

## **Structured abstracts**

Emerald introduced structured abstracts to all journals in 2005. This development was undertaken as part of our strategy of continuous improvement in the delivery and dissemination of papers. Use of structured abstracts ensures that better information is supplied and that there is more consistency across the journals and database. Ultimately, readers and researchers searching the database are more likely to access the paper when the abstract provides useful information. In the past, author-written abstracts were very variable both in terms of content and quality. Structured abstracts ensure we no longer have this problem.

In an electronic environment, abstracts are more important than they have ever been. Sometimes this "snippet" is the only thing a reader or researcher will see and it is the one chance we have of persuading them to download the full text of the paper.

### **Structured abstracts act like signposts, they provide:**

1. Consistency and clarity
2. Much easier evaluation of abstracts when confronted with a list of them
3. Speed to any literature search – saves time therefore.
4. A format where it is easy to isolate sections and therefore read about the key elements of a paper
5. A unique approach which sets Emerald abstracts apart from others
6. Real support when seeking academic support materials depending on the identified needs e.g. research papers employing particular types of research methods
7. Useful information in libraries – identifying texts for library users or directing them to Emerald
8. More efficient evaluation of papers at the abstract level
9. Transparency of the valuable content of the database acting as a clearer shop window
10. Ease of reading.
11. Particular benefits for practitioners – being able to select quickly those papers with explicit practical implications
12. Benefits for researchers – being able to select quickly those papers that may help them design their own research agenda and see what has already been done.
13. A major benefit in that one can pick out quickly the new angle/value of a paper.
14. Best practice from the medical and scientific fields but adapted for our readers' and researchers' needs within the management and business field.
15. A clear framework for extracting, summarising and emphasising pertinent information for people in management
16. Encouragement and a requirement for authors and researchers to provide stronger links between research and practice – something that both government and other funding bodies support.

Structured abstracts will help the Editor in their preliminary review of a paper and will certainly help the journal reviewers get an overview of a paper even before conducting the review.

## **How to write a structured abstract**

### **Paper type**

Please choose a category for your paper. Pick the category which most closely describes your paper. We understand that some papers can fit into more than one category but it is necessary to assign your paper to one of the categories - these are listed and will be searchable within the database.

- **Research paper:** This category covers papers which report on any type of research undertaken by the author(s). The research may involve the construction or testing of a model or framework, action research, testing of data, market research or surveys, empirical, scientific or clinical research.
- **Viewpoint:** Any paper, where content is dependent on the author's opinion and interpretation, should be included in this category; this also includes journalistic pieces.
- **Technical paper:** Describes and evaluates technical products, processes or services.
- **Conceptual paper :** These papers will not be based on research but will develop and test hypotheses. The papers are likely to be discursive and will cover philosophical discussions and comparative studies of others' work and thinking.
- **Case study:** Case studies describe actual interventions or experiences within organizations. They may well be subjective and will not generally report on research. A description of a legal case or a hypothetical case study used as a teaching exercise would also fit into this category.
- **Literature review:** It is expected that all types of paper cite any relevant literature so this category should only be used if the main purpose of the paper is to annotate and/or critique the literature in a particular subject area. It may be a selective bibliography providing advice on information sources or it may be comprehensive in that the paper's aim is to cover the main contributors to the development of a topic and explore their different views.
- **General review:** This category covers those papers which provide an overview or historical examination of some concept, technique or phenomena. The papers are likely to be more descriptive or instructional ("how to" papers) than discursive.

### **Selecting keywords**

Supply up to six keywords for tagging the paper when archived in the database. Researchers will be more likely to retrieve the paper when conducting a keyword search of our database if your paper is suitably tagged. In the near future the controlled list of keywords will appear on the Emerald website and will form part of the new online content management system so it will be easier then to find the suitable terms but in the meantime pick keywords which reflect the specificity of the paper. Avoid overarching terms like "Management" unless the paper discusses the topic with such a wide focus. Use the most common term for a concept. Do not make up new terms for an old concept. Try to think broadly; if the paper discusses performance appraisal in an electronics factory it may be

worthwhile supplying the industry as a keyword. If an activity/research takes place in a particular country then supply the country's name as a keyword.

### Writing the abstract

To produce a structured abstract for the journal and Emerald database, please complete the following fields about your paper. There are four fields which are obligatory (Purpose, Design, Findings and Value); the other two (Research limitations/implications and Practical implications) may be omitted if they are not applicable to your paper.

**Abstracts should contain no more than 250 words.** Write concisely and clearly. The abstract should reflect only what appears in the original paper.

<i>Purpose of this paper</i>	What are the reason(s) for writing the paper or the aims of the research?
<i>Design/methodology/approach</i>	How are the objectives achieved? Include the main method(s) used for the research. What is the approach to the topic and what is the theoretical or subject scope of the paper?
<i>Findings</i>	What was found in the course of the work? This will refer to analysis, discussion, or results.
<i>Research limitations/implications (if applicable)</i>	If research is reported on in the paper this section must be completed and should include suggestions for future research and any identified limitations in the research process.
<i>Practical implications (if applicable)</i>	What outcomes and implications for practice, applications and consequences are identified? Not all papers will have practical implications but most will. What changes to practice should be made as a result of this research/paper?
<i>What is original/value of paper</i>	What is new in the paper? State the value of the paper and to whom.

### A sample structured abstract

Title: Internal brand building and structuration: the role of leadership

Author(s): Christine Vallaster, Leslie de Chernatony

Journal: European Journal of Marketing

Year: 2006 Volume: 40 Issue: 7/8 Page: - 784

**Purpose** – The paper aims to clarify the relationship between organisational structures and individual brand supporting behaviour. It proposes modelling the social transformation process and outlining why and how leadership is important throughout the internal brand building process. The study aims to expand the domain of corporate branding by including a broader range of human resource and leadership-related aspects than is normally found in the branding literature.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The paper opted for an exploratory study using the open-ended approach of grounded theory, including 30 depth interviews and one expert group discussion with employees representing middle and senior management having mainly a marketing and corporate communications background. The data were complemented by documentary analysis, including brand documents, descriptions of internal processes, and copies of employee magazine articles.

**Findings** – The paper provides empirical insights about how change is brought about during internal brand building. It suggests that successful leaders act as “integrating forces” on two levels: integrating the elements of corporate identity structures, and mediating between the corporate branding structures and the individual.

**Research limitations/implications** – Because of the chosen research approach, the research results may lack generalisability. Therefore, researchers are encouraged to test the proposed propositions further.

**Practical implications** – The paper includes implications for the development of a powerful brand image, the development of “brand ambassadors” and for managing the balance between stability and change.

**Originality/value** – This paper fulfils an identified need to study how brand-supportive behaviour can be enabled.

**Keywords:** Brand management, Corporate branding, Leadership, Social change

**Article Type:** Research paper