

## GENERIC COMPONENTS OF BRIEFING BOOKS

Before writing your briefing book, consider the “hub and spokes” analogy regarding organization--the hub of the wheel representing the key theme and the spokes representing individual findings or recommendations. This type of organization will ensure that:

- Each finding or recommendation emanates from the central theme
- therefore, if a finding or recommendation is rejected by a briefee, the central theme is still valid.

Note that among the following generic components only the Title Page, Executive Summary, and Table of Contents are required for this exercise. The other components are optional, depending upon the contents of your briefing and your decisions about priorities, given your page limit.

### Possible Components

#### **Title Page**

#### **Executive Summary** (2-5 pages)

The equivalent of a cover memo, personalized to the recipient(s). Summarizes the main components of your briefing book, including key findings or recommendations.

#### **Table of Contents** with page numbers

The challenge here is to break up your analysis into meaningful sections that display the framework of your thought. The T of C serves as another kind of Executive Summary.

(The Executive Summary and Table of Contents are usually at the beginning of a briefing book, and the Index at the end. Other components should be in an order appropriate and most helpful for your particular briefees.)

#### **Background**

Problem statement  
Key facts and figures  
Previous studies or experiences, in the U. S. or elsewhere

#### **Option(s) for Change**

Most likely alternatives  
Pros and cons re: economic, political, and management feasibility

#### **Interest Groups**

Synopses of their views  
What are their priorities?  
Which alternatives do they and don't they support?

**Key Legislation**

- Existing legislation that affects options or recommendations
- Proposed legislation that would affect options or recommendations

**Findings or Recommendations** (*if appropriate*)

- The challenges are to link findings or recommendations:
  - Clearly and explicitly to the problem definition
  - Clearly and explicitly to the analysis

**Implementation**

- Economic, political, and management feasibility
- Short- and long-term goals

**Graphics:** *Potential Uses*

- Summarize background info
- Illustrate key facts
- Emphasize key contrasts
- Illustrate an old or new process (flow chart)
- Illustrate the make-up of an organization
- Lay out a timetable

**Appendices**

- Additional facts & figures (in graphic format?)
- Details of formulas, regression analyses, etc.
- Discussions of methodologies

**Index**

- Helps briefee quickly locate key information
- Includes alphabetized subjects the briefers consider important
- Also includes subjects the briefees might consider important

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