Business Brief

Definition of a business brief:
Business briefs are a form of communication meant to bring a decision-maker (usually a high-ranking executive) up to speed on some issue or situation that needs attention. Briefs strive to present all the relevant facts and considerations that the reader will need to make a fully informed decision—but to do so concisely. The trick, therefore, is to make the business brief succinct while also making it complete. Please note that a business brief, just like all other business documents, begins with your purpose statement…your bottom line.

Organization of a business brief:
Although the organization of business briefs may vary, briefs generally make three main moves:
1. The opening identifies the situation or issue at hand and suggests why it is important.
2. The body summarizes the facts and considerations (all the relevant background) necessary to fully understand the situation or issue.
3. The conclusion often recommends a course of action.

Characteristics of a business brief:
Although briefs will vary depending on the material, a typical brief shares qualities with good business writing. Briefs are written in a style that is direct, concise, and clear, and they are formatted for ease of reading (subheads, bullets, etc.). The specific audience, purpose, and topic will determine the choices that a writer makes when drafting a brief, but here are some general considerations to bear in mind:
• Although business briefs may include a recommended course of action, you should strive to present the key questions and facts in a neutral, factual way. Slanting facts to fit the eventual recommendation, or adopting an argumentative or emotional tone, could undermine the writer’s credibility.
• Although you should be formal, avoid dense prose and puffed-up language: You are not trying to show off in this piece of writing but rather to inform your reader and lead him or her to a decision.
• Respect your audience’s time. A brief should be informative but not ponderous. It should be able to be read at a brisk pace. Although it is hard to generalize, a business brief, as the name implies, is typically short – maybe a couple of pages, longer if the issue is particularly complicated.