**Executive Summary**

**An executive summary, always written last in a report,** is **a report in miniature**, usually written for an executive audience, **not to exceed one page**. The Executive Summary contains enough information for the readers to become acquainted with the full document without reading it. Managers, who are overseeing several projects simultaneously, will often only read the Executive Summary. Unless told otherwise, it usually contains these 3 sections:

* TASK: a statement of the problem and some background information/context,
* PROCESS: a description of the process the time engaged in and the alternatives,
* COCLUSION: A description of the final design and the major conclusions.

Anyone reading an executive summary should get a good idea of the main points of the document without becoming bogged down with details.

The Executive Summary, because of the audience who will read it, can be the most important part of a report. As such, it should be the best-written and most polished piece of the document. This degree of polish is needed because many readers may only look at the Executive Summary when deciding whether or not to read the entire document. In short, you may expect that an Executive Summary will be read more frequently and by more people than will your entire report.

Your Executive Summary should not be misleading, but it should give readers the same understanding as if they had read the entire report. It is an encapsulation of the entire project and the team’s final design, explaining why this is the best solution to your design problem.

When writing an executive summary:

* omit any preliminaries, details, and illustrative examples.
* include the main ideas, the facts, and the necessary background to understand the problem, the alternatives, and the major conclusions. And be brief and concise.

**Do not merely string together excerpts from the larger report**; instead:

* go over the entire document while making notes of the elements you consider important;
* from your notes, create a rough draft of the summary;
* polish what you have written until it is smooth and seamless without unnecessary wordiness;
* omit any introductory or transitional material;
* and finally, ensure that your executive summary is accurate and representative of your full document.

(Source: *Technical Communication in the 21st Century*

By Sidney I. Dobrin, et. al. Prentice Hall, 2010.)