

Building on previous quantum CPU successes with carbon and hydrogen atoms, the QCPU uses proprietary technology and is built around the following: a Quantum Molecular Matrix, which provides the atomic material; an NMR sensor, which reads the spin states of the atoms; an RF assembly, which provides phased array RF illumination of individual atoms, and a magnetic field coil, which establishes the required fixed magnetic field

Notice the substantive details included in the informative abstract. Also, notice how some materials, such as those related to George Yamaslute and the genesis of the device, have been omitted from the abstract. The fact that Yamaslute demonstrated the feasibility of quantum computing in 1998 was not deemed important enough to be included in the abstract's summary of the report's key points. Writing these kinds of abstracts often requires some tough decisions about what stays and what goes.

### What Are Executive Summaries?

An *executive summary* is normally used with large technical reports, such as formal proposals, and other fully developed business or technical documents. Executive summaries are extended, stand-alone abstracts that have both informative and descriptive characteristics. They contain both the substance and the structure of the report. In fact, an executive summary often substitutes for the full report. It is analogous to the class review notes one picks up in the bookstore to avoid buying and reading the course text. Of course, teachers always say that these notes are no substitute for the real book, and they are not—but, as we all know, they can work to some extent depending on the class and the teacher.

In a similar vein, executive summaries are designed to provide key management and staff with enough information about what is in a report that these executives can make informed decisions without reading the entire document. They can always

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go back and read the document, if warranted—or, more likely, have experts on staff read and analyze the complete report.

Executive summaries can be large documents. Major, formal, multivolume proposals often have executive summaries of 30 pages or more. In fact, a common rule of thumb is that the length of an executive summary should be about 10 percent of the length of the report it summarizes. Also, because these summaries often take the place of the report for key decision-makers, executive summaries can take on critical importance and must be well written.

### Writing Executive Summaries

Writing executive summaries is a challenging undertaking. Your task is to capture as much of the full report's substance as is reasonable, or feasible, in a fraction of the full report's space. To do so, you need a good strategy, especially if the report you are summarizing is complex and extensive. You cannot possibly include everything, so you have to think through exactly what to include and what to leave out of the summary.

A good approach for doing that is to go back to the original purpose of the report. Evaluate everything in the report in terms of (1) how much it contributes to achieving that purpose and (2) how extensive the treatment would have to be if you were to include it. Then include only those portions that contribute the most to the goal of the report and that can be handled effectively in a summary.

an example of an executive summary, this chapter will summarize this entire book—and, in the process, provide you with a ready-made set of review notes for the book. What is the strategy for boiling down all this material into a few pages? Obviously, not everything in this book can be included. Some guiding principles for what to include need to be defined before we start writing the already mentioned, a good idea is back to the purpose of the original document.