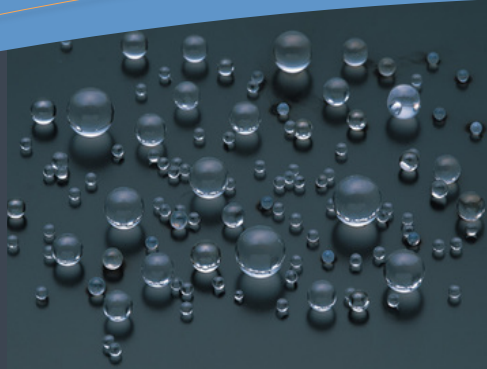


NotaBene has launched a new Workshop

It is with great success that NotaBene has delivered workshops on Executive Brief Writing to large pharmaceutical companies this autumn.

The executive brief is the most important part of a business document. It is sometimes the only document others will read. It is the document that presents your ideas and goal so that executives can take a glance and be able to talk about a complex subject, which they have just been introduced to. In this way the executive can get an idea of what actions should be taken to meet the objectives .



Failure to Prepare is Preparing to Fail – Executive Brief Writing

It is an art and a discipline to prepare complex information and present it in a brief and concise manner. Throughout our lives we have practiced how to keep people's attention so they can hear our message, but we are not always equally prepared for questions posed. Every parent can relate to the following scenario: 'So sweetie how was your day and what did you do?' The child looks at you and then in detail describes every little and big thing. If your child is very talkative and goes on and on, you will probably say 'how interesting', but think 'could I get the short version'. On some days the child has experienced so much that it's too complex to answer the parent's question and will reply: 'I did nothing'.

Neither too much information nor too little information is what the receiver is looking for. When writing an executive brief, we need to be in between these two answers illustrated from the child's briefing to the parent. When writing an executive brief, whether it is the CEO of a medical company meeting with the Minister of Trade of a new market or it is the president dining with the queen of England, there are certain etiquettes that have to be followed.

Etiquettes have to be followed, but even the best can fail, as when President Obama mentioned 'Her Majesty the Queen' a bit too early in his

speech, and the orchestra began playing before Obama finished his toast. It is an etiquette that every time the word 'the queen' is mentioned the orchestra starts to play. Anyway even the best experience mishaps now and then. The most important thing is to be prepared. As Benjamin Franklin once said: Failure to prepare is preparing to fail. This applies in all aspects of life and business.

Remember that your purpose for writing an executive brief is to provide an overview or preview to an audience who may or may not have time to read the whole report carefully. Usually the CEO only has 30 minutes to convince the Minister to sign a deal, letting the company open factories in the new market. It is vital that he clearly states his objective, links it to the meeting and conveys his message, so he can round off by thanking the delegation and summarizing the next steps and hopefully signing the deal. It is crucial to be prepared and not let a chance go by, by not being prepared.





Checklist For Executive Brief Writing

Double check your wording in the document by:

- Going through and finding key words and using those words to organize a draft of your summary.
- Looking for words that enumerate (first, next, finally).
- Using words that express causation (therefore, consequently).
- Stressing words that signal essentials (basically, central, leading, principal, major) .
- Finally using words that contrast (however, similarly, more than, less likely).
- Use the imperative verb, which calls for action.

Ask the Editor

Do you have a question you would like us to answer or a topic you would like us to discuss, please send an email to

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NotaBene Newsletter Issue 07 November 2011



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