ABSTRACT WORKSHOP

PREPARING AN ABSTRACT

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WHAT IS AN ABSTRACT?

THE BASICS

- A concise summary of a larger paper or presentation
- Highlights major points covered in the work
- Makes it possible for readers to quickly determine the content of the work
- Should entice readers to want to read more about the work
QUALITIES OF A GOOD ABSTRACT

- Brief, well-developed paragraph
- Coherent, concise, able to stand alone
- Presents purpose, methods, results, conclusions (in that order)
- Simply summarizes without adding ANY new information
QUALITIES OF A GOOD ABSTRACT

- Adheres to conference standards
- Is understandable to a broad audience
- Passive verbs to emphasize information
- Consists of 150-300 words
- MUST be approved by your mentor
STEPS TO WRITING EFFECTIVE ABSTRACTS

1. Read the article, paper, or report with your abstract in mind.

2. Look specifically for these main parts:

- purpose
- methods
- scope
- results
- conclusions
- recommendations
3. The introduction and summary are good places to begin as they include a general idea of the paper’s emphasis.

4. After you’ve re-read the article, write a rough draft without looking back at what you’re abstracting.

5. Be sure to summarize key concepts without using exact phrasing.
WHAT NOT TO DO

• DO NOT:

Just copy exact phrasing; you end up with too much or too little information

Start with "this paper..." "this report..." or similar.

Use sentences that end in "...is described" "...is reported" "...is analyzed" or similar to explain the sections/parts of your paper.
WHAT NOT TO DO

• DO NOT:

Use phrases like "it is suggested that..." "it is believed that..." "it is felt that..."

Repeat or rephrase the title of the work

Refer to any new information not included in the original document

Use trade names, abbreviations, or symbols (if possible)
BREAKING IT DOWN

THE BASICS OF THE ABSTRACT

ABSTRACT CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

ONE DOES NOT SIMPLY

RESEARCH INFORMATION AND TELL
ME EXACTLY WHAT YOU RESEARCHED

NOTE: WEIGHT ACCORDED TO INDIVIDUAL
COMPONENTS OF AN ABSTRACT VARIES BY DISCIPLINE
PART 1: MOTIVATION/PROBLEM STATEMENT

- Why do we care about the problem?
- What practical, scientific, theoretical or artistic gap is your research filling?
PART 2: METHODS/PROCEDURE/APPROACH

- What did you actually do to get your results? (e.g. analyzed novels, completed a series of 5 oil paintings, interviewed 12 students)
PART 3:

RESULTS/FINDINGS/PRODUCT

- As a result of completing the above procedure (methods section), what did you learn/invest/create?
PART 4:

CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS

- What are the larger implications of your findings, especially for the problem/gap identified in step 1?

NOTE: You may choose to include recommendations for future research (briefly) along with conclusions.
THE ABSTRACT SHOULD BE ABOUT THE RESEARCH, NOT ABOUT THE ACT OF WRITING

"I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO WRITE A SHORT LETTER, SO I WROTE A LONG ONE INSTEAD"

- MARK TWAIN
WHERE TO FIND EXAMPLES OF ABSTRACTS

- Journal articles
- Library guides
- Google (SCHOLAR!!!!!!!)
- Similar research to your own
REFERENCES

- https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3136027/

- https://uofw.adobeconnect.com/_a834897290/p9c206poemt/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal

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