilities in Detroit, Michigan, and Shanghai, China, and sources component parts from suppliers in Vietnam, China, Brazil, and the United States. While IG maintains sales offices in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, London, Munich, Paris, Moscow, and Brussels, its products are sold throughout the United States and all of Europe and in China through a partner firm. IG employs both a direct sales force targeting its top 1,000 customers as well as selling via its website. Sales offices also include service and support operations, managed separately from the sales teams. The company is considering expanding more directly into China and exploring the possibility of opening a sales office in Beijing.

IG's current top-selling product is the OfficeDrone, designed for workplace monitoring. The OfficeDrone is a small unmanned aerial vehicle for indoor use that includes real-time video monitoring and a targetable built-in water pistol and reservoir. The OfficeDrone is marketed to management and security teams to break up water cooler conversations and other non-productive behaviors among groups of workers.

IG has introduced several new products and experienced rapid growth during the past year with many new employees in all departments. The management team has greatly expanded as well, including several first-time managers, and is experiencing difficulties in functioning as effectively as in the past. Communications within and between all parts of the organization, external partners, and suppliers and customers, are at serious risk of completely breaking down.

In a recent example, Detroit Manufacturing was unable to meet a product delivery deadline because of parts shortages from supplies. (The component parts originated in Brazil and had been seriously delayed due to a dockworker's strike at U.S. West Coast ports.) Manufacturing believed they had informed Sales of the delay, but Sales indicated they had never received that information and ended up losing the customer to a competitor. In another example, European sales were impacted when Switzerland unexpectedly devalued its currency, impacting IG's profitability. Revised profitability forecasts were provided by several of the

European sales offices, but others did not understand the request from the corporate office due to how it was worded, and the delay in response led to unnecessary costs.

Your first task is to hire a small team to address these issues. Write a memo to management describing the makeup and roles of your proposed team, what attributes you will be looking for in team members, and what you hope to accomplish with your new team. Be sure to offer solid reasoning in all areas of your memo.

### Rubric

**Guidelines for Submission:** Review the [Purdue Owl: Memo](#) website for suggestions and formatting guidelines on memo structure.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (90%)	Needs Improvement (70%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
<b>Description of Business Case</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and ideas are substantiated with specific and relevant details	Accurately describes the business case and uses specific details in explanation	Accurately describes the business case, but lacks specific details in explanation	Does not accurately describe the business	30
<b>Recommendations</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria with substantial detail for the rationale	Provides a discussion highlighting the recommendations, with sufficient detail for rationale	Provides a discussion highlighting the recommendations, but lacks sufficient detail for rationale	Does not provide a discussion highlighting the recommendations	30
<b>Conclusions</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and conclusions are substantiated with specific and relevant research	Draws informed conclusions that are justified with evidence	Draws logical conclusions, but does not defend with evidence	Does not draw logical conclusions	30
<b>Articulation of Response</b>	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy-to-read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	10
<b>Earned Total</b>					<b>100%</b>