Creating An Executive Summary

Good marketing materials should start with an "Executive Summary" that gives a clear overview of what your business is about.

Here are the five elements of an executive summary:

1. Problem – Make it crystal-clear that you understand what your prospects are experiencing by discussing their problems, pains or predicaments.

2. Solution – Discuss what's possible or what things will be like when your prospects' problems are solved.

3. How come? – Discuss why your prospects are stuck in #1 and not doing #2.

4. What you need to do – Discuss the basic steps necessary for your prospects to resolve their problems.

5. Call to Action – A statement of who you are, what you do, how you can help, and an invitation to the prospect to pick up the phone.

Applying the formula to your marketing materials

One of the biggest mistakes I see with clients is that they start with #4 and #5 first. They tell everything they do to solve the problem before there is agreement that there is even

a problem to solve.

And you wonder why people are not interested in what you do. Well guess what, they aren't! They first want to know that you understand their situation and then they want to know how you can help them.

This Five-Step model provides the perfect template for simple, direct and persuasive marketing materials that do just that. It gives you the format for creating an Executive Summary about your business and your services that speaks directly to the needs of your prospective clients.

Your Executive Summary can be printed on one or two pages and can serve as the first part of a complete marketing package. The same format can be used for the opening text on your web site's home page.

Here's an example using this Executive Summary format with an IT consulting company.

First, a headline with your Core Marketing Message

"We help IT companies retain their best talent."

1. Problem – Tell them what's not working.

"These days, the biggest challenge in big IT departments is keeping talented staff.

In a survey of the 20 largest IT departments in banking, for

instance, the average attrition rate is 27% per year, costing each organization over $3.8 million in recruitment costs annually."

2. Solution – Tell them how it could be.

"Research also proves that the top reason for attrition is not poor compensation or lack of challenging work, but poor management by those directly above them.

The good news is that when management approaches change, people stay, saving companies hundreds of thousands, if not millions each year."

3. How come? – Why haven't you already solved this?

"Highly competent technical people are the ones most often promoted to management positions, however they only receive in-depth management training 16% of the time. This leaves 84% of those in technical management positions with few skills in the area of people or project management."

4. What you need to do – An approach that's proven to work.

"The best investment IT departments can make is providing in-depth management training and coaching. It is the number one defense against attrition, low productivity and declining morale. Such training needs to be seen as an investment,

not as an expense, as it can show a return of 500% or more."

5. Call to action – Prove that you can help them.

"Since 1987, IT Management Solutions has been helping some of the largest IT departments in America attract and retain top talent by developing top management and teams through our guaranteed consulting and training services. Please give us a call to discuss how we can help you with your IT challenges."

For an excellent Executive Summary created by what is now a very successful small business coaching firm, Heart of Business:

http://actionplan.com/abdo/ES-Heart-Business.pdf