

ASTANA IT UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION DISCIPLINES
ACADEMIC WRITING
WEEK9

Lecture 1: Writing Conference Abstract

Lecture 2: Preparing Poster Presentation for Conference

Seminar 1: Abstract writing practice

Seminar 2: Drafting the final poster

Seminar 3: Language focus: Preparing for conference presentation

LECTURE I: WRITING CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of Lecture 1, students will be able to:

- identify the abstract structure;
- distinguish good and bad examples of abstracts;
- review recommendations for writing an abstract.

WARM-UP

- Choose the statement you agree more? Why?
 1. The abstract should be a self-contained unit capable of being understood without the benefit of the text.
 2. The abstract should be a unit which cannot be understood without the benefit of the text.

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

- Participants in conference have to write a short abstract to appear in the conference program.
- This should summarize the contents of the presentation.
- Presentations are often based on a piece of research or a written paper.
- When writing a conference abstract, think carefully about **your audience**; your abstract should tell them about your research.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CONFERENCE ABSTRACT*

1. Accurate description and use of terminology

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2. **Concise reference to key points**

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1. Accurate description and use of terminology
2. Concise reference to key points
3. **A summary of the whole project, including the main conclusion**

*It is essential to remember that an abstract helps the reader decide whether to attend your Poster Presentation.
Therefore, the text of the abstract must be accessible.

IMRAD STRUCTURE

One common way to structure your abstract is to use [the IMRaD structure](#)

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This stands for:

- **Introduction**
- **Methods**
- **Results**
- **Discussion**

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Choose the best option:

- A. This study will investigate the relationship between social media use and adolescents' mental health.
- B. This study investigates the relationship between social media use and adolescents' mental health.

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- A. Structured interviews were conducted with 25 participants.
- B. Structured interviews will be conducted with 25 participants.

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Choose the best options:

- A. Our analysis has shown a strong correlation between social media use and adolescents' mental health.
- B. Our analysis shows a strong correlation between social media use and adolescents' mental health.
- C. Our analysis showed a strong correlation between social media use and adolescents' mental health.

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If there are important limitations to your research (for example, related to your sample size or methods), you should mention them briefly in the abstract. This allows the reader to accurately assess the credibility and generalizability of your research. If your aim was to solve a practical problem, your discussion might include recommendations for implementation. If relevant, you can briefly make suggestions for further research.

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Choose the best option:

- **We concluded that social media use influences adolescents' mental health.**
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- **We conclude that social media use influences adolescents' mental health.**

Recommendations for writing an abstract

It can be a real challenge to condense your whole work into just a couple of hundred words, but the abstract will be the first (and sometimes only) part that people read, so it's important to get it right.

These strategies can help you get started.

READ OTHER ABSTRACTS

- The best way to learn the conventions of writing an abstract in your discipline is to read other people's.
- You probably already read lots of journal article abstracts while conducting your literature review—try using them as a framework for structure and style.
- You can also find lots of dissertation abstract examples in thesis and dissertation databases.

REVERSE OUTLINE

- Not all abstracts will contain precisely the same elements. For longer works, you can write your abstract through a process of **reverse outlining**.
- For each chapter or section, list keywords and draft one to two sentences that summarize the central point or argument. This will give you a framework of your abstract's structure.
- Next, revise the sentences to make connections and show how the argument develops.

WRITE CLEARLY AND CONCISELY

- A good abstract is short but impactful, so make sure every word counts. Each sentence should clearly communicate one main point.

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- **Avoid repetition and filler words:** Replace nouns with pronouns when possible and eliminate unnecessary words.
- **Avoid detailed descriptions:** An abstract is not expected to provide detailed definitions, background information, or discussions of other scholars’ work. Instead, include this information in the body of your thesis or paper.

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- Cohesive — it flows smoothly between the parts.

How to be concise?

Do not waste the main elements of the sentence. The main elements of a sentence are its subject, verb, and object. They should convey the core of the thought. As you compose a sentence, then, get the essence of the thought into the subject, verb, and object

- WORDY The fact of the war had the effect of causing many changes.
- CONCISE The war caused many changes.

Use Parallelism

- WORDY These books are not primarily for reading, but they are used for reference.
- CONCISE These books are not primarily for reading but for reference.
- WORDY The beginner must work more slowly, and he must work more consciously.
- CONCISE The beginner must work more slowly and more consciously.

Do Not State What Sentence Structure Itself Makes Clear.

Use Colon or Dash for Announcement

- WORDY There were many reasons for the Civil War, which include slavery, economic expansion, states' rights, cultural differences, and sectional jealousy.
- CONCISE There were many reasons for the Civil War: slavery, economic expansion, states' rights, cultural differences, and sectional jealousies.
- WORDY Pitchers are divided into two classes. These classes are starters and relievers.
- CONCISE Pitchers are divided into two classes—starters and relievers

Use Participles

Because they lacked experience, they didn't do a good job.

BETTER: Lacking experience, they didn't do a good job.

These ideas are out of date, and they don't tell us anything new.

BETTER: These ideas are out of date, telling us nothing new.

Avoid Meaningless Strings of Verb. A special case of empty verb strings is the awkward passive construction.

The writer's point must be clearly stated by him at the beginning of the paragraph.

- BETTER: The writer must clearly state his point at the beginning of the paragraph.

The work must be done by her by tomorrow.

- BETTER: She must do the work by tomorrow.

Use active voice by default; research shows readers comprehend it more quickly than passive voice. But use passive voice when

- **the action is more important than the subject, such as when you're describing research or testing you've done:** The results generated from the test were telling.
- **the subject is unknown:** Every year, hundreds of people are diagnosed with hearing problems caused by excessive cell phone use; or
- **you don't want to identify the subject, such as instances in which identifying the subject would cause unnecessary embarrassment:** The lights in the lab were left on for three nights in a row and the bulb burned out as a result.

However, don't use passive voice to conceal serious responsibility:

Mistakes *were made* that delayed the testing for weeks.

Use active voice instead:

The team *made* mistakes that delayed the testing for weeks.

Avoid using forms of the verb “be”

Forms of the verb “be” (is, am, are, were, was) indicate a state of being rather than an action. They can weaken an active sentence and, in some instances, may indicate passive voice. Use active verbs instead whenever possible.

Before: The report **is waiting** for your approval.

After: The report **awaits** your approval.

The people were supportive of conservation.

- BETTER: The people supported conservation.

Avoid Empty Redundancy

Empty redundancy is pointless repetition. It is often found in headwords and modifiers:

- bisect in half
- modern life of today
- vital essentials
- sufficiently satisfied
- It is clearly evident that

Reduce prepositional phrases

- **Before:** The opinion of the manager.
- **After:** The manager's opinion.
- **Before:** It is a matter **of** the gravest importance **to** the health **of** anyone who uses a microwave and has a heart condition to avoid standing **in front of** the microwave **while** it is running.
- **After:** Anyone **with** a heart condition should avoid standing **in front of** an operating microwave oven.

Specificity Means Concision

People who enter college for the first time find it difficult to adjust to the teaching.

- **BETTER:** College freshmen find it difficult to adjust to the teaching.

The sudden change motivated him into a rage.

- **BETTER:** The sudden change enraged him.

REVISE YOUR SENTENCES USING THE PARAMEDIC METHOD

While you may not use it for everything you write, the paramedic method, developed by Richard Lanham, a professor of English at the University of California, is a set of steps for revising sentences. When the situation is appropriate, use this popular method to make your writing clear and concise (adapted from the Purdue Online Writing Lab).

The first step is to concretely identify problems in your sentences:

- Underline prepositions (of, about, to, in, across, etc.)
- Circle forms of the verb “be” (is, am, are, were, was)
- Put boxes around action words (verbs like test, result, change; as well as nominalisations like testing, resulting, changing).
- Highlight the person or thing performing the action.
- Bracket wind-up explanations.
- Cross out redundancies.

REVISE YOUR SENTENCES USING THE PARAMEDIC METHOD

The next step is to revise the problem areas you have identified:

- Rewrite or delete unnecessary prepositional phrases
- Replace forms of “be” with action verbs.
- Put the action in the verb.
- Put the person or thing performing the action into the subject.
- Delete unnecessary wind-up explanations.
- Eliminate redundancies.

LET'S PRACTICE

- Although Bradley Hall is regularly populated by students, close study of the building as a structure is seldom undertaken by them.
- Bradley Hall is usually filled with students who do not study the building as a structure.
- He dropped out of school on account of the fact that it was necessary for him to help support his family.
- He left school to support his family.
- It is expected that the new schedule will be announced by the bus company within the next few days.
- The bus company will probably announce its schedule during the next few days.

- It is very unusual to find someone who has never told a deliberate lie on purpose.
- Rarely will you find someone who has never lied deliberately.
- Trouble is caused when people disobey rules that have been established for the safety of all.
- Disobeying safety regulations causes trouble.
- A campus rally was attended by more than a thousand students. Five students were arrested by campus police for disorderly conduct, while several others were charged by campus administrators with organising a public meeting without being issued a permit to do so.
- Five out of more than a thousand students at a campus rally were arrested for disorderly conduct, and several others were charged by campus administrators with organizing a public meeting without a permit.

- In the not-too-distant future, college freshmen must all become aware of the fact that there is a need for them to make contact with an academic adviser concerning the matter of a major.
- **Soon, college freshmen must realise that they need to contact their advisors about their choices of majors.**
- In our company, there are wide-open opportunities for professional growth with a company that enjoys an enviable record for stability in the dynamic atmosphere of aerospace technology.
- **Our company provides opportunities for professional growth and stability in the dynamic field of aerospace technology.**

Abstract writing checklist

Criteria

Yes/NO

The word count is within the required length, or a maximum of one page.

The abstract appears after the title page and acknowledgements and before the table of contents.

I have clearly stated my research problem and objectives.

I have briefly described my methodology.

I have summarized the most important results.

I have stated my main conclusions.

I have mentioned any important limitations and recommendations.

The abstract can be understood by someone without prior knowledge of the topic.

LECTURE 2: PREPARING POSTER PRESENTATION FOR CONFERENCE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of Lecture 2, students will be able to:

- identify general presentation skills (strategy and techniques)
- outline and organize an academic presentation (strategy and techniques)

WARM-UP. ARE THESE STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE?

- It's ok to stand with one hand in your pocket while presenting.
- You should memorize your presentation.
- You should look at people's eyes most of the time you are speaking.
- You apologize for your English skills before or during your presentation.
- The more Power Point slides you use, the more impressed the audience will be.
- Find out as much as possible about the audience before you present.
- Use your Power Point slides to help you remember your main points.
- Focus your eye contact on the most important audience members.
- It's not necessary to prepare for the Q&A session that usually follows a presentation.
- Holding your hands together in front of you or behind your back shows the audience that
 - you feel relaxed.
 - Do not speak while your back is to the audience.
 - The more body language you use, the more effective your presentation will be.
- Use small cards for notes, rather than large pieces of paper.
- It's okay to repeat information during a presentation.
- Separate your presentation into a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.

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PREPARING A POSTER PRESENTATION

- The purpose of the poster is to present ideas **CLEARLY and CONCISELY**.
- The main idea of a poster should therefore be immediately clear to the audience when they first see it.
- You need to think carefully about the impact, for example, by being selective in what you display.
- If you try to communicate too many ideas on a poster, your main idea will be lost.

ELEMENTS THAT YOUR POSTER SHOULD NORMALLY INCLUDE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. **A heading providing the title of the project, the participants involved in completing the work and their affiliation**

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3. **An introduction with a clear statement about the issues you are interested in, your thesis statement and essential background information**

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4. **A methodology section that explains the basis of the technique you are using, or the procedure you have adopted in your study. You should also state and justify any assumptions so that your results can be viewed in context**

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5. **A results section that you should use to show illustrative examples of the main results of the work**

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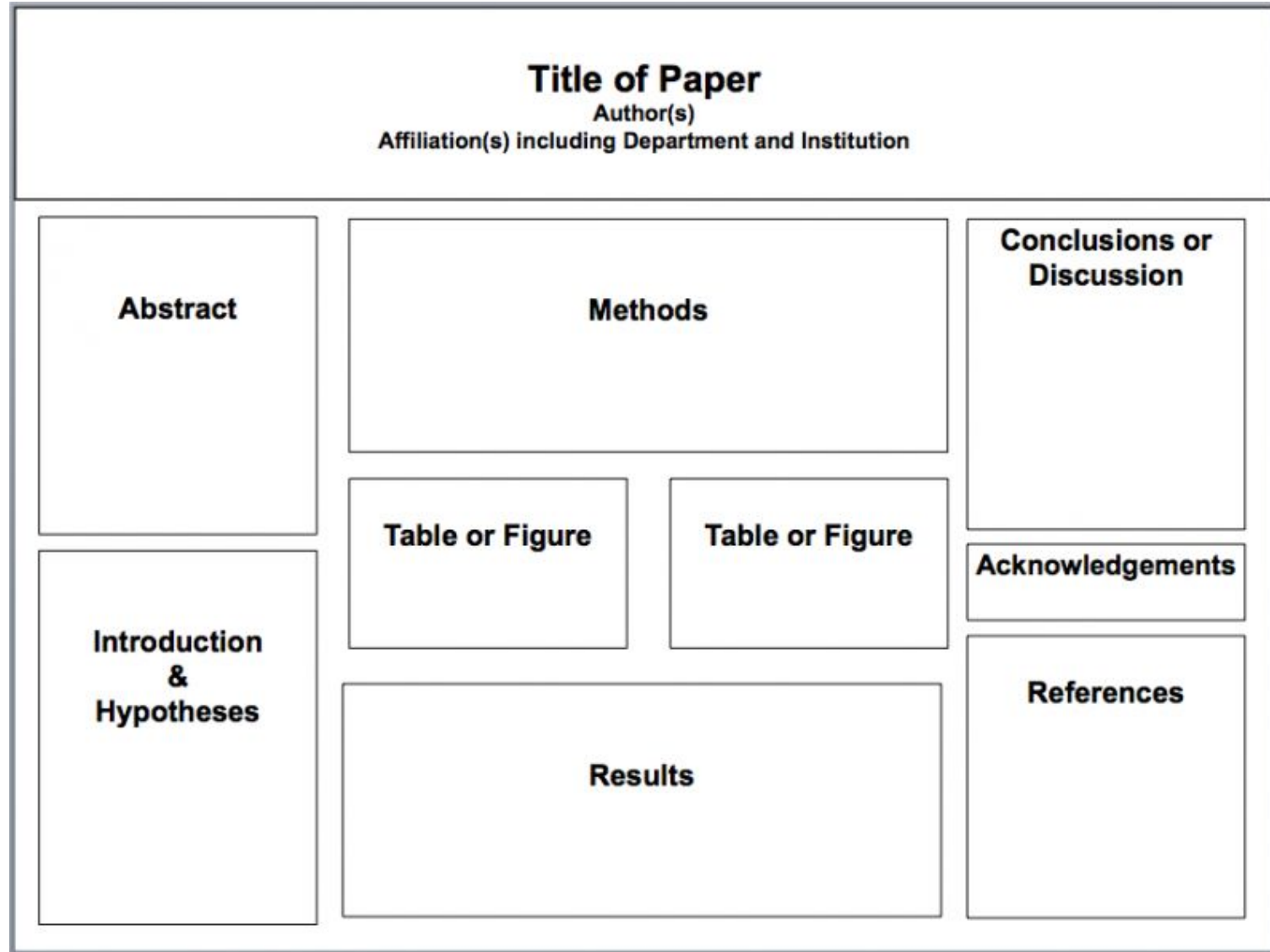
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5. A results section that you should use to show illustrative examples of the main results of the work
6. **A conclusion describing the main findings of your research and any recommendations about future research that could be carried out, or experiments or tests that could be applied**

STEPS TO PRODUCE A POSTER PRESENTATION:

- Make a sketch of the poster;
- Arrange the content in a series of three, four or five columns. This will help people follow the information on the poster;
- Assemble the elements of the poster.

* An important issue with poster presentations is that you must present specific information in a limited space.

AN EXAMPLE OF
THE POSTER
PRESENTATION
SCRATCH



GIVING A PRESENTATION.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN PLANNING YOUR PRESENTATION

- What is **the main purpose** of your presentation?
- Who is **the audience** – are they experts or non-experts in your field? This will influence how you present your content, e.g., you may need to explain some key vocabulary depending on the prior knowledge that your audience is likely to have.
- What is the **length of your presentation**? Running over time can be a serious fault and if, for example, you were presenting at a conference, you would not be allowed to continue and the whole point of your presentation could be lost.
- Is the presentation being assessed? If this is a case, you need to determine the **assessment criteria**.

PRACTICING YOUR PRESENTATION

- It is important to **go over your presentation many times**, not only in your head, but also aloud.
- Practicing will **give you confidence** and help you sound convincing; the audience will then be more interested in what you have to say.
- Make sure you know **how you will begin** your presentation; this is when you gain the attention of your audience.
- Practice how you will maintain **contact with your audience** to ensure they are following what you are saying.
- Make sure you have included **appropriate language chunks**.

1. Introduction – Starting:

Good morning (Good evening, Good afternoon)

My name is _____. I'm _____.

This morning (This afternoon, This evening, Tonight, Today)

I'd like to explain

I'd like to begin by discussing

I'm going to talk about

My point is ...

I will look at this from three points of view: first, ...; next, ...; and finally, ...

In the first part of my presentation, I'll describe....

After that I will explain....

Finally, I'll show you

2. Body – Explaining points/ Using connecting words:

First, I'd like to talk about ...

Now, I'd like to move on to ...

Next, let me describe...

The next point I'll discuss is ...

This means ...

This is supported by ...

According to

Finally, let me explain....

For example, ... For instance,

First, ... second, ... third, ... last, ...

Another, ... In addition, ... Moreover, .. Nevertheless,... but ... yet...

Since Because...

Therefore, ... Thus, Because of ... Due to ...So, ...

Similar to ... Similarly, ... like... the same as ... equal to ... in comparison, ...compared to ...

In contrast, ... different from ... differs from...

3. Conclusion – Ending:

In conclusion (In summary, I've talked about (discussed)

To conclude (To summarize), I've explained (shown) ...

My main point was ... My (three) main points were ...

In my opinion, ... Therefore (So), I feel (believe, think, recommend, suggest)...

Thank you for your attention.

LANGUAGE CHUNKS

Effective openings

- Communication experts are agreed that the first three minutes of a presentation are the most important.
- They talk about ‘hooks’ – simple techniques for getting the immediate attention of the audience.
- A good start makes you feel more confident.
- There are three primary ways to hook: the **problem, facts, or story** technique

LANGUAGE CHUNKS

The following frames will help you prepare effective openings, using the **problem, facts, or story** technique. You should always know exactly how you are going to start.

- Problem Technique

Suppose

How would you

Have you ever wondered why it is that ?

How many people here this morning/afternoon/ evening

Well, imagine ...

Do you think that's possible?

- Amazing facts technique

Did you know that...

According to the latest study, ...

Statistics show that.....

I read somewhere the other day that

- Story / Anecdote Technique

You know,

When I think about

I'm reminded of

Have you ever been in the situation where ...

I remember

It turned out ...

THE CONCLUDING VIDEO

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AwMFhyH7_5g
- Watch the video and take notes

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