

## **Abstracts and Introductions**

What is an abstract? A brief summary of a longer proposal or paper.

### **Characteristics of a strong abstract**

1. Clear, concise, and simple language
2. Written in past tense
3. States the objectives of the study
4. Briefly described the important methods
5. Briefly summarizes the results (research paper) or hypotheses (proposal)
6. States the major conclusions, focusing on novel findings and their relevance (i.e., interpret the results)
7. Needs to stand alone with a title to provide readers a full understanding of the project

### **An abstract short NOT**

1. Present information or conclusions not supported by the paper or relevant to the proposal
2. Contain references
3. Cite tables or figures
4. Include any abbreviations or acronyms
5. Rely on other sections of the paper or proposal
6. Contain normative language

### **Generalized abstract formula**

1. Generalized topic statement that addresses the focus of the research
2. Statement that introduces the specific topic, need, issue studied
3. Identify the exact topic and/or describe the knowledge gap that will be addressed
4. State how the study aims to address the knowledge gap: What is the objective(s)?
5. Study design and methods (2-3 sentences) – proposal and research paper
6. Analytical techniques (1-2 sentences) – research paper
7. Results or anticipated results – value of the anticipated results
8. Implication, management recommendation, or broader application of result(s)

**Functions of the Introduction:**

1. States the rationale/motivation for the study
2. Provides sufficient background information to allow the reader to understand/evaluate the problem without reading other research
3. States the purpose/objective(s)/hypotheses for the research

**General rules for a strong introduction**

1. Clearly define the nature and scope of the problem studied
2. Review the pertinent literature to orient the reader to the study needs
3. Outline the knowledge gaps that exist and address how your project will help fill those gaps
4. Transition into your objective(s)/hypotheses