

14

Summaries



LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS CHAPTER

- Summarize a long document using step-by-step strategies
- Identify the purpose and placement of the four types of summaries: closing summaries, informative abstracts, descriptive abstracts, and executive summaries
- Recognize ethical issues when writing summaries

CHAPTER OUTLINE

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LET'S GET STARTED

Summaries

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Locate a technical article related to your undergraduate major that begins with a summary (the summary may use the name “summary,” “abstract,” or “executive summary”). For instance, if you are majoring in electrical engineering, use the library to find an article from a journal in that field. Most peer-reviewed articles begin with a brief summary of the article. Read this summary and make notes about the use of language, the order in which information is presented, and the level of technicality. See if you can understand the entire article simply by reading the summary. Then read the entire article.

Questions to ask about the summary you’ve located as you review the material in this chapter may include the following:

- ▶ What role does the summary play for the readers of this journal?
- ▶ How well does the summary characterize the full report or article?
- ▶ What decisions did the writer make about word choice, and why?

As you read this chapter, come back to your notes and the answers to the above questions and modify them based on what you learn from the chapter and in-class discussion.

Definition of summary

summary is a restatement of the main ideas in a longer document. Summaries are used to convey the general meaning of the ideas in the original source without all the specific details or examples that may appear in the original. When you write a summary, take care to provide the essential information clearly and concisely in your own words, leaving out anything that isn’t absolutely central to an understanding of the original.

Audience considerations

AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE OF SUMMARIES

Formal reports and proposals (discussed in Chapters 16 and 17) and other long documents are typically submitted to busy people: researchers, developers, managers, vice presidents, customers, and so on. For readers who must act quickly or

only need to know the “big picture,” reading an entire long report may not only be too time-consuming but also irrelevant. As a result, most long reports, proposals, and other long documents are commonly preceded by a summary.

The purpose of summaries, then, is to provide only an overview and the essential facts. Whether you summarize your own writing or someone else’s, your summary should do three things for readers: (1) describe, in short form, what the original document is all about; (2) help readers decide whether to read all of the long document, parts of it, or none of it; and (3) give readers a framework for understanding the full document that will follow if they do plan to read it.

To get a basic idea of how summaries fulfill audience needs, consider the examples in Figures 14.1 and 14.2.

Purpose of
summaries

Scientists know with virtual certainty that human activities are changing the composition of Earth’s atmosphere. Increasing levels of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide (CO₂) since pre-industrial times are well-documented and understood. The atmospheric buildup of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases is largely the result of human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels. Increasing greenhouse gas concentrations tend to warm the planet. A warming trend of about 0.7 to 1.5°F occurred during the 20th century in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres and over the oceans. The major greenhouse gases remain in the atmosphere for periods ranging from decades to centuries. It is therefore virtually certain that atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases will continue to rise over the next few decades.

Source: Adapted from *State of Knowledge*, by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

FIGURE 14.1
A passage to
be summarized

Figure 14.2 shows a summary of the complex passage in Figure 14.1. Note how it captures the original’s main ideas but in a compressed and less technical form that busy readers and general audiences would appreciate. The summary does not, however, change the essential meaning of the original—it merely boils the original down to its basic message.

Scientists are virtually certain that greenhouse gases largely produced by human activities are warming the planet. Temperatures have risen worldwide during the 20th century and undoubtedly will continue.

Source: From *State of Knowledge*, by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

FIGURE 14.2
A summarized
version of
Figure 14.1

ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE SUMMARIES

Whether you summarize your own document or someone else’s, always keep in mind that all summaries have four key characteristics: accuracy, completeness, conciseness, and nontechnical style.

Four characteristics
of summaries

Accuracy

Readers expect a precise sketch of the content, emphasis, and line of reasoning used in the original document. Be careful not to alter the essential meaning of the original. For example, in Figure 14.2 on page 269, the summary uses different wording but remains true to the original document's central point (scientists feel that global warming is “virtually certain,” not “somewhat certain”), retains the emphasis made in the original (the fact that human activity is responsible), and follows the same logical sequence (global warming has occurred and will continue to occur).

Completeness

Readers will also expect your summary to include everything essential in the original document—everything they need at a glance to grasp its full meaning. For example, in Figure 14.2, nothing has been left out to prevent readers from getting a complete overview of the original. Readers will know exactly what to expect from the longer document, only in fuller detail.

Conciseness

Readers expect a summary to exclude superfluous details—as well as any new details, examples, or opinions—not found in the original. Although the summary in Figure 14.2 doesn't omit anything essential, it does omit lesser details such as statistics (“0.7 to 1.5°F”), examples (set off by “like,” “such as,” “and other”), and overly long passages (“in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres and over the oceans” is replaced with “the planet”). Also the summary in no way embellishes upon the original content.

Nontechnical Style

Unless your readers are all experts (and most of the time they will not be), always summarize a document using plain English rather than carrying the original's technical jargon or scientific and mathematical data into the summary. The summary in Figure 14.2, for example, omits expressions such as “atmospheric buildup” and “greenhouse gas concentrations,” while also leaving out the specific temperatures mentioned.

WRITING SUMMARIES STEP BY STEP

Step-by-step nature
of summaries

More so than for other types of documents, writing summaries involves a straightforward process: reading and rereading the original document, marking the key information, and writing and revising your summary while checking it against the original. The Strategies for Summaries on pages 278–279 provide an overview of these steps, along with audience and purpose considerations.

Step 1: Read the Original Document

Before you can effectively summarize a document, you need a solid understanding of what it says. Read the original from start to finish, without highlighting or taking notes. An initial read will give you a general understanding of the document's main point and key subpoints.

Do an initial read to get the big picture

Step 2: Reread and Mark Essential Material

Read the document again, this time using a highlighter or pen (if working on hard copy) or your computer's highlighting feature (after copying and pasting the document into a word processing file). Pay close attention to key words or phrases to help you identify the essential points. In Figure 14.3, key sentences are underlined, while the less important information is not.

Reread and highlight for a sharper understanding

Step 3: Cut and Paste the Key Information

If you are working from a hard copy of the original, rekey the material you highlighted into a new document. If you are working from an electronic version of the original, copy and paste only the highlighted portions into a new file. Don't worry about the overall organization or sentence construction at this point; just gather everything you need.

Create a new document from the highlighted information

Step 4: Redraft the Information into Your Own Organizational Pattern and Words

At this point, reorganize the material from the original source into patterns that work well in a smaller space. Use your own wording to express the original concepts. Don't worry about length just yet. You just want to get your own wording down on paper.

Turn the cut-and-paste version into your own version

Step 5: Edit Your Draft

In the previous step, the goal was to get your own wording down on paper. Now, edit your version. Keeping sentences clear and grammatical, cross out needless words; get rid of any asides; combine related concepts; and look for any repetitions. Note how Figure 14.4 is as pared down as it can be.

Focus on shortening your version

Step 6: Compare Your Version with the Original Document

As a final step, double-check that you have not altered the meaning, intent, or emphasis of the original document. Reread the original and then immediately reread your own version. As you can see, Figure 14.4 remains true to the original source but is only about 25% of the original's length.

Make sure you preserve the intent of the original

FIGURE 14.3
An article to be
summarized

Open with basic
claim

Omit background
details

Include key
comparison

Omit inessential
detail

Include essential
definition

Compress list of
examples

Omit repetition and
inessential statistic

Include key fact

Compress list
of benefits

Include key
comparison

Include key point

Dietary Fats and Your Health

Scientific evidence shows that consumption of saturated fat, trans fat, and dietary cholesterol raises low-density lipoprotein (LDL), or “bad” cholesterol levels, which increases the risk of coronary heart disease (CHD). According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health, more than 12.5 million Americans have CHD, and more than 500,000 die each year. That makes CHD one of the leading causes of death in the United States.

The Food and Drug Administration has required that saturated fat and dietary cholesterol be listed on food labels since 1993. With trans fat added to the Nutrition Facts panel, you will know for the first time how much of all three—saturated fat, trans fat, and dietary cholesterol—are in the foods you choose. Identifying saturated fat, trans fat, and dietary cholesterol on the food label gives you information you need to make food choices that help reduce the risk of CHD. This revised label will be of particular interest to people concerned about high blood cholesterol and heart disease. However, everyone should be aware of the risk posed by consuming too much saturated fat, trans fat, and dietary cholesterol.

But what is trans fat, and how can you limit the amount of this fat in your diet?

What Is Trans Fat?

Basically, trans fat is made when manufacturers add hydrogen to vegetable oil—a process called hydrogenation. Hydrogenation increases the shelf life and flavor stability of foods containing these fats. Trans fat can be found in vegetable shortenings, some margarines, crackers, cookies, snack foods, and other foods made with or fried in partially hydrogenated oils. Unlike other fats, the majority of trans fat is formed when food manufacturers turn liquid oils into solid fats like shortening and hard margarine. A small amount of trans fat is found naturally, primarily in dairy products, some meat, and other animal-based foods.

Trans fat, like saturated fat and dietary cholesterol, raises the LDL cholesterol that increases your risk for CHD. Americans consume on average 4 to 5 times as much saturated fat as trans fat in their diets. Although saturated fat is the main dietary culprit that raises LDL, trans fat and dietary cholesterol also contribute significantly.

Are All Fats Bad?

Simply put: No. Unsaturated fat is a major source of energy for the body and aids in the absorption of vitamins A, D, E, and K, and carotenoids. Both animal- and plant-derived food products contain fat, and when eaten in moderation, unsaturated fat is important for proper growth, development, and maintenance of good health. As a food ingredient, unsaturated fat provides taste, consistency, and stability and helps you feel full. In addition, parents should be aware that unsaturated fats are an especially important source of calories and nutrients for infants and toddlers (up to 2 years of age), who have the highest energy needs per unit of body weight of any age group.

While unsaturated fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated) are beneficial when consumed in moderation, saturated and trans fats are not. Saturated fat and trans fat raise LDL cholesterol levels in the blood. Dietary cholesterol also raises LDL cholesterol and may contribute to heart disease even without raising LDL. Therefore, it is advisable to choose foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, and dietary cholesterol as part of a healthful diet.

< continued >

FIGURE 14.3
(Continued)**What Can You Do About Saturated Fat, Trans Fat, and Cholesterol?**

When comparing foods, look at the Nutrition Facts panel, and choose the food with the lower amounts of saturated fat, trans fat, and dietary cholesterol. Health experts recommend that you keep your intake of saturated fat, trans fat, and dietary cholesterol as low as possible while consuming a nutritionally adequate diet. However, these experts recognize that eliminating these three components entirely from your diet is not practical because they are unavoidable in ordinary diets.

← Include key instruction

← Omit inessential details

Where Can You Find Trans Fat on the Food Label?

You will find trans fat listed on the Nutrition Facts panel directly under the line for saturated fat.

← Omit the obvious

How Do Your Choices Stack Up?

With the addition of trans fat to the Nutrition Facts panel, you can review your food choices and see how they stack up. Don't assume similar products are the same. Be sure to check the Nutrition Facts panel because even similar foods can vary in calories, ingredients, nutrients, and the size and number of servings in a package.

← Omit inessential observation and advice

How Can You Use the Label to Make Heart-Healthy Food Choices?

The Nutrition Facts panel can help you choose foods lower in saturated fat, trans fat, and dietary cholesterol. Compare similar foods and choose the food with the lower combined saturated and trans fats and the lower amount of dietary cholesterol.

Although the updated Nutrition Facts panel will list the amount of trans fat in a product, it will not show a Percent Daily Value (%DV). While scientific reports have confirmed the relationship between trans fat and an increased risk of CHD, none has provided a reference value for trans fat or any other information that the FDA believes is sufficient to establish a Daily Reference Value or a %DV. There is, however, a %DV shown for saturated fat and cholesterol. To choose foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol, use the general rule of thumb that 5 percent of the Daily Value or less is low and 20 percent or more is high. You can also use the %DV to make dietary trade-offs with other foods throughout the day.

← Include key fact

← Omit technical detail

← Include key statistics

Do I Have to Give Up My Favorite Fatty Foods?

You don't have to give up your favorite foods to eat a healthy diet, even when they are high in saturated fat, trans fat, or dietary cholesterol. When a food you like is high in saturated fat or dietary cholesterol, balance it with foods that are low in saturated fat and dietary cholesterol at other times of the day.

← Include basic advice

Source: Excerpt from *FDA Consumer* Sept.–Oct. 2003: 12–18.

SPECIAL TYPES OF SUMMARIES

In preparing a report, proposal, or other document, you might summarize the work of other people as part of your presentation. The previous sections have described how to summarize documents written by others. But in other situations, you will often need to summarize your own material. Various types of reports, proposals, and other long documents require internal summaries. Depending on the length, purpose, and audience, your document might include one or more of four special types of summaries, in different locations, with different levels of detail. These four types of summaries are (1) closing summaries,

FIGURE 14.4
A summary
of Figure 14.3

Dietary Fats and Your Health (A Summary)

Saturated fat is a principal cause of bad cholesterol (LDL, or low density lipoprotein), but dietary cholesterol and trans fat also play a role. High LDL is a major risk factor for coronary heart disease, a leading killer in the United States. In addition to the listing of saturated fat and dietary cholesterol on food labels, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) now requires that trans fat be listed.

Although small amounts of trans fat exist naturally in dairy products and other animal-based foods, most trans fat is a byproduct of hydrogenation, the addition of hydrogen to vegetable oil. This process increases shelf life and stabilizes the flavor of foods such as hard margarine, crackers, snack foods, and foods fried in hydrogenated oil.

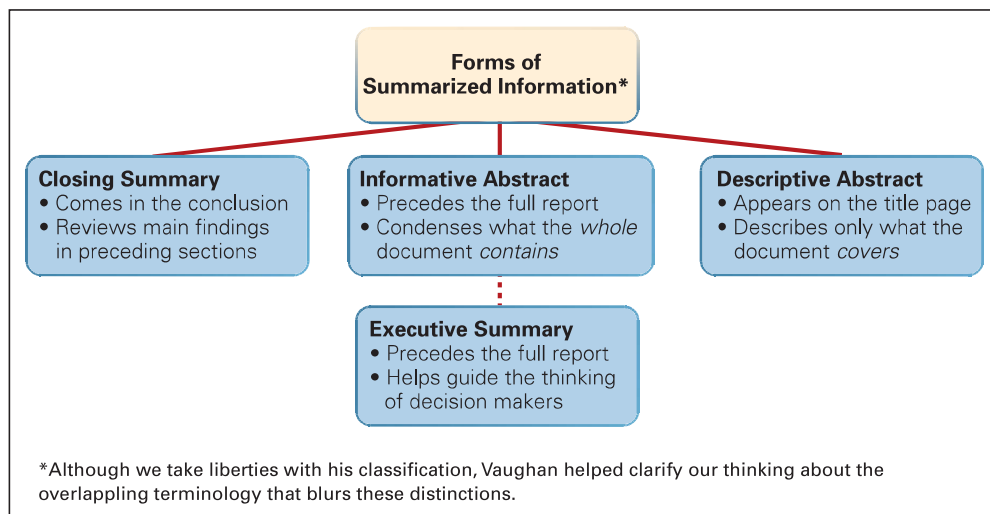
Not all fats are bad. In fact, unsaturated fat serves as a major energy source, promotes vitamin absorption, enhances food taste, and helps us feel full. Consumed in moderation, unsaturated fat is essential to health and provides a vital calorie source for infants. However, saturated fats and trans fats, along with dietary cholesterol, should be avoided as much as possible.

To make wise choices about fats and cholesterol, read the Nutrition Facts label on packaged foods. Note the serving size, number of servings in the package, and the Percent Daily Value (%DV) of each ingredient. Although no Daily Value is yet established for trans fat, avoid foods with a high saturated fat or cholesterol DV (greater than 20 percent per serving), unless you can balance these with low DV foods during the day.

Source: Excerpt from *FDA Consumer* Sept.–Oct. 2003: 12–18.

(2) informative abstracts, (3) descriptive abstracts, and (4) executive summaries. Figure 14.5 illustrates each of these types of summaries, their placement, and their purpose. The following sections discuss and illustrate each type in more detail.

FIGURE 14.5
Special types
of summaries



Source: Adapted from Vaughan, David.

Closing Summaries

A *closing summary* appears in the concluding section of a formal report or proposal. The closing summary helps readers review and remember the major findings that have preceded it. This look back at “the big picture” also helps readers appreciate the conclusions and recommendations that typically follow the closing summary. Figure 14.6 shows a closing summary at the end of a report that analyzes the feasibility of a career in technical marketing. This summary appears just before the “Recommendations” portion that ends the report.

Purpose and placement of closing summaries

Summary of Findings

Technical marketing and sales requires solid technical background, motivation, communication skills, and interpersonal skills. This career offers job diversity and excellent income potential, balanced against hard work and relentless pressure to perform.

College graduates interested in this field confront four entry options: (1) direct entry with on-the-job training, (2) a formal training program, (3) prior experience in a technical specialty, and (4) graduate programs. Each option has benefits and drawbacks based on immediacy of income, rate of advancement, and long-term potential.

FIGURE 14.6
A closing summary

Informative Abstracts

An *informative abstract* is a capsule version of a formal report or proposal that appears on a separate page, just after the document’s title page. Informative abstracts provide readers with a snapshot of a long document—a clear picture of what is to come. Some readers, such as busy executives, may want just the “bottom line” without having to read the entire report or proposal. The informative abstract summarizes what the full document says: it identifies the need or issue that prompted the document; it describes the research methods used; it reviews the main facts and findings; and it condenses the conclusions and recommendations. (See page 317 of the formal report in Chapter 16 or page 340 of the formal proposal in Chapter 17 for an example.) An informative abstract may simply be labeled as an “abstract.”

Purpose and placement of informative abstracts

Descriptive Abstracts

More compressed than an informative abstract, a *descriptive abstract* is usually only one to three sentences long and appears on the title page of a report or proposal. A descriptive abstract merely states what a document *covers*; it doesn’t get into detail about what the document contains. Such an abstract helps people decide whether to read the report. Compare, for example, the descriptive abstract

Purpose and placement of descriptive abstracts

FIGURE 14.7
A descriptive
abstract

The origin of trans fat, its relation to saturated fat and dietary cholesterol, and its causative role in heart disease is explained, and advice for consumers is provided.

in Figure 14.7 with the article summary in Figure 14.4 The descriptive abstract conveys only the basic nature and extent of the longer document.

Executive Summaries

Purpose and
placement of
executive summaries

An *executive summary* is similar to an informative abstract; however, it not only summarizes the long document but also tells readers what they should think about it. Placed on a separate page just after a long document's title page (just like an informative abstract), an executive summary is aimed at decision makers rather than technical audiences. Unlike informative abstracts, executive summaries are written to persuade readers to act on the information. Executive summaries are crucial in cases when readers have no time to read the entire original document and when they expect the writer to help guide their thinking ("Tell me how to think about this," instead of, "Help me understand this"). Unless the readers (the organization or company) stipulate a specific format, organize your executive abstract to answer the following questions:

Questions to answer
in an executive
summary

- What is the issue?
- What was found?
- What does it mean?
- What should be done?

The executive summary in Figure 14.8 falls at the beginning of a much longer 40-page report. This one page summarizes the more detailed report. Notice how the executive summary answers all the above questions.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN SUMMARIZING INFORMATION

Summaries in the
information age

Information in summary format is increasingly attractive to today's readers, who often feel bombarded by more information than they can handle. Consider, for example, the popularity of the *USA Today* newspaper, with its countless news items offered in brief snippets for overtaxed readers. In contrast, the *New York Times* offers lengthy text that is information rich but more time-consuming to digest. Summaries are especially adaptable to the hypertext-linked design of online documents. Instead of long blocks of text, Web pages are often designed with concise modules, or "chunks," of information that stand alone, are easy to scan, and require little or no scrolling. Moreover, magazine Web sites such as *Forbes* or *The Economist* offer email summaries of their hard copy articles.

Status Report: Market Share for Goldilocks Breakfast Cereals (GBC)

In response to a request from GBC's Board of Directors, the accounting division analyzed recent trends in the company's sales volume and profitability.

← What is the issue?

Findings

- Even though GBC is the cereal industry leader, its sales for the past four years increased at a mere average of 2.5 percent annually, to \$5.2 billion, and net income decreased 12 percent overall, to \$459 million.
- This weak sales growth apparently results from consumer resistance to retail price increases for cereal, totaling 91 percent in slightly more than a decade.
- GBC introduces an average of two new cereal products annually (most recently, "Coconut Whammos" and "Spinach Crunchies"), but such innovations do little to increase consumer interest.
- A growing array of generic cereal brands have been underselling GBC's products by more than \$1 per box, especially in giant retail outlets.
- This past June, GBC dropped its cereal prices by roughly 20 percent, but by this time the brand had lost substantial market share to generic cereal brands.

← What was found?

Conclusions

- Slow but progressive loss of market share threatens GBC's dominance as industry leader.
- GBC must regain consumer loyalty to reinvigorate its market base.
- Our new cereal products have done more to erode than to enhance GBC's brand image.

← What does it mean?

Recommendations

To regain lost market share and ensure continued dominance, GBC should implement the following recommendations:

1. Curtail development of new cereal products, and invest in improving the taste and nutritional value of GBC's traditional products.
2. Capitalize on GBC's brand recognition with an advertising campaign to promote GBC's "best-sellers" as an "all-day" food (a healthful snack or inexpensive alternative to microwave dinners).
3. Examine the possibility of high-volume sales at discounted prices through giant retail chains.

← What should be done?

FIGURE 14.8 A one-page executive summary from a much longer (40-page) report

**Ethical pitfalls
of summaries**

While such capsules or “digests” of information are an efficient way to stay informed, summaries carry with them potential pitfalls, as media critic Ilan Greenberg points out (65):

- A condensed version of a complicated document may provide a useful overview, but this superficial treatment often fails to communicate the document’s full complexity—that is, the complete story. Whoever summarizes a lengthy document makes decisions about what to leave out and what to leave in, what to emphasize, and what to ignore. During the selection process, the original message could very well be distorted. Therefore, be careful that any summary (except a descriptive abstract) conveys the full picture of what the original document says.
- In a summary of someone else’s writing, the tone or “voice” of the original author often disappears—along with that writer’s way of seeing. Be careful that you not only carry the essential facts of an original document into your summary, but that in the process of condensing you don’t distort the original writer’s intent. If a writer says, as in Figure 14.1, “Scientists know with virtual certainty” that human activities are leading to global warming, make sure that this critical point carries into your summary. Downplaying (“some scientists suspect”) or overplaying (“scientists are 100% certain”) the original writer’s intent is a distortion.

Although summaries do have their place in our busy world, the more complex the topic, the more readers need the whole story.



STRATEGIES for Summaries

- ▶ **Start the summary process by reading the original document.** Read the document all the way through without highlighting or taking notes to get a clear sense of its main point and most important subpoints.
- ▶ **Reread the original while highlighting essential information.** A second read, combined with highlighting or underlining, will give you a sharper picture of important points.
- ▶ **Save only the key information.** Delete the inessential information from the original document to create a rough draft of the original document’s wording.
- ▶ **Rewrite the key information in your own words.** Initially don’t worry about length. Avoid using any of the original document’s words unless a key term or phrase is indispensable. If you must quote a passage directly, use quotation marks around the quoted words.
- ▶ **Edit your version.** When you have included everything readers need, edit your work for conciseness, getting rid of wordiness, combining related ideas, and eliminating repetition.



STRATEGIES *continued*

- ▶ **Finally, check your version against the original.** Verify that you have added no personal observations (unless you are writing an executive abstract) and have not altered the meaning, intent, or emphasis of the original.
- ▶ **Indicate the exact source of the summarized material.** When you are summarizing someone else's work, immediately follow your summary with a reference to the original source.
- ▶ **Use the appropriate types of summaries in your own formal documents.** Formal reports and proposals always include informative abstracts (when the intent is simply to provide a snapshot) or executive summaries (when the intent is to persuade readers how to think about the longer document). Closing summaries are always helpful in such reports. Descriptive abstracts can be helpful when included on the title page of a formal report or proposal.
- ▶ **Remain aware of ethical considerations.** A summary that adds material not found in the original document or omits critical information from the original is misleading and unethical. Likewise, misrepresenting the original document's point of view is unethical.

**CHECKLIST**
for Summaries

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- ☐ Can the summary stand alone?
- ☐ Is the summary accurate when checked against the original?
- ☐ Is the summary free of needless details?
- ☐ Is the summary concise yet clear and comprehensive?
- ☐ Is the source of this summary documented?
- ☐ Does the descriptive abstract merely tell what the original is about?
- ☐ Is the level of technicality appropriate for its audience?
- ☐ Does the executive summary tell readers how to think about the information?

**APPLICATIONS****GENERAL APPLICATIONS**

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1. Find an article about your major field or area of interest and write both an informative abstract and a descriptive abstract for the article.
2. Find a long article (at least five pages) and summarize it, following the step-by-step process described in this chapter and keeping accuracy, completeness,

conciseness, and nontechnical language always in mind. Capture the essence and main points of the original article in no more than one-fourth the length. Use your own words, and do not distort the original. Submit a copy of the original along with your summary.

TEAM APPLICATION

Organize into small groups and choose a topic for discussion: an employment problem, a campus problem, plans for an event, suggestions for energy conservation, or the like. (A possible topic: Should employers have the right to require lie detector tests or drug tests for their employees?) Discuss the topic for one class period, taking notes on significant points and conclusions. Afterward, organize and edit your notes in line with the directions for writing summaries. Write a summary of the group discussion in no more than 200 words. As a group, compare your individual summaries for accuracy, emphasis, conciseness, and clarity.

GLOBAL APPLICATION

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Find a long article (longer than five pages) from a technical, scientific, financial, or similar publication. Pick an article that deals with an issue that is global in scope (for instance, an article about the use of pesticides in different countries or an article about the ways in which financial decisions have worldwide impacts). Summarize this article for an audience of nonspecialists, but for two different groups: one group of U.S. citizens and another group of citizens in a different country. Learn what you can about the other country by looking online and determining key scientific, political, or financial issues. Or bring knowledge you have from your own travel (such as a study abroad experience) or background or from a class that you took. What will you highlight in the summary for the U.S. readers, what will you highlight in the article for the non-U.S. readers, and why? Bring copies of the original article plus each summary to class to discuss with others.

DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA APPLICATION

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When used for workplace communication, Twitter and Facebook require writers to summarize complex news stories and technical information into very short summaries, usually with a link where readers can find more information. Look at the Twitter feed or Facebook page for your campus or for a technical or scientific government agency (such as the National Weather Service). How effective are these short summaries? What techniques do the writers use to keep these summaries accurate yet interesting? Summarize your findings in two to three sentences for your instructor.

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Visit Chapter14, *Summaries*, in MyWritingLab to complete this chapter's applications, to explore this chapter's overview, checklist, and flashcards, and to test your understanding of the chapter objectives.