**RECOMMENDATION**

[EXAMPLE] The Board endorses the idea that storylines help them make a better-quality decision following a more substantive discussion as the papers were vastly easier to comprehend.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Context -** It is imperative that the Board be able to glean the high-level messaging very quickly as soon as they look at a paper.

**Trigger -** The ‘executive summary’ is a perfect place to do that, particularly if it is organised well.

**So What - To that end, please ensure your story covers the relevant issues that enable the board to make a decision.** This would typically include a point about each of the following

* Strategic alignment, so the Board can see where your recommendation fits within your division’s plan
* Financial impact, so the Board can decide whether your recommendation meets your typical financial hurdles
* Implementation, so the Board can trust that your recommendation can be implemented easily and potentially understand other implementation options that you considered
* Risks, so the Board knows the risks involved in what they are signing off on while also trusting that you have mitigated them appropriately

(**Note:** This set of instructions offers a storyline format for you to mimic. The structure is a suggestion: other storyline patterns may be more appropriate for your situation although these concepts will be important most of the time. See *The So What Strategy* for suggestions.)

**DISCUSSION**

**Repeat the dot points from the Recommendation section as bolded headings like this.**

* Expand on each point with supporting points like this
* And this …

**Discuss the next one the same way and roll on until all of your top line points are covered with an appropriate level of supporting detail, which is equally well structured.**

**PREVIOUS BOARD ADVICE (OPTIONAL)**

(Summary of information on this item which may have been provided to the Board previously if appropriate. Structure each summary as a storyline with a context, trigger, ‘so what’ and high-level supporting points.)

**ATTACHMENTS**

(List of any attachments included with the paper)

**SUBMITTED BY**

**TEST THE FOLLOWING BEFORE SUBMITTING:**

1. Can your audience ‘get the gist’ of the message by reading the executive summary, or do you need to read the full paper closely to understand the high-level story?
2. Are all material issues highlighted at the appropriate level? For example, have you surfaced all major issues the Board would be concerned about at the top line level or potentially as a highlight within a section?
3. Have I been careful to optimise my use of attachments? Include only if the topic is complex or important audience members have missed foundational material (eg they are new or were absent from the past meeting to discuss the issue), as supporting exhibits referred to in the body of the paper. Attachments must not replace the content of the submission paper.