Background

William Walls, the owner of the big computer imperium MaxiTech, is looking to provide a multi-document text summarisation service to his numerous customers. As he doesn’t have the relevant expertise in his own company, he is looking for contacts with young start-up companies specialising on summarisation. He has scheduled meetings with Tom Hopeful from OptiSum and Jack Enthusiastic from Sums-R-Us, who both want to sell him their summarisation system. Which system is William Walls going to choose?

Task

Your task is to play the role of one of our three protagonists. Here is what you should do:

Tom Hopeful  The summarisation system that your company developed is described here:


Make yourself acquainted with the system. You should be able to summarise it to William Walls and outline its advantages. You want to persuade him to buy your system! You may also want to take a brief look at the system of your competitor, Jack Enthusiastic (see below), to find disadvantages in his system. 

Note: in the actual discussion William Walls may ask you questions about your system; he may also ask you whether (and how) you can adapt it to his specific requirements. If the system described in the paper doesn’t fit the bill you can use your imagination to come up with ways in which it could be modified.
Jack Enthusiastic  The summarisation system that your company developed is described here:


Make yourself acquainted with the system. You should be able to summarise it to William Walls and outline its advantages. You want to persuade him to buy your system! You may also want to take a brief look at the system of your competitor, Tom Hopeful (see above), to find disadvantages in his system.

Note: in the actual discussion William Walls may ask you questions about your system; he may also ask you whether (and how) you can adapt it to his specific requirements. If the system described in the paper doesn’t fit the bill you can use your imagination to come up with ways in which it could be modified.

William Walls  You should think about exactly what you want the system for. It should do multi-document summarisation. You should choose the domain (or domains) for which you need it and also think about special circumstances: e.g. is your company willing to provide money for domain adaptation (for example to annotate some data in the new domain)? Do you need the system to be particularly fast? Who are the end-users of the system? What are their requirements regarding the quality of the summaries? How much development time can you make available to tune the system to your needs? Etc.

Once you thought about your specific requirements you may also want to take a brief look at the descriptions of the two systems to be able to ask Jack and Tom about things that are unclear to you.