

How to Write a Conference Abstract¹

An abstract is the reader's first encounter with your paper/research. It should provide a brief summary of the topic, the approach used and the findings of the research, and should be a stand-alone document that can be understood without reading the paper/research.

An abstract should conform to the following format:

Title

The title of your abstract should be the same as the title of your paper/research.

The Body of the Abstract

The abstract is a very brief overview of your research. It tells the reader WHAT you did, WHY you did it, HOW you did it, WHAT you found, and WHAT it means. The abstract should essentially be a “mini” article. You should briefly state the purpose/problem/puzzle of the research (introduction), how the problem was studied (methods), the principal findings (results), and what the findings mean (discussion and conclusion). It is important to be **descriptive** but **concise!!**

Bibliography

The sources cited in the abstract.

Conference Abstract Worksheet

Use one or two concise phrases/sentences to summarize the most important aspects of your project for each section listed below.

Project/Paper Title

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Introduction (What is this project about? What is the problem or the puzzle? Why is this project interesting or important?)

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¹ The content presented here is drawn from materials from the libraries at the State University of New York. This is for pedagogical purposes only.

Literature / Hypothesis (What literature are you contributing to/What literature are you drawing on? Depending on your approach, do you have any hunches or propositions, what do you think you will find? Why?)

Methods (Briefly identify your epistemic community [e.g., positivism, postpositivist, critical, interpretivism, postmodern, etc.], your approach and procedures.)

Results (What has your theoretical or empirical research found?)

So What? (What do your findings mean? Why is this important?)