Writing Your Abstract

Below are two tools that can be helpful for writing an abstract or other overview of your work

# [Koopman template](https://users.ece.cmu.edu/~koopman/essays/abstract.html) (1997)

**Instructions**: answer each question with 1-2 sentences. Then copy and paste all five sentences into a single paragraph and clean up the wording and flow. That’s your first draft! This one is better for scientific audiences

*What problem are you trying to solve?*

*Why do we care about the problem and the results?*

*How did you go about solving or making progress on the problem?*

*What's the answer?*

*What are the implications of your answer?*

# [Message Box](https://www.compassscicomm.org/leadership-development/the-message-box/) (Compass)

**Instructions:** answer the questions here or download the pdf template on the Compass website. This one is better for science communication and non-specialist audiences. Use each question to brainstorm the key points and then use that to craft your summary or even full presentation!

Pre-question: who is your audience? (only consider one group at a time and repeat the following questions with each difference audience)

What’s the big picture?

What specific dimension of the issue are you addressing?

How does this impact something your audience cares about?

What can be done to address the problem?

Who does this help and how?

## Things your audience cares about/broader impacts

* See the NSF page for a list of potential societal outcomes to help brainstorm: <https://new.nsf.gov/funding/learn/broader-impacts>
  + NSF suggested categories: inclusion, STEM education, public engagement, societal well-being, STEM workforce, partnerships, national security, economic competitiveness, and infrastructure