Less is More: Writing the Abstract

• What is an abstract?

• An abstract is a brief, comprehensive summary of the article’s contents.

• The abstract allows the reader to survey the contents of the article quickly.
Less is More: Writing the Abstract

• The purpose of the abstract is to give your readers a concise overview of your thesis/project.
Less is More: Writing the Abstract

- A well-written, succinct abstract might be the most important paragraph of your thesis/project.
- Think about the first ten minutes of a movie: Do you want to keep watching—are you interested? Or do you want to get your money back?
Less is More: Writing the Abstract

• Needs to be dense with information.
Less is More: Writing the Abstract

• Embed key words in the abstract; this will help your work to be more easily found when other scholars are conducting research.
Less is More: Writing the Abstract

- The length and nature varies according to your discipline.
- Word limits vary from journal to journal. They typically range from 150 to 250 words.
- Keep it around or under 250 words.
- The abstract is not easy. How do you boil your thesis/project down to 250 words or less?
The Stellar Abstract Is:

• Accurate
The Stellar Abstract Is:

• Nonevaluative
The Stellar Abstract Is:

- Coherent and Readable
The Stellar Abstract Is:

• Concise
Elements of the Abstract

• States what the thesis/project does or the purpose of the thesis/project. May include brief statement of why the study is being conducted or the rationale or problem you are addressing.
Elements of the Abstract

• Explains briefly how the thesis/project conducted the study
• What methodology was used?
Abstract for Empirical Study

• One sentence that presents the problem under investigation
Abstract for Empirical Study

• The participants: age, sex, and ethnic/racial group.
• In animal research, make sure you specify genus and species.
Abstract for Empirical Study

- Essential features of study method.

- You have a word limit, so make sure your description highlights essential and interesting features of the study methodology, particularly those certain to be employed per digital searches.
Abstract for Empirical Study

• Present the basic findings: include size, confidential intervals and/or statistical significance levels.
Abstract for Empirical Study

• Don’t forget the conclusions and the implications or applications.
Abstract for Literature Review

• Problem under investigation.
Abstract for Literature Review

• Study eligibility criteria
Abstract for Literature Review

• Type(s) of participants included in primary studies.
Abstract for Literature Review

• Main results
Abstract for Literature Review

• Conclusions (including limitations)
Abstract for Literature Review

• Implications for theory, policy, and/or practice.
Abstract for Methodological Study

• General class of methods being discussed.
Abstract for Methodological Study

• Essential features of the proposed method.
Abstract for Methodological Study

• Range of application of the proposed method.
Abstract for Methodological Study

• For statistical procedures, provide some of the essential features (power efficiency, etc.)
Elements of the Abstract

• Indicates what you found.
Elements of the Abstract

• States what you concluded from the findings of your study.

• This element may also include the implications of the study or significance of the study.
Questions that Drive the Abstract

- Who is your audience?
- Advisor?
- Committee?
- Peers?
- Journal?
- Scholars in the field?
Questions that Drive the Abstract

• What impression do you want to make on your audience?

• How will your audience view you and your work after reading the abstract?

• Will they be encouraged to read on?
1. Introducing purpose.
   • What is your intention, main idea, of hypothesis?
   • In other words, what’s the purpose?
   • You can also include a direct statement of the main goals of objectives of the research or problem that drove the research.
4 Paths the Abstract Can Take

2. Describing the Methodology

• Describe the design, procedures, or method you used to conduct the research
3. Summarizing Results

- Limit this approach to the thesis/project that involves observations, discoveries, or solutions to a problem.
- This path works well when you have collected data.
4 Paths the Abstract Can Take

4. Presenting Conclusions

• Interpret results and suggests implications of the research.