How to write good abstracts for conferences

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Why do we bother to write abstracts for conferences?

• as a way of getting some visibility when you go on the job market

 as a way of getting some experiences on presenting your work in public

as a way of making some new friends and visiting new places



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Huffman, Schuhmann, Keller and Chen at the Acoustical Society of America (June 25-29)

Date: 25–29 June 2017 Location: Boston, MA

Professor Marie Huffman, our PhD alumna Katharina Schuhmann (Penn State University) and two Stony Brook undergraduate students, Kayla Keller and Chanda Chen, are presenting a poster at the Acoustical Society of America. The conference is held in Boston, MA on June 25-29, 2017.

• Marie Huffman, Katharina Schuhmann, Kayla Keller, and Chanda Chen. Interaction of drift and distinctiveness in L1 English-L2 Japanese learners.

More information is available here.

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What's the differences between paper abstracts and conference abstracts?

Paper abstracts:

"I plan to look at X and find out whether Y is the case."

- Conference abstracts:
 - "I look at X supposing Y is the case, and I have data to back up the hypothesis, so Y is the case."
 - It must be "immediately clear and understandable", because "no one will have time to puzzle out your intended meaning."
 - "The point of a conference in general is to present new ideas that have not yet been published"

What are the basic components of an abstract?

Please order these sections

- 1. Title
- 2. Statement of the Problem/ research topic/ hypothesis
- 3. Solution/ how do you account for the problem
- 4. Conclusion
- 5. Data
- 6. References
- 7. Theoretical framework and context
- 8. Methodology

What should pay attention while drafting an abstract?

Pay attention to format (especially obey the format guidelines)

Abstract Format Guidelines

- 1. Abstracts must be submitted in PDF format.
- 2. Abstracts must have no more than 500 words of narrative text. Titles, examples, trees, tables, figures, captions, and references do not count toward this 500 word limit. The title of the abstract should appear at the top of the page but does not count as part of the 500-word limit.
- 3. Abstracts must fit on one 8.5x11 page, with margins no smaller than 1/2 inch and font no smaller than 10 point. No exceptions to these requirements are allowed. This means that all content (narrative text, titles, examples, trees, tables, figures, captions, and references) must fit on one page.

What should pay attention while drafting an abstract?

You should not identify yourself in any way on the abstract itself

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For example, "In Smith (1992), I......
As proposed in my previous paper (Smith 2016),
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What should pay attention before submitting an abstract?

- Get feedback from someone else
- Fix typos
- Fix gross flaws in argumentation
- Be sure to anonymize your .pdf document by clicking on "File," then "Properties," removing your name if it appears in the "Author" line, and resaving before uploading it

Further reading

 LSA Model Abstracts: https://www.linguisticsociety.org/resource/model-abstracts