

# Writing an Executive Summary

Executive summaries can take a number of forms. Some authors choose a narrative or paragraph style of writing the summary. Others prefer to utilize a bulleted format. The caveat for a bulleted format is that the bullets need to be substantive enough to explain what you, as author, mean. Sometimes bullets have a way of being so short they no longer convey the compelling message for the reader.

A bulleted format would like something like the following:

## MACRO ANALYSIS:

### Economic Analysis –

- relevant bullet
- relevant bullet
- relevant bullet

### Socio-Demographic Analysis –

- relevant bullet
- relevant bullet
- relevant bullet
- (and so on. . .)

## INDUSTRY/COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS:

### Bargaining Power of Buyers –

- relevant bullet
- relevant bullet

### Bargaining Power of Suppliers –

- relevant bullet
- relevant bullet
- (and so on. . .)

## DRIVING FORCES:

- relevant bullet
- relevant bullet

## CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS:

relevant bullet  
relevant bullet  
and so on...

This can be a highly efficient way of moving your reader through a lot of data points easily. The purpose of an executive summary is to provide a comprehensive overview of the critical elements of the strategic issues raised as a part of the analysis. You will not describe everything but convey the compelling information required to move your reader to your point of view. Every word in an executive summary is chiseled with the intention of moving your reader to your point of view, as this is the work of the strategic thought leaders in organizations.

While offering a comprehensive overview, the executive summary should be crafted to be concise, clear, and convey the vital and relevant information for the reader to act upon. Usually, an executive summary is presented in a setting where decision makers are reviewing information to develop actions plans for moving a business forward. As you developed your funnel analysis throughout this course readying yourself to write your executive summary, you may have found that one or two issues were relevant discussions in several sections of the funnel analysis. This only means that this is truly a strategic issue which should be paid attention to, and that it should become a discussable point in your overview or in some way resolved in the mind of the reader who has been told about the issue throughout the analysis.

If the summary is well developed, the executive summary should persuade the reader to agreement all by itself. You should have to have little if any discussion to persuade the reader to your point of view: Development of the summary should lead your reader to the conclusions you wish to have them act upon.

The display of data from your strategic funnel analysis will represent the vital few issues you wish me as reader to pay attention to and will finish with a series of alternatives. The alternatives should represent a broad and creative display of options which you as strategist have uncovered. Then, you will identify a vital few of those strategic alternatives to create a final list of strategic recommendations.

Strategic Recommendations will represent a series of statements about the vital few things you believe important to mediate risk, create competitive opportunities for your organization, and challenge the marketplace with new products and services to create new opportunities for market growth. The list will be a shorter list than represented in the alternatives list. After each strategic recommendation, you will create a statement which will identify for the reader how the idea will be funded. In other words, in order to take on new ideas, build products, open new markets, hire special talent, how will you fund the ideas. Some ideas for you to ponder might be sale of stock if it is a public company, End-of-life of outmoded technology and a streamlining of operations as a result to free up dollars, merger and acquisition, etc.

Remember, the executive summary is where you paint a compelling story for your ideas. Give it thought, be creative and push your own boundaries as a strategist representing your case company.