



OPTION AND DECISION MEMOS

BASIC COMPONENTS

1. **Define the problem:** Why are you writing and why should the reader be interested?
2. **Summarize your findings**
3. **Step back and show how you got there:** Give a roadmap of the framework of your memo
4. **Generate criteria for evaluating options for change**
5. **Analyze each option according to your criteria:** What are the pros and cons? What's feasible? What are the predictable outcomes?
6. **Support assertions with relevant data**
7. **Consider qualifications, caveats, counterarguments**
8. **Suggest next steps or other implementation issues**

[Marie A. Danziger](#)

Lecturer in Public Policy

marie_danziger@harvard.edu

617-495-2686

HKS Communications Program

www.hkscommunicationsprogram.org

Twitter: @hkscommprog