**Writing an Executive Summary**

**Jack Mottley**

From WikiHow:

“The executive summary is the most important part of a business document. It is the first (and sometimes the only) thing others will read and the last thing you should write. It is simply a brief summary of the document, given so that the busy people who will read your document know at a glance how much to read and what actions will probably be needed. . . . An executive summary is different from an abstract. An abstract gives the reader overview and orientation, while an executive summary gives the reader more of a summary. Abstracts are more commonly written in academia, while executive summaries are used more for business purposes.

Most authoritative sources who write executive summaries agree that certain stylistic and structural guidelines should apply. These include:

* Paragraphs should be short and concise.
* Executive summaries should make sense even if you haven't read the original report.
* Executive summaries should be written in language that is appropriate for the target audience.

An executive summary needs to clearly define a problem, whether it's supply-chain management or marketing campaigns overseas. Executive summaries, especially, need clear definitions of problems because the documents that they are based on, Requests For Proposals (RFP), are often written by technical people with a poor grasp of conceptual issues. Make sure the problem is defined in clear, understandable terms.”

OK, so you are not writing a summary of a business plan. I want you to write a summary for your immediate superior, convincing them you know what was done in the lab, what the purpose was, and that you understand the outcomes.