Writing an Abstract

Figure 1

What is an Abstract?

- A condensed version of a larger work, e.g. a paper or presentation
- A self-contained document – stands alone and makes sense

Helpful Hints for Conference Submissions:

- Read abstracts from conferences or journals for ideas and format
- Select an innovative-cutting edge-relevant topic
- Write an attention grabbing title
- Select the BEST conference track
- Ensure objectives match content
- Format using headings if word count limit allows
- Check grammar, spelling, readability – make it easy for the reviewer to follow the story
- Build presentation experience – start with local conference submissions, co-present with a mentor or experienced presenter

Stages of Writing an Abstract

Plan	Draft	Review	Peer Review	Edit	Package
• Start early • Choose a novel topic – appeal to broad audience • Ask "how does content add to current knowledge of topic?"	• Review instructions – word count, format, headings. • Draft in Word file (even if submission format is electronic)	• Allow sufficient time • Set aside draft and read with fresh eyes • Edit for grammar, spelling, flow, sentence structure	• Select someone who is rigorous and will offer constructive feedback • Allow sufficient time before due date	• Consider comments of reviewer(s) • Edit to strengthen abstract • Revisit spelling, flow, etc. • Revise, revise!	• Revisit author guidelines • Use a style that is easy to read and follow • Make it easy for reviewer(s) to read and find key elements

Why Write An Abstract?

1. **Selection** – Submission for presentations journals, proposals, grants
2. **Assist audience** – help readers or conference attendees decide if they should read an entire article or attend a presentation
3. **Indexing** – contains key words or phrases that allow for easy searching of on-line databases

Abstract Checklist

- ☐ Is the title clear, descriptive, innovative?
- ☐ Can people from other fields understand it?
- ☐ Is the abstract clear and concise?
- ☐ Are acronyms explained?
- ☐ Is the abstract free from grammar, spelling errors, and awkward sentence structure?
- ☐ Is the abstract factually correct?
- ☐ Are the guidelines (such as word count limit) followed?

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Figure 2

Creating a Poster Presentation

What is a Poster?

- A poster combines text and graphics to present a study or project in visually appealing, succinct format
- A method to display work and talk to/receive feedback from interested viewers

Overall Formatting Tips

- In general, information flows from left-to-right and top-to-bottom within several columns
- Suggested font sizes: 36 to 48 for text; 72 or bigger for titles
- Use a sans-serif font like Verdana, Ariel, or Tahoma (not Times New Roman); use 1-2 fonts max on the poster
- Use professional graphics and clear, non-pixelated pictures
- Make main points easy to find using bullets or numbers; avoid underlining text
- Ask someone to review/edit
- Print a 8.5x11" version to preview the overall look/layout

PARC – Poster Design Elements

Proximity	Alignment	Repetition	Contrast
• Create a relationship among related pieces of information • Group items relating to each other together or visually connect in some way	• Create order and organization; align elements to create a visual connection • Use visible or invisible lines to line up headings or text boxes	• Create consistency, strengthen a design, tie elements together • Create consistency through colors, fonts, patterns e.g. using a consistent color for headings	• Create differences; juxtaposition of opposing elements • Use contrast in colors, shapes, sizes and space (including white space) to emphasize or highlight elements

Keep in Mind

1. **Clarity of content** – decide on a small number of key points that you want viewers to take away
2. **Visual interest** – design the poster for viewers to notice and take interest in your project
3. **Elevator Speech** - prepare a brief overview of the poster; provide more information if viewers are interested
4. **Network** - get to know your fellow presenters
5. **Business Cards** – bring business cards to hand out

Poster Checklist

- ☐ Is the title clear, descriptive, innovative?
- ☐ Can you read the poster from a distance of four (4) to six (6)feet?
- ☐ Is the poster clean, sophisticated looking?
- ☐ Is the poster free from grammar, spelling errors, and long paragraphs; are acronyms explained?
- ☐ Does the poster provide enough information to the viewer to describe the work and make sense?
- ☐ Are the poster guidelines (e.g. size and mounting requirements) followed?

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Figure 3

NKI Council: Dissemination Series

Creating a Podium Presentation

What is a podium presentation?

- An oral presentation of a larger work, e.g. a paper or research study
- Presented to an audience, using a software program such as Power Point

Helpful Hints for Podium Presentations:

Before the presentation:
- Know your audience
- Define purpose and goals of the presentation
- Ensure objectives match content
- Ensure format meets presentation guidelines
- Use the same font throughout, use bullet points, and when presenting data use graphs
- Know your content, practice!

The day of the presentation:
- Arrive early to the venue
- Bring equipment and check functionality before presentation
- Wear professional attire
- Greet the audience as they arrive

Stages of Preparing a Podium Presentation

Plan	Draft	Review	Peer Review	Edit	Package
• Select a value-added topic • Ask "How does content add to current knowledge of topic?" • Outline content using an organizing framework	• Follow 6x6: 6 words/line, 6 lines/slide • Plan 1 minute/slide • Use a non-distracting, easily read background • Use high quality graphics	• Allow sufficient time for revisions • Present to colleagues who are and are not familiar with topic	• Rehearse with someone who is rigorous, and will offer constructive feedback • Allow twice as long as the presentation to rehearse	• Consider reviewer comments and revise to strengthen the presentation	• Revisit guidelines • Make it easy for viewers to read slides • Practice, especially with transitions

Tips for Success

1. Articulate clearly, speak slowly and loudly, vocalize pauses, and punctuation
2. Be aware of body language
3. Be mindful of podium panic - prepare, breath deeply, and be yourself
4. Consider using stories to exemplify a point
5. Encourage audience participation, such as an activity, case study, or poll
6. Prepare and rehearse responses for Q & A
7. Keep it short – if presentation is for 30 minutes, finish in 25 minutes
8. Bring business cards to hand out , if requested

Podium Presentation Do's and Don'ts

- **Do** make eye contact
- **Do** have a professional stance
- **Do** thank the audience, moderator, organization, and the researchers, team members, etc.
- **Don't** chew gum/candy
- **Don't** fidget
- **Don't** click or tap pen or pencil
- **Don't** play with clothing
- **Don't** shuffle notes

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Writing for Publication

Figure 4

Stages of Writing a Publishable Paper/Article

Plan	Review	Organize	Write in Sections	Submit	Revise
• Choose a topic • Select a target journal and secure "Author Guidelines" • Select a sample article • Prepare a mind-map of proposed article	• Conduct literature search using MeSH[1] terms or headings in mind-map • Read & critique articles • Synthesize articles	• Organize mind-map into "outline" for paper • Add selected articles into a reference list or program Prepare citations & references per guidelines	• Introduction • Purpose/Aim • Significance • Define terms • Framework • ROL[2] • Methods • Findings • Limitations • Conclusions • Implications for Practice	• Follow Author Guidelines exactly • Save each section (title page, abstract, manuscript) in a separate file • Prepare CTA[3] and save in a file • Submit as instructed	• Consider comments of reviewer(s) • Edit paper and list changes made per reviewer comments • Resubmit per editor's instructions

Publishable Papers
- Letters to the Editor
- Research papers
- Theory papers
- Systematic Reviews of the Literature
- Review of the literature
- Case Studies

Helpful Hints for Successful Submissions:
- Select an innovative, cutting edge, relevant topic; make certain your topic has not been recently published
- Select the BEST journal for your topic
- Read previously published articles and abstracts from your targeted journal for formatting ideas
- Write an attention grabbing title
- Precisely follow author guidelines for the article & abstract and for submission process
- Check grammar, spelling, readability – make it easy for the reader to follow the story

Writing the Abstract
1. Follow word & style guidelines
2. Use prescribed headings if available; review published papers & abstracts similar to yours
3. Keywords – provide key words MeSH terms or phrases that ensure easy searching of on-line databases

Article Checklist
- ☐ Is the title clear, descriptive, innovative?
- ☐ Is the abstract clear, concise & within word limits?
- ☐ Are acronyms/abbreviations defined?
- ☐ Is the manuscript free from grammar, spelling errors, and awkward sentence structure?
- ☐ Are the guidelines such as word count, page limit, headings, and citation/referencing style followed?
- ☐ Have you completed the CTA & saved into a file?

1. MeSH Terms = Medical Subject Headings
2. ROL = review of the literature
3. CTA = copyright transfer agreement

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