

Conference Abstract

Principles of Abstract Writing

1. You must address three different audiences, convincing them of the merit of your work.
2. You must summarize each section of your paper/report/poster: each section in one or two sentences.
3. It must be only one paragraph with no headings.

Who is your audience?

1. The panel who admits or denies your submission to the conference
2. The judges who will evaluate your submission, poster, presentation
3. The attendees who need to decide which posters to visit

What is the content of an abstract?

The abstract abstracts or pulls out key information from the parts of your paper/poster. Some authors copy and paste key sentences, but then you run the risk of lack of clarity. It is better to think of it as 4 mini-elevator pitches.

1. Introduction: What real world problem might your research be relevant to?
2. Purpose: What was your research question?
3. Methods: How did you try to find the answer to your question?
4. Results: What was answer to your question?

Style of Abstract Writing

Mapping the needs of different audiences upon the different components, results in the following:

- 1-2. From Introduction through Purpose: You will probably need a couple of sentences between #1 and #2, in order to move from the world level problem to the more specific problem that you're trying to solve. These sentences should be written for a general audience.
3. The methods should be written for an expert audience—the judges. It should highlight validity, reliability and innovation.
4. The results should be written for the conference organizers. Some authors are coy about revealing their results since they want the audience to visit the poster or read the article. More likely however, conference visitors will be attracted by significant and interesting results.