

# 1

## Introduction



Formerly called a “T-Letter”, an **Executive Summary** is a special kind of cover letter that allows job applicants to provide visual evidence of their suitability for a particular position, intentionally laid out as a point-by-point comparison of the core job requirements matched against their strongest qualifications. Since the comparison block of this letter resembles the letter “T”, a common term for this type of cover letter is a **T-Letter**. Within the ETP Network, the term “Executive Summary” is preferred over “T-Letter” because it helps to promote the mind-set of being the CEO of one’s own career management business.

Executive Summaries must be written using clear, concise and powerful language so that the candidate presents a **compelling** and **unambiguous** case in defense of his or her qualifications for the position.

# 2

## High Level View of an Executive Summary

**CHRISTOPHER LIPSMEYER**  
846 Cameron Way  
Phoenix, AZ 85012  
(602) 555-0160 chris-lipsmeyer@provider.net

December 10, 20—

Mr. Gary Whaley  
District Sales Manager  
Computerferals Company  
1 Computer Way  
Rallings City, NY 10099

Dear Mr. Whaley:

Computerferals has earned my respect. I have used and repaired peripherals from most of the leading manufacturers in my studies as a Business Systems/Computer Repair major and in my job as a sales representative at ComputerChoice. I know you build quality products, and I want to sell quality products—Computerferals.

Careful review of my qualifications and the requirements of a sales representative at Computerferals suggests that I am well qualified for a sales position with your organization.

Your Requirements	My Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ability to handle multiple prospects</li> <li>■ Proven ability to meet sales goals</li> <li>■ Ability to expand sales in existing accounts</li> <li>■ Strong communication and follow-up skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Expanded customer base from 137 to 183 accounts in the past year—a 34 percent increase</li> <li>■ Increased yearly sales from \$743,000 to \$1,236,000—exceeded goal by 66 percent</li> <li>■ Negotiated a new \$250,000 service contract for an existing client with five locations</li> <li>■ Attained 100 percent customer retention through a service-first approach and frequent communication</li> </ul>

The expanding market for Computerferals presents an appealing challenge. Even if you have no current sales openings, I would appreciate meeting with you to discuss your requirements. My resume is enclosed for your convenience. I will call next week to request an appointment, or you may reach me at the contact information above. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,  
*Christopher Lipsmeyer*  
Christopher Lipsmeyer

Enclosure

Introduction

T-Display Block

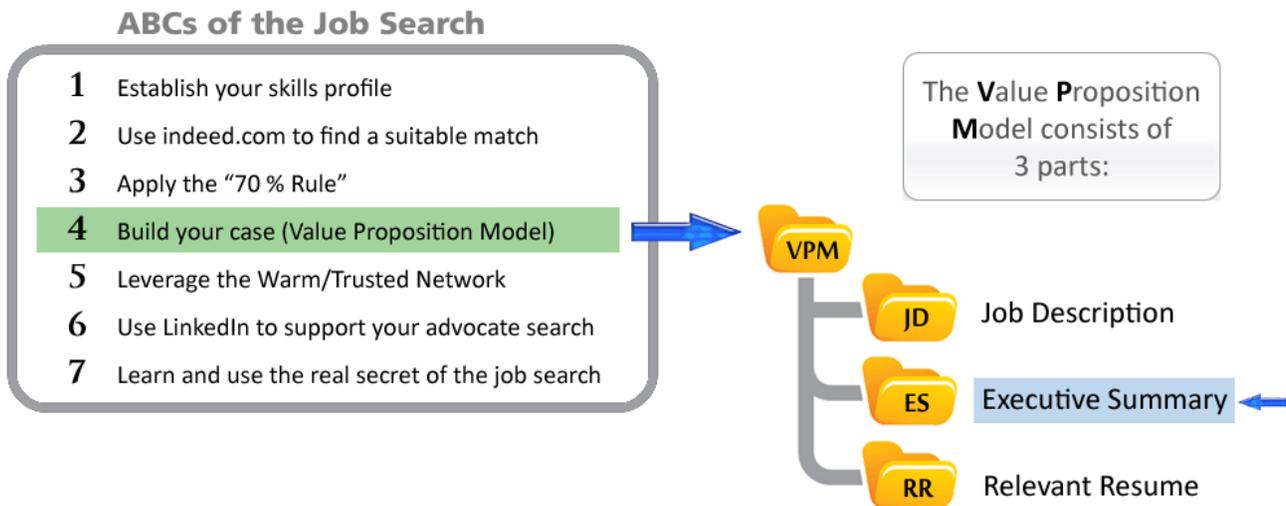
Closing

*The basic structure of an Executive Summary is shown at left. Since it is a cover letter, it needs a powerful introduction and closing. But its primary attribute is the “T”-Display Block in the center which gives individuals the opportunity to make their case for the job. If candidates can show a “dead on” match between the position’s core requirements and their qualifications, they have just provided powerful and compelling evidence for being advanced to the interview stage.*

# 3

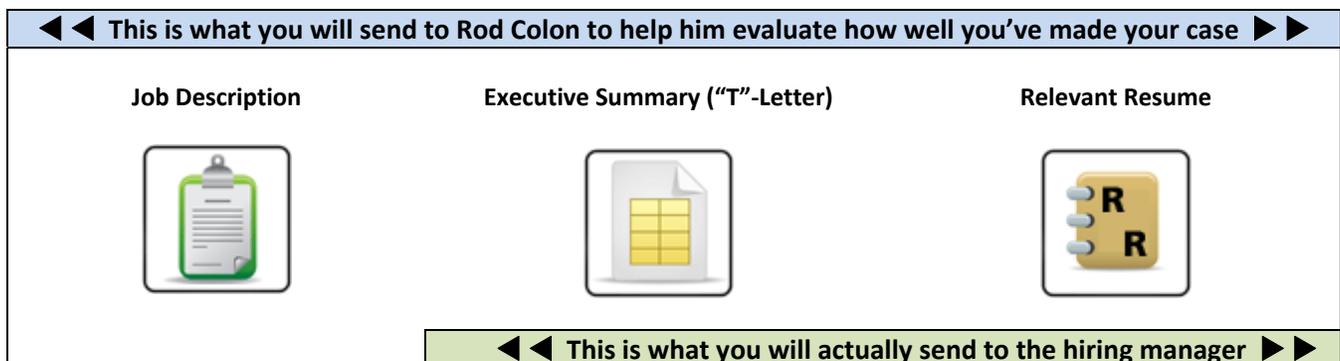
## The Executive Summary is Part of the Value Proposition Model

To understand what an Executive Summary is and its vital role in helping individuals to obtain interviews, it's helpful to take a high-level view of its position and sequence within the ETP Network's **ABCs of the Job Search**. Let's take a look:



After completing **Steps 1 – 3** (shown above left with the rest of the 'ABCs' steps), **Step 4** tells us that we need to "build our case" for the job. In the ETP Network, the "case" we're referring to is called a **Value Proposition Model (VPM)**, or more simply, a **Value Proposition**.

The Value Proposition Model itself consists of three documents: **(1)** The Job Description; **(2)** The Executive Summary (formerly known as a "T"-Letter); and **(3)** The Relevant Resume.



It is at this step in the ABC model that candidates develop a specific, point-by-point comparison of their unique skills matched against specific requirements as posted in the original job description. **This document will become their Executive Summary for that specific job description.**

4

**How Do I Create an Effective Executive Summary?**

1



Based on search results you've obtained from using indeed.com (or other search engines), find a job posting for which you are a good fit. You need to be a **70% or better match for the job requirements** in order to have a better-than-even chance of advancing to the interview stage.

2



Using the job description, highlight the most important requirements. Try to think like the hiring manager when selecting the top 4 – 7 requirements for this position. Make sure you are highlighting requirements that involve specific skills, not generalized requirements or so-called "soft skills."

3



Now list the top 4 – 7 requirements going down the left-hand side of the "T-Display Block". Each requirement gets its own bullet. Important: If you are not absolutely sure you are listing the TOP 4 – 7 requirements, the rest of your work may become a wasted effort. **GET HELP ON THIS STEP FROM ROD COLON.**

4



Now, for each requirement bullet you've listed, carefully write a "qualification" bullet that shows how your experience matches that requirement. Write short but powerful phrases and make sure your responses capture three things:

- 1) **What** have you done that demonstrates mastery of this skill?
- 2) **Where** did you do it? (i.e., what company or organization); and
- 3) What was the **impact**? (e.g., "saved company \$45 million in admin. costs").

5



Make sure you are "answering" each of the company's "requirement bullets" with each of your "qualification bullets." **IMPORTANT: The best strategy is to write these bullets as one-for-one match-ups; resist the temptation to "load" several qualification bullets for each listed requirement bullet.**

► Note: You'll see several reminders of this point throughout the rest of this job aid.

# 5

## Specific Tips and Suggestions

### Tip # 1 . . . Be sure to identify the “core skills” in the job requirements.

In order to develop the most powerful Executive Summary possible, you need to make sure that the requirements you’ve pulled out of the job description represent “core skills” (skills you can readily demonstrate and prove you have) rather than the more generalized “soft skills” (responsibilities, duties, etc...) that many people can easily claim.

Are you a 70% or better match on the requirements?



ORIGINAL JOB DESCRIPTION

YOUR POSTED REQUIREMENTS	MY QUALIFICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requirement # 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification # 1 (what + where + impact)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requirement # 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification # 2 (what + where + impact)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requirement # 3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification # 3 (what + where + impact)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requirement # 4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualification # 4 (what + where + impact)</li> </ul>



Make sure the requirements you list in this column represent core skills, not general (or soft) skills.

**Tip # 2 . . . Write “one for one” qualification bullets that answer 3 key questions.**



When you write your “qualification bullets” (the responses to each requirement bullet), be sure you observe the following points:

- Each requirement bullet must be “answered” by only one qualification bullet. Some people make the mistake of listing several qualification bullets per requirement in the belief that they are providing additional evidence of suitability for the position. In reality, one strongly worded qualification bullet makes the document easier to “scan”, thus ensuring that your Executive Resume will be read thoroughly, not just skimmed. Your goal is to have concise but powerful statements as qualifications.
- Each qualification bullet must be written so that three (3) basic aspects of your strongest experience come through loud and clear:

1. **What** was it that you did?
2. **Where** did you do it? (i.e., what group, organization, or company); and
3. **What impact** did it have on the group, organization, or company?

**Tip # 3 . . . Use the power of color to help you decide if you’re a 70% match on the job.**



Many job descriptions can be long and tedious documents. They are not always written clearly and job seekers often need to perform some detective work in order to filter out the core requirements.

One trick that can be helpful when reviewing job descriptions that are densely worded (or where the requirements may be scattered throughout the document) is to use color to help you determine if you are close to the 70% “skill-match” plateau.

Here’s what to do. Highlight in green all those skills you have in depth (no question about it); highlight in yellow those skills which you have, but not necessarily in depth, then highlight in red those skills which you either don’t have or have only weakly.

Now look at the combined green and yellow areas of the document. If you estimate that the combination of green plus yellow is close to 70%, it’s a safe assumption that this is a position for which you can build a strong and effective Executive Summary.

**Tip # 4 . . . Use action words to make your qualification statements memorable.**

To produce a truly powerful Executive Summary, use **strong and demonstrable** “action words” (verbs) at the beginning of each qualification bullet. Here is a hypothetical “T”-Display Block. Which of the following qualification bullets (right side of the chart) makes the strongest, most compelling statement? Before making your decision, read the requirement bullet very carefully.

Your Requirements	My Qualifications
<div style="background-color: #d9ead3; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p><b>Must have proven expertise with the DSX-50 Centurion software suite.</b></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center; padding: 20px;"> <p><i>Which one of these “qualification bullets” makes the strongest statement? Why?</i></p> </div>	<div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #4f7942; text-align: center;">A</p> <p style="background-color: #d9ead3; padding: 5px;">Had great success in using the DSX-50 Centurion software suite in a variety of organizations within XYZ Company since 2005.</p> </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #4f7942; text-align: center;">B</p> <p style="background-color: #d9ead3; padding: 5px;">Mastered the DSX-50 Centurion software suite and authored 9 new applications that saved XYZ Co. over 40% in development costs since 2005.</p> </div> <div> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #4f7942; text-align: center;">C</p> <p style="background-color: #d9ead3; padding: 5px;">Learned how to use the DSX-50 Centurion software suite to build computer-based animations and e-learning applications.</p> </div>

**Analysis**

- The best choice is “B”. It begins with a strong, commanding verb, “mastered”. It demonstrates this mastery through the candidate’s description of “authored 9 new applications” (if you’ve authored an application that has been used by your employer, you clearly have **proven** expertise). Additionally, the impact statement (“saving the development costs”) and the identity of the company (“XYZ”) are all part of the same qualification bullet.
- The reason why choices “A” and “C” are considered poor statements is that they do not begin forcefully enough. “Had great success” (A) and “Learned how to use” (C) are weak, passive phrases that communicate an unwillingness to find a more suitable “action word” to begin the qualification statement. Put another way, no matter how good the rest of the statement is, a weak opening can sabotage the entire effort.

**Tip # 5 . . . Make your Executive Summary “mirror” your Relevant Resume.**



*If your Executive Summary and Relevant Resume properly “mirror” each other, you will increase the likelihood of getting an interview.*

**Tip # 6 . . . Never forget the primary reason for developing an Executive Summary ...**

**Your Value Proposition**

Executive Summary & Relevant Resume



is the key to ...

**The Interview**



*and*

**The Interview**



is the key to ...



**The Job**