

Writing Dissertation's Abstract:

An abstract is a small window opening into the full content of your research/thesis. It is a type of discourse consisting of five different but complementary moves. The first move is optional and contains general background information about your key research variable or variables. The second move is the statement of the problem indicating your research hypothesis/ question. The third move is the methodology move representing your participants, if any; your materials/instruments, procedures, and data analysis. The fourth move portrays your findings. Finally, in the last optional move, you talk about the likely implications of the study.

1- Precise Language:

An abstract is a small summary of a larger paper. A dissertation is a long research paper with an original argument that you must write to graduate with a Master's degree or doctorate. An abstract helps give your reader a map of your paper before he or she reads it. It also helps researchers to know if your paper will be helpful to them before they expend time reading it. Therefore, you should try to write as clear an abstract as possible, in simple and concise language

Writing an abstract can be difficult: your job is to communicate lots of information using a limited number of words. Abstracts are short: usually not more than 300 words, although the precise length will depend on your particular requirements. You may thus only have one or two sentences to devote to the elements outlined above. You should thus use language that is precise, effective, and evocative, choosing each word carefully in order to convey your intended meaning. The use of active verb is more practical than using the passive verbs

2- Include the Correct Information for a Humanities Abstract.

For a humanities abstract, you will need to include information about the major works you are discussing. Remember to:

- *. Include any major works you're analysing. In other words, provide a short discussion of the source material, whether it's the diaries of a famous historical figure for a history dissertation, a work of literature, a piece of music, or a great work of art.
- *. Discuss the major theories you're applying to make your argument.
- *. Cover your main argument.
- *. Talk about your conclusions.

3- Know What to Include in a Social Science Abstract.

A social science abstract will most likely focus on the research you did and any studies you conducted. Try to:

- *. Include any methodology you used to conduct research.
- *. Provide an overview of any studies you conducted, including participants and the purpose of the study.

*. Discuss major theories that you are using for analyzing your work, as well as how your research fits into the larger discussion. Remember to keep it brief.

*. Don't forget to discuss your conclusions, as well as how your research could lead to further research.

4- Double Check that your Abstract Includes the Most Important Information Contained in your Paper.

Your abstract should include the main purpose of your paper, the problem you're exploring, how you implemented your research, the conclusions you drew, and the implications it holds for other research. These items will change by discipline, of course. The way you implement your research in science includes methodology (how you carried out your experiment), but in a humanities paper, you'll likely be talking about the theories you applied in your research (such as applying Foucault's theories to a book like *Wuthering Heights*).

5- Tips:

If you wrote a scientific, sociological, or psychological dissertation (or any other type of dissertation requiring field research), be sure to include information on your methodology.

If you're writing an abstract on a literature paper, be sure to include the major works you're reviewing. You can use some technical language if it is a technical paper.

The Writing Center at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill suggests five main ideas that any abstract should address, regardless of discipline. These are:

A-Reason for writing: What's important about your research and why should a reader care? / **b- Problem:** What problem is your research trying to solve? What's your main argument? / **c- Methodology:** What kind of research methods or approaches does your research use? / **d- Results:** What were the results of your research? Or, if you haven't finished your dissertation or paper yet, what results do you expect to find? / **e- Implications:** What are the larger implications of your project, both to your field and beyond? How does your project contribute to or intervene in the conversation around your research or dissertation topic?

Your goal in writing an abstract is to convince readers that your dissertation or project is important: be sure to use the abstract to sell yourself and tell readers why your work will make waves in your field.

A- Introductory Sentences in Abstracts:

This study (dissertation, research)?

aims to illuminate?

examines the role of...

explores why...

investigates the effects of...

assesses the impact of...on...

developed and tested the idea that...

I...

investigated the role of...

outline how...

introduce the concept of...

extend prior work on...

examine the relationship between...and...

identify...

evaluate these...by...

In this study (dissertation, research) I...

propose a model of...

B- Leading with Research Questions

This study (dissertation, research)...

is motivated by two research questions: (1)

To examine these questions, the study?

"...is a fundamental question in"

We suggest [argue] that a new generation of research in this area needs to address the extended question: [Insert your research question]?

C- Leading with Research Hypotheses

This study (dissertation, research)...

offers two hypotheses: (1) [insert research hypothesis one]; and (2) [insert research hypothesis two].

tested hypotheses regarding the relationship between...and...

It was hypothesized that [insert variable] is negatively [positively] related to...

hypothesized that [insert variable] is more negatively [positively] related to [insert variable] than [insert variable].

D- Leading with a Dissertation Aim or Goals

This study (dissertation, research)...

has three goals: (1) [insert goal one], (2) [insert goal two], and (3) [insert goal three].

E- Major findings

The findings from the research...

illustrate how...

show that the impact of [insert text] on [insert text] is more complex than previously thought/assumed.

address a controversial belief among practitioners that...

illustrate the antecedents and consequences of [insert text] and [insert text] in...

suggest that the effect of [variable X] on [variable Y] was moderated over time when...

A predicted, the...

Contrary to our expectations...

F- Conclusion

The findings...

provide support for the key arguments.

support the prediction that...

support the model:

offer insights into...

prompt a re-thinking of [insert your area of interest]

We conclude that...

1. Purpose

The purpose of an abstract is to summarise the content of your dissertation in a systematic and formulaic manner. The dissertation abstract serves as a short-hand for the entire piece. It indicates whether or not it would be worthwhile to read. Bear this purpose in mind when drafting your own abstract.

2. Length

Typically an abstract should not exceed one page of text, but it is essential to check departmental specifications to be sure that your abstract conforms with requirements. Exceeding stated limitations in length is a serious failure which will indicate a lack of understanding as to the purpose of an abstract.

3. Avoid Verbosity

The biggest challenge in writing a dissertation abstract is to retain focus and not exceed the word count. It is therefore necessary here to avoid unnecessarily florid and superfluous language. Keep it simple, clear and within specifications.

4. Thoroughness

The abstract must represent the entire dissertation, not just certain elements of it. Objectives, reviewed literature, methodology, analysis and conclusions: all should be summarised in the abstract. Remember that abstracts are used to inform the reader of what they are about to read, so don't leave too many surprises.

5. Terminology

The inclusion of key terms – both general and specific to your subject area – will provide a means for browsing research academics to identify the character and purpose of your dissertation as a whole.

6. Authority

Set the tone for your dissertation by establishing an authoritative academic voice early on in your abstract. Demonstrate your comfort with the academic register to set up the impression that your work is professional and credible.

7. Salesmanship

A rather crass way to think about the purpose of your abstract, perhaps, but useful nonetheless. Academics will read your abstract to decide whether or not your dissertation as a whole is likely to be useful to them. Indicate the significance of your research and emphasise the rigour of your methods.

8. Balance

In the same way that the dissertation as a whole must maintain the proper share of space between different chapters, so too the abstract should reflect this balance. Look at the marking criteria to see which aspects carry how many marks, and organise your dissertation abstract appropriately.

9. Clarity of Expression

As already mentioned, abstracts require a concise writing style to keep the word count low. In summarising such a large volume of material, be mindful also of the danger of obscurity and lack of clarity. Make sure the abstract is not entirely incomprehensible to an intelligent layman.

REFERENCES: