

One Page That Matters

The executive summary or "one-pager" is an essential document for startups looking to work with investors - this overview explains how to do one.



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Investors often talk about a "one-pager" and by that, they mean your executive summary. The executive summary is an at-a-glance fact sheet summarizing everything important about your business. Although it may be a hassle to create, it is vitally important.

What is the purpose of an executive summary?

An executive summary serves several purposes:

1. It provides a condensed quick reference guide to your business in a format the typical reader (an investor) is going to find familiar.
2. It is a chance to demonstrate the clarity of your thinking and your communication skills.
3. It is a piece of "collateral" that an investor can use to discuss your company with other investors and solicit their input--it reduces friction by saving investors the trouble of having to re-summarize the company themselves, keeping your description intact.
4. It gives visual learners an easy way to quickly absorb your business vs. having to read many pages of documentation.

How much weight do investors give the one pager?

They count for a lot. Executive summaries are the basic currency of the startup investing world. They are often the only material a potential investor will read before deciding whether to engage further. Nothing beats a face-to-face meeting if you can get one, and the executive summary is often the ticket to that meeting. And it can create investor-to-