Capstone
Executive Summary

A summary of your paper. An Executive Summary is typically ½ to 1 ½ pages. This is a very important part of your paper for your client and others he or she may distribute it to because many others will only read this part in order to determine whether to read the rest. Your focus should be on briefly summarizing your purpose, findings, and recommendations.

Many students put too much background in the Executive Summary. Remember, this summary is primarily for the client. He or she already knows about their agency. Focus on your results.

Executive Summaries also should not discuss research literature extensively. As noted, the focus is on these three things: your purpose, your findings, and your recommendations.

This section is usually the last thing you write.

Sample Executive Summaries follow:
Executive Summary A

In Colorado’s 2009 legislative session Senate Bill 09-295 was proposed. Part of this legislation would grant Colorado’s institutions of higher education the flexibility to set their tuition rates without a limit. Currently institutions in Colorado have flexibility to increase their tuition up to a cap set by General Assembly. A tuition flexibility policy would end the General Assemblies power to set tuition rates. After the 2009 legislative session ended Senate Bill 09-295 failed, however similar legislation is highly likely to be proposed in upcoming legislative sessions. In a response to Senate Bill 09-295 the Colorado Department of Higher Education requested an analysis of the impacts of tuition flexibility, specifically on the Metropolitan State College of Denver. Metro State was chosen for analysis because of the demographic population it serves, which is low-income and minority students. It is reasoned that lower income and minority students would have a more difficult time paying for high tuition increases.

To do an analysis of the impacts of tuition flexibility on Metro State I developed a Microsoft excel model that generated five different scenarios in FY 09-10 & FY 10-11 of what the impacts of high increases tuition would have on the tuition revenue of the institution, enrollment of students, and financial aid.

My results were that for FY 09-10 it is financially feasible for Metro State to backfill its $9.9 million state appropriations cut with a large tuition increase of 14%. Metro State can increase its additional operating revenue higher, however any amount over $15 million would lead to declines in enrollment. It is possible for Metro State to use increases in revenue to buy-down tuition increases to 5% and less for the neediest students in both FY 09-10 & FY10-11. Finally, I recommend that policymakers must consider tuition flexibility as a long-term policy instead of a temporary initiative.
Executive Summary B

At a time when charitable giving is at an all–time low in Colorado (Colorado ranks 43 of states in charitable giving), efficient and effective development is vital for the stability of local nonprofits in Colorado, and thus nonprofit federations and workplace giving campaigns have become the means to do just that. For the past twenty years, Community Shares of Colorado has provided this service to various nonprofits, both big and small, in Colorado through their workplace-giving program. Each year Community Shares adds new member organizations looking for another means to tap into the billions donated annually by individuals.

Community Shares, the second largest nonprofit Alternative Fund in Colorado attempted to understand just how effectively they are fulfilling their mission by conducting a member agency survey and donor survey. The purpose of the current study was two fold: First, the CSC Board of Directors wanted to learn the opinions and attitudes of member agencies, or more specifically, how agencies felt about membership applicant requirements, meeting requirements and volunteer requirements. The second purpose of the study was to learn more about Community Shares’ donor base.

MEMBER AGENCY SURVEY FOUND…

- Member agencies overall are satisfied with membership requirements, but feel they can be vague and a bit ambiguous at times

- Member agencies agree that the membership requirement “excellent leadership from staff and volunteers” is too vague and should be expanded

- The agency narrative should be more informative and at a minimum require a mission statement and description of services and programs.

- Member agencies send representatives to meetings at least 90 percent of the time and when they can’t its due to a lack of staff or the timing and/or location prevent attendance.

- If the meeting structure were changed, a significant proportion of members feel that the summer meeting should become optional and only the winter meeting be mandatory.

- Members believe volunteers hours to be fair, but should be decreased to 15 hours.
The lack of available staff and/or service opportunities prevents member agencies from completing the required hours.

DONOR SURVEY FOUND….

- CSC donors are “Idealist” i.e. donate an average of 2.5 percent of their income, volunteer less time than other segments, have an above average income, are predominantly Caucasian, are likely to be under 35 years old, married, and consider religion not to be important.

- The donors are more globally minded than other donor segments and believe in supporting change through political means.

- The donors are also relevantly new supporters with in the past five-year and give only 19 percent of their donations to Community Shares with an average donation of $50 to $250.

- The majority of the donors only plan some of their giving with single donations averaging below $1000.

- Donors feel CSC communications are efficient and effective and contribute to a high level of trust from the donor.

- Donors would like to receive more information on how CSC uses their donation.

- Gift recognition is of low priority for donors, as a thank you letter would suffice as adequate recognition.
Executive Summary C

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs surveyed Colorado municipalities in 1983, 1992, and 2004, about their land use practices and regulations. The purpose of the survey was not only to gather information about land use regulations of municipalities for its purely academic value, but to gather information that might display trends, provide examples for municipalities seeking models, and allow the Department to target its technical resources in areas where it might have the greatest effect.

As might be expected, the survey reveals that use of land use tools among municipalities is increasing, and municipalities are using an increasingly sophisticated and wide variety of tools to accomplish their objectives. It is impossible to link these trends to specific legislation or statewide policy changes. Rather, it is more likely that these trends are in response to the increased population growth and corresponding boundary changes, which force municipalities to explore greater cooperation, and different land use tools, to achieve their community's vision.

For example, the survey reveals a dramatic increase in the use of intergovernmental agreements, not only for growth management purposes, but also to achieve general land use objectives.

The information will prove useful not only to the Department of Local Affairs and the Colorado Municipal League, but also to municipalities seeking to identify general land use practices to emulate, or seeking comparisons with similarly situated municipalities.