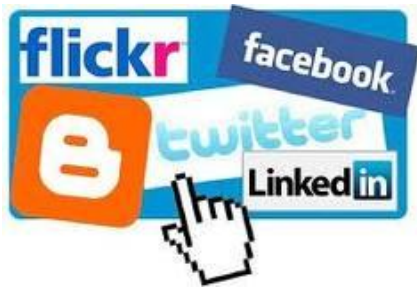


## Delivering Effective Business Presentations



### Assignment 08

## Writing an Executive Summary

**Deadline:** 9:00 AM Wednesday, Nov 17  
**Value:** 60 points

### Background

Your boss, Mark Widdel, is a small business owner who is wondering whether or not he should seriously consider the use of social networking to increase customer traffic and sales for one or all of his companies. Mark operates a small business empire of diverse companies that currently include:

- a lawn care/landscaping company and a snow removal company
- a three-store chain of coffee shops
- a service company that provides the installation and repair of home entertainment and home office technologies
- a small-town hardware store
- an independent bakery
- a website and graphic design company
- a sales office for a breadth of financial products targeting individual investors, senior citizens, and small companies.

Mark has a list of articles that he has collected but hasn't had the time to review. He decided to delegate the task of reviewing the articles to his staff members. He expects each employee to read the articles and condense the relevant points of all of them into a single, one-page document known as an executive summary.

On a date to be determined, the staff will meet to online discuss their recommendations as to whether or not the use of the primary tools of social networking should be used to generate business for some or all of the companies.

### Directions

**Step 1:** Read the five articles/reports about the use of social networking by small businesses that are posted on the class website.

Limit your reading to these five sources. This is not a research project, so don't look to more sources than what you have been given.

**Step 2:** Write a **one-page** executive summary that states the question attempting to be answered, presents the relevant findings from the given resources and contains a recommendation for future action.

Your summary should include these sections. *Use these topics as section headings.*

1. The Question
2. Major Findings
3. Recommendation(s) For Future Action

#### **Format Requirements:**

- Create an appropriate title for the document
- Use section headings to cue your reader
- Use a standard font and page setup.
- Use single spacing with blank lines between.
- Bullet or itemize your major findings and recommendations
- Include your assignment information in the top line of the document.
- Check your spelling and use good business grammar.
- After stating a finding, state the source. Use these...

(Schwartz) for *More small businesses use Twitter, Facebook...*

(Kindelan) for *Report: Small Businesses Not Ready...*

(RatePoint) for *Small Business Uncertain About Social Media Use...*

(AmEx Open) for *Small Business Owners Poised to Capitalize...*

(Rubin) for *Is Social Media Really Worth Your Time?*

Step 3: Save the document as **Your Name Exec Summary**

Step 4: Upload your completed document to the **Exec Summary** drop box in D2L.

#### **Additional Things to Consider**

Please note that this is NOT a research report. An executive summary is a document that provides the highlights of articles, reports, broadcast reports, etc., to someone who needs the information but doesn't have the time to obtain it him or herself.

Be careful

- it's not your job to interpret the information in these source articles. It's your job to cull through the information and present what is relevant to the question that is asked.
- your conclusions must be based upon the facts that are presented in the articles.
- your recommendations are not the most important part of this summary. The major findings are most important.
- your recommendations for future action should be conservative.

Successful completion of this assignment sets you up to participate in the online meeting where a discussion of your findings will take place. If you don't complete this assignment, you won't be able to participate in the meeting.

## **Scoring Criteria**

### **The Question**

- ✓ The central question was correctly stated.

### **Major Findings**

- ✓ Relevant findings from the five information sources were identified and concisely summarized.
- ✓ Sufficient findings were presented.
- ✓ Each of the findings had a direct relationship to the question.
- ✓ Each of the findings was a statement of fact or a logical conclusion based upon fact.

### **Recommendations for Future Action**

- ✓ The recommendations for future action were based on the stated findings.
- ✓ The recommendations were realistic.

### **Other Factors**

- ✓ The formatting requirements were met.
- ✓ The writing should reflect standards of professional business writing.
- ✓ The document was submitted by deadline.