

Executive Summary Guidelines

General Comments

Your Executive Summary should be a **BRIEF** synopsis of your business plan. The summary should emphasize the major conclusions of your plan including the results of your market research, the relevant business experience of your management team and the customer needs that your products and services will meet.

Length

- **Maximum of four (4) pages** in length including any tables, graphs, photos and financials.

Specific Suggestions

The section headings suggested below should be regarded as the minimum for any executive summary and, by extension, for the business plan itself. Other sections may be needed to describe completely a particular venture. The section weights used in these guidelines were developed by sophisticated investors from around the country and indicate relative emphasis investors place on various parts of your summary.

Section 1. The Opportunity Presented by Your Products or Services

- Describe important features and user **benefits** – relate features of the products and services to market needs and to the competition.
- Explain proprietary position – trademarks, patents, trade secrets, special production skills, proprietary process, etc.
- Describe specific products and projects planned, their status, when due out, expected product life.
- Photographs or drawings of your product(s) are very informative.

Section 2. The Company

- Provide your business purpose. State the company's overall strategy and objectives.
- Give a brief summary of your company's history and current status.
- Describe your business model.

Section 3. The Market and Marketing Strategy

- Market analysis – size, anticipated growth, key changes, trends, etc.
- Competition – who are the competitors? How much of the market do they have? What is their strategic position? How will they react to your market entrance?
- Unique capabilities – what makes you different? What gives you a special advantage?
- Market strategy – how are you going to reach the market? What are your channels and costs of distribution, plans for promotion, pricing, etc.? How long is the sales cycle? Who makes the decision to buy?
- Discuss pricing and margins for both your products and your competitors' products.

Section 4. Management

Give brief backgrounds of key individuals, emphasizing **relevant** management expertise:

- Why each manager is perfect for the job.
- Specific value each adds to the company.
- Past successes and achievements.

Section 5. Financial Plan

Financial Summary

- Show projected revenues and net income for the first five years following funding. These can be shown graphically.
- Describe your exit strategy. How will your investors get their money back?
- Briefly discuss the major risks and how you plan to mitigate them.

Financial Needs

- List the funds required – how much you want to raise.
- List the planned uses of the funds – how you plan to spend the funds