

Writing the abstract

Fundamentals of Academic Writing

Abstract as mini-thesis

1. What was done?
2. Why was it done?
3. How was it done?
4. What was found?
5. What is the significance of the findings?

(University of Queensland)

at different stages
Write the abstract ~~first~~

- “Focus your thinking on what you are currently working on”
- When writing chapters “you can easily lose the thread”
- “If you are having trouble writing an abstract [those parts of your research] are not well conceptualized yet.”

(University of Queensland)

at different stages
Re-write the abstract ~~later~~

- Before experiments: “The analysis is expected to show...”
- Later: “The analysis showed that...”
or: “Contrary to expectation, the analysis showed that...”
- The final abstract “is the first thing your reader will turn to”
(University of Queensland)

Conference abstracts

- Consider your audience
- Relate your topic to larger concerns
- Engage the conference theme (or seem to)
- Get to the point (clarity, brevity)
- Proofread, edit **and ask for help**

(Gradhacker)

Sample abstracts

- Is this information communicated? How? Where is it?
 - Thesis statement
 - Motivation / position in the field
 - Main task / research question
 - Methods / procedures
 - Results
 - Conclusion
 - Implications
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