

How to write an abstract

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'How to write a **good** abstract'

'What to think about before and during the process of writing an abstract'

'THE GOOD THE BAD AND THE UGLY'

'HOW TO BEGIN?'

Can I do it? NO!

Aim:

- Give you something to think about.
- Somewhere to go for help.
- The desire to look at what others are doing.

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What is an abstract?

A short paragraph summarising your work

Adjective: existing in thought, or as an idea, but not having a physical or concrete existence.

Noun: a summary or statement of the contents of a book, article or presentation.

Types of abstracts

Descriptive:

- Information on report, introduce reader to report who must then read the full article to find out results and conclusions.
- Usually short.

Informative:

- Usually 10% of original piece.
- Provides summary of aims, results and conclusions / recommendations.
- Allows readers to decide if they wish to read the full report.

What is the abstract for?

- Poster
- Presentation
- Oral
- 'Summary' of a project for a qualification
- Book chapters
- Book





Conference abstracts are used by the committee to decide whether your should be given the opportunity to present your full work.



Why put yourself through it?

- You have done a piece of work why not share the results?
- Puts your name out there.
- Puts your hospitals / university / Consultants name out there.
- Shares work and stops repetition.
- Encourages learning and teaching.

Where?

Often the reality is conference coming up call for abstracts what can I submit?

Ideal – the piece of work should dictate where it should be submitted, i.e;

- The audience
- Networking opportunities
- Aims and objectives of the work

Putting people first When?

- At conferences individuals usually present current work as a poster or oral in order to generate interest and discussion.
- Once you have sufficient validated results to discuss and make recommendations.
- The completed full work may then be written up as a full publication / research paper.





Beware

 Data ownership, authorship, permissions, acknowledgments, conflicts of interest, plagiarism and ethics.

You must be honest, accurate, objective and complete.





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Key words

Think about electronic search engines. Having done the work and written the abstract you want people to be able to find it - key words are vital.

Format – 'The Rules'

- Read the instructions! No point in all that hard work to be rejected because the font size or format is wrong.
- Observe the word count and in general if the instructions same max 300 they are expecting at least 250.

Writing

• Spend time thinking..... about your aims

- What has your work shown?
- What has your work changed?
- What further work could be done?
- Re read (think about) your full piece of work and draft a summary.
- Put into correct format.
- Come back later and re-read / edit.
- Come back later and **critically evaluate** to ensure it meets the aims and the submission criteria (checklist).

Putting people first Good abstracts

- Well defined paragraphs
- Coherent and concise

 Introduction / body / conclusion
- Simply summarises no new information
- Understandable to wide audience
- Emphasis on information not the author

Putting people first Acknowledgement

Note: No vested interest – personal recommendation.

Communication skills for the Biosciences: A graduate guide Aysha Divan Oxford University Press

www.oxfordtextbooks.co.uk/orc/divan/



Reviewing checklist:

- Is the abstract the correct length?
- Does it conform to the style set by the guidelines?
- Are the four elements: aims, methodology, results and conclusions included and in the right order?
- If you have used any abbreviations, have they been defined?
- Are there any parts of the abstract that can be edited to make it more concise (e.g. is all the information necessary, is there repetition of material, are there any long sentences)?
- Has the spelling, grammar and punctuation been checked?
- Can the abstract be understood without reference to any further information?

There is already a lot of evidence that the soda that millions of people drink everyday is harmful to their health. One area of concern that has long been linked to drinking soda is dental health. Some of the problems caused by drinking a plethora of soda are: tooth decay, gingivitis, gum diseaes and cavityes! Many of these problems are blamed on both the acids and the sugar contained in soda. With the increasing popularity of diet soda, the obvious question is: Is diet soda harmful to teeth?

To determine if diet soda is harmful to teeth, human wisdom teeth were submerged in three different brands of diet soda for two weeks. Mass loss, an indication of tooth damage, was measured over the two week period using an extremely accurate sceintific scale. The acidity of the diet soda tested was also determined using Litmus paper and and elecronic pH meter to measure the pH of each brand.

My initial prediction was that teeth would be damaged because diet soda contains the same acids that are in regular soda. While diet sodas do not contain sugar, they do contain citric and phosphoric acids which are believed to be harmful to teeth. Not surprisingly, all brands of soda did cause teeth to lose mass. Up to 6% of their orignial starting mass was lost. This findings does indicate that soda can be harmful to teeth.



Toxoplasma gondii in healthy lambs: which lambs are infected and why?









Spark discussion and debate. A good indicator of success is that people ask questions or want your contact details.

GO OUT THERE AND PROMOTE YOURSELF, YOUR PROFESSION AND YOUR WORK IF YOU DON'T KNOW ONE ELSE WILL.

