

Informative Abstracts



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What is an informative abstract?

A good abstract provides prospective readers the opportunity to judge the relevance of a longer work in a short and powerful statement. Abstracts act as a surrogate for the work itself by introducing the readers to the content, issues, and solutions explored. Abstracts also include the key terms found in the longer work and the purpose and methods of the research (if applicable).

How to get started

While the format of your abstract depends on the work being abstracted, all abstracts share several mandatory components, and there are also some optional parts that you can decide to include or not. When preparing to draft your abstract, ask yourself the following questions:

Reason for writing	➔	Why is the research important?
Problem	➔	What is the work trying to answer? What are the main arguments, claim, and thesis?
Methodology	➔	How was the research performed? Scientific abstracts may include specific research models or approaches used in the larger study. Other abstracts, including literary, may describe the types of evidence used in the research.
Results	➔	What outcomes must be reported? A scientific work may indicate specific results of the project. Other abstracts may discuss findings in a more general way.
Implications	➔	What changes should be implemented as a result of the findings? How does this work add to the body of knowledge on the topic?

Abstracts must include

- * A citation of the source, preceding the abstract.
- * The most important information first.
- * Clear, concise, and powerful writing.
- * Key words and phrases that quickly identify the content and focus of the work.
- * The same language found in the original, including technical language.

Abstracts may include

- * The thesis of the work, usually in the first sentence.
- * Background information that places the work in the larger body of literature.
- * The same chronological structure as the original work.

Informative Abstract, Cont'd

Drafting the Abstract

When abstracting your own work, it may be difficult to condense a piece of writing that you have agonized over for weeks, months or even years into a approximately 250-300 word statement. There are some techniques you can use to make it easier:

Reverse Outlining

Using a copy of your entire paper, write the main idea of each paragraph in ten words or less. Once every paragraph has been summarized, gather the summaries and combine them into direct, powerful sentences.

Copy and Paste

While reading through the entire paper, copy sentences that capture key passages and paste them to a separate document. Take what you have copied and revise them to flow cohesively together.

Revise! Revise! Revise!

The most important step in writing any abstract is to revise early and often. When revising, delete extraneous words and incorporate meaningful and powerful words. The idea is to be as clear and complete as possible in the smallest amount of space. Make sure to have others evaluate the clarity of your abstract.

✦ Make sure you address the **reason for writing, problem, methodology, results and implications.** ✦

Commonwealth Honors Program at Massasoit Formatting

Bold your name →	Rebecca Whittaker (Panteha Sanati)	←	Your professor's full name in parenthesis
Your professor's department →	Department of Humanities		
Blank space ↗			
↘	<u>Electroconvulsive Therapy: A Modern Day Lobotomy</u>	←	Your whole title <u>underlined</u>
No indentation and left aligned →	Over the years, the world has been introduced to several controversial treatment methods for the mentally ill. We have seen procedures ranging from drilling a hole into a human skull, to placing a surgical instrument through the eye. What each controversial treatment method from the past has in common is that they are now considered no longer beneficial, but extremely harmful. As a matter of fact, lobotomy was once praised and practiced all over the world, but it is now known as one of the biggest failures for its life threatening risks and frightening results. A year after lobotomy had its debut, Electroconvulsive Therapy was introduced to the world along with its wildly similar effects to a lobotomy. Seventy-seven years later, Electroconvulsive Therapy is very much alive and performed all over the world. This paper will discuss the harmful long term effects of Electroconvulsive Therapy, and why it still remains one of the most ethically controversial treatment methods for the mentally ill.		
Single space throughout →			

★ Remember to use 12 point Times New Roman font! ★