

EVIDENCE INFORMED BRIEFING NOTES

From Evidence to Action Project

Not every heading is required for all briefing notes. Writers should choose the headings that best fit the issue and purpose for writing the note. This format can also be used when making proposals for funding new program or services to executive management.

| BRIEFING NOTE OUTLINE | GUIDELINES |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Issue</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State the issue, reason, purpose, question or problem that led to the need for a briefing. • How did this issue come to the attention of the organization (evidence)? |
| <i>Background</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the situation arise? • What previous problems or decisions have related to this issue? • What actions or steps led up to the current situation? |
| <i>Current Status</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize current state: Who is involved? What is happening? |
| <i>Key Considerations</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize important facts, considerations and developments from the perspective of the reader. • Include relevant previous organizational decisions and policy/position statements. • Substantiate all statements with evidence. |
| <i>Options</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize observations about key considerations and what they mean in terms of options for action. • Describe options according to predicted outcome. Include internal organizational implications such as impact on financial, human and operational resources. • State benefits and risks for each with supporting evidence. |
| <i>Recommended Option</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State what you want the reader to infer/conclude from the briefing note. • Should be a logical explanation of what has been put forward in previous sections (nothing new), and how the evidence leads to a recommendation. |
| <i>Cautionary Notes</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do recommended options reverse or challenge previous decisions? • Do they lead to a new policy position or direction? • Are there substantial risks associated with action on this issue? |
| <i>Recommendations</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of specific, realistic, actions that the decision-maker can take. |
| <i>Submitted by</i> | |
| <i>Date</i> | |