The GRAB

Guy Kawasaki, a Californian speaker and investor who writes about business plans, start-ups and investing, suggests starting with ‘The Grab’.

The idea is to start with a compelling sentence or two that sums up your unique solutions to a big problem that should be direct and specific. If you are going to name drop – now is the time!

Review the simplified sample executive summary from the case study as an example.

Problem

What is the problem you are trying to solve? Describe it in one or two sentences, with numbers to back up your statement.

Solution

Briefly describe your solution. Explain what you offer to who.

Don’t use technical jargon.

Explain your Unique Value Proposition here.

Market

How big is the market?

Is it growing?

What is driving that growth?

Which segments will you be targeting?

Competition

Provide an overview of the competitive landscape. Who else is operating in the space?

Why are you different?

What is your unfair advantage (patent, people, first-mover)

The business model

How will you make money? Is it a subscription model? Are you buying goods for X and selling them at Y?

Will you be offering a free service and selling advertising?

Are you targeting companies or individual consumers?

Do you have distributors? How will you find and reach your customers?

How will you scale? What are your key costs? No need to get into the details of your

operating, technology and/or marketing plans here, but you might want to touch on any really important pieces of information.

Team

Explain why your team is best placed to win.

Where does each person on the core management team fit in? Have you covered all

the key roles and skills?

Be specific – if you have a great idea for a mobile advertising business, and your chief

marketing officer was previously head of advertising sales at Safaricom, then say so!

At a smaller scale, if someone on your team has great relationships and connections in the community where you operate, then say so.

Traction

What have you achieved so far? Describe the evolution of your company.

Do you have a product or at least a prototype? How may units of your

product/service/prototype have you sold to real customers? At what price?

Do you have larger customers ready to buy form you – letters of interest?

Have you received any endorsements or prizes?

The financial plan

Provide a snapshot of your financials.

How much revenue do you expect to generate within 5 years?

When do you expect to break even?

If you are seeking outside capital, you will need to show either that you have the

ability to pay back a loan (plus interest), or if you are seeking equity investment, you need to show convincingly that you can grow to a point where you can provide a return to your investors.

The ask

If you are asking for capital, spell out how much you need, what you will spend it on, and when you will be able to deliver a return.