



# FILE STRUCTURE

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# FILE

- A file is made up of:
  - Current file
  - Note file
- Current file consists of :
  - Communications received
  - Communications sent

# Fly Leaf

To distinguish the current and note files, a blue flyleaf should be attached to the current file on the top. It should be marked “Current file”. Nothing should be written on this flyleaf as it can be removed once the action in the file is completed and used in another file.

# Current File

❖ Papers in the current file are arranged:

- In Chronological order
- Previous paper on the top
- Neatly tagged together
- Page numbers on both sides of C.F.
- In Red Ink starting with one
- Blank pages too should be numbered



# Note File

- **1/2 or 1/3<sup>rd</sup> Margin**
- **Page No and NF.No on top**
- **Subject/ title**
- **Reference**
- **Broken into short paragraphs dealing with single point**

# Right and Left Margins

Besides the half and one third margins in the note, the margins should be given on the left side of page one and right side on the second page. This is to facilitate stitching the record. Once the file is disposed it is stitched like a book. When this is done if both sides margin is given at the same place some portion of the note will go in to the stitching. By giving margin at left and right sides, this is avoided.

# Referencing

**Whenever a note is put up, proper referencing should be done. The first reference written in the note file is the communication received from outside.**

# Flagging

- Flags should be indicated in Alphabetical order as A, B, C Etc.
- Care should be taken to see that no alphabet comes second time.
- Care should be taken to see that the flags are kept in such a way that catches the eye.
- If number of flags are attached, flag A should be kept at the bottom, B above, C on B and so on.
- Care should be taken to see that one flag does not cover the other flag.

# LINKING FILES

**If some matter in any pending file need to be referred to :**

- **Put up file (reference file) to be kept under the file which is under consideration (main file)**
- **Strings of upper file pad tied to back of the pad**
- **Strings of lower file tied around upper file**
- **Slips indicating TOP FILE FOR ORDERS/  
L.F. FOR REFERENCE**
- **L.F. for REFERENCE to be pinned to flaps of upper and lower pads, respectively**

# Oral discussion: Minutes

All points emerging from discussions between two or more Officers in a meeting and the conclusions reached will be recorded as minutes of the meeting. Confirmation of the outcome of the meeting ie. the minutes is to be signed by all the participating officers.



# Oral instructions by higher officers

Normally, it is incumbent on the superior officer to give his/her direction in writing regarding the manner of dealing with a case. In some occasions due to paucity of time at the disposal, the instructions have been given orally. The oral instructions thus given may be confirmed in writing at the earliest opportunity. If such instructions are not from the immediate superior, it is to be brought to his/her notice. In case the orders not confirmed in writing at a later date, it is necessary that the person putting up the note should indicate the action taken by him/her on such oral orders and bring it to the competent authority and take his/her post approval.

# A NOTE

- **A note is a piece of writing intended for internal use within the organization.**
- **A Note contains remarks recorded on a case under consideration to facilitate its disposal**

**A Note...**

**Facilitates/ensures comprehensive examination**

**Provides written record of decision taken and justification thereof**

**Constitutes proof of approval/orders by the competent authority**

**Ensures consistency of approach**

**Provides historical and evidential material**

# Content of a note

- **Statement of the case of problem**
- **Relevant facts and figures**
- **Procedure prescribed and precedents**
- **Law /rules etc on the subject and their application**
- **Views/advice of others if any consulted**
- **Possible course of action**
- **Implications (legal, social administrative, financial ) of the various options available**
- **Suggested course of action**

# How to Write a note

- Simply worded (logically sequenced and with good readership appeal)
- Factually correct (fact based)
- Non repetitive (by drawing attention through references on the margin or in the body of the Note esp. for those which can be referred by Nos. and dates)
- Referenced(to achieve economy of words and comprehensiveness)
- In short, numbered paragraphs of a few sentences (of about 10 words) each
- Signed in full and dated by the dealing hand (on the left hand bottom) and by the officers on the right hand bottom without wasting much space in between

# While writing a note

## Please Avoid....

- ✓ **Verbosity**
- ✓ **Long and complicated sentences**
- ✓ **Reproduction of rules/regulations**
- ✓ **Intemperate language**
- ✓ **Bias**

# Noting

- How it should be?
- Recorded on a note sheet (even at least one word should be carried over to the next page, instead of ending the note at the extreme bottom of the page at least extra black courtesy sheet should be added for further noting)
- Concise (comprehensive)
- Precise ( businesslike and to the point)
- Objective and unbiased (3<sup>rd</sup> person passive voice and double negative without being too prolix / clumsy)
- Polite (temperate language, when pointing out obvious mistakes statements too)



# How should a Note be...?

- (1) Complete**, i.e., it should answer all questions that have been raised and all other possible questions that may arise while considering the case. Answers to questions such as What, Why, How, When, Where, and Who will help in making the note complete.
- (2) Clear**, i.e., it should be written, as far as possible, choosing short, familiar words, using short sentences, in active voice, and preferring concrete expressions in place of abstract ones.
- (3) Concise and to the point**, i.e., it should not contain wordy expressions, or trite or unnecessary expressions, and should include only relevant statements. It should also avoid repetitions either of words or ideas.

# How should a Note be...?

**(4) Coherent**, i.e., it should be logically arranged, sticking to one idea for each paragraph, and linking together sentences and paragraphs.

**(5) Correct**, i.e., it should be factually correct, figures should be free from mistakes, and the writing should be grammatically correct.

**(6) Courteous**, i.e., it should express ideas tactfully, without hurting anybody's feelings, and emphasise positive facts. If apparent errors or incorrect statements in a case have to be pointed out or if an opinion expressed therein has to be criticized, care should be taken to couch the observations in courteous and temperate language free from personal remarks.

# How should a Note be...?

**(7) Organised properly**, i.e., it should put ideas in the best order for impact, reflecting clear thinking. The first paragraph should state the main point followed by paragraphs giving evidence and discussing it, and the final paragraph should contain recommendations.

**(8) Visually attractive**, i.e., it should be made attractive by dividing the note in serially numbered paragraphs, using headings liberally, and keeping the paragraphs of six to ten lines each. Where possible use bullets and other lists, and leave a small margin of about one inch on all sides (left, right, top and bottom).

# Noting - Routine or Repetitive Cases

**In cases of repetitive nature, 'a standard process sheet' which means a standard skeleton note should be developed indicating pre-determined points of check.**

# Problem Solving Cases

**In these cases, a detailed note providing maximum information on each aspect will be necessary. Even then, the note should be concise and to the point, covering the following aspects:-**

- (i) What is the problem?**
- (ii) How has it arisen?**
- (iii) What is the 'Rule', 'Policy' or 'Precedent'?**
- (iv) What are the possible solutions?**
- (v) Which is the best solution? Why?**
- (vii) What will be the consequences of the proposed solution?**



# Policy and Planning Cases

These types of cases would not be large in number and are normally dealt with at sufficiently higher levels of the organisation. They require a thorough examination with maximum amount of noting developed systematically. A note in such cases should be structured in the following manner: -

1. **Problem:** - State the problem. How it has arisen? What are the critical factors?
2. **Additional Information:** - Give additional information to size up the problem. The information would be available on the files and other papers in the Section. If sufficient information is not available to enable thorough examination, it should be collected before attempting a note.



**Contd...**

**3. Rule, policy etc:** - Relevant rules, regulations, policy, standing orders, practices are required to be referred to, wherever available. Logical interpretation of such rules etc. bringing out their bearing on the problem has to be put across in a cohesive manner.

**4. Precedents:** - Precedent cases having a bearing on the issue under consideration should be put up. If there are varying precedents or any precedent differs in certain respects from the case under examination, the difference should be brought out so as to arrive at a correct decision.

## Contd...

**5. Critical analysis:** - the case should then be examined on merits answering questions such as what are the possible alternative solutions/ which is the best solution? It should be ensured that views of other Departments etc. have been obtained where necessary. Attention should also be paid to other aspects like the financial and other implications, repercussions, and the modality of implementing the decision and the authority competent to take a decision.

**6. Concluding para:** - the concluding para should suggest a course of action for consideration. In cases where a decision is to be taken by the competent authority the point or points on which the decision is sought should be specifically mentioned.

# Drafting

**A draft is a rough sketch of a communication to be issued after approval by the officer concerned**

## **Points to be noted:**

### **✓ A draft should :**

**carry the exact messages sought to be conveyed  
be clear , concise and incapable of misconstruction  
result in the desired response from the received  
be divided into proper paragraphs, according to the logical  
sequence or order of ideas expressed in the draft  
contain references to previous correspondence, if any**

### **✓ Avoid:**

**Lengthy sentences, abruptness  
Repetition of words, observations or ideas  
Offending, discourteous language**

# DRAFTING-CHECK LIST

✓ **A draft should indicate the following:**

**File Number**

**The names and complete postal address of the sender organization**

**The name/designation of the addressee with complete postal address**

**Subject of the communication**

**Number and date of the last communication in the series (from the addressee or from the sender)**

**The enclosures which are to accompany the fair copy**

**Subscription**

**Urgency grading (By registered post/Spl. Messenger)**

**Name and Designation, signature of the sender form applicable should be carefully chosen**

# Types of Communication

- **Memo**
- **Letter**
- **DO letter**
- **Proceedings**
- **UO Note**
- **Office order**
- **Notices**
- **Circular, Telegram/telex /Email/  
Tel.Message/ Fax Message**

# Memo

**Memo No.A /1670/97 Dt**

**Sub**

**Ref**

**(in third person)**

**Sd/-**

**Designation**

**To**

**Address**



# Letter

**TM/Lr.No.A/1670/97 Dt**

**To  
Official Address  
Sir/Madam**

**Sub  
Ref**

**(in first person)**

**Yours faithfully**

**Sd**

**Designation**

# DO Letter

The purpose of DO letter is to draw personal attention of the addressee. The officer whoever receives a DO letter should take care to see that it is replied. In case more time is needed for furnishing the information etc called for in the DO Letter, intimate the position immediately. For this purpose it is advised that the PAs of the officers should maintain a DO letter Register and watch action on such communications. The officer should also check the register once in a fortnight to ensure prompt action.

# DO Letter

**DO Letter No.A/1670/97 dt**

**Sir(Respected Sir)**

**Dear Sri / My Dear**

**Sub**

**Ref**

**(in first person)**

**With regards**

**Yours Sincerely**

**Sd/**

**By Name**

**Name**

**Official Designation**

# Proceedings

**Proc.No.A/1670/97 dt**

**Present**

**Sri**

**Sub**

**Read**

**ORDER**

**Sanction is hereby accorded.....**

**Sd**

**Designation**

**Address**



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