

Writing an Abstract

Pre - Ph.D. Course Work Paper I (Research Methodology)

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1. What is an Abstract?

- **An abstract is a brief summary of a research article review, conference proceeding, or any in-depth analysis of a particular subject and is often used to help the reader quickly ascertain the purpose of the paper**
- **An abstract is basically a short summary used for research surveys or large papers such as thesis or dissertations. As majority of these are quite lengthy, an abstract is used to provide a complete but concise summary of the entire academic writing**
- **An abstract summarizes, usually in one paragraph of 300 words or less, the main aspects of the entire paper in a prescribed sequence that includes:**
 - 1. The overall purpose of the study and the research problem(s) investigated;**
 - 2. The basic design of the study;**
 - 3. Major findings or trends found as a result of the analysis;**
 - 4. A brief summary of interpretations and conclusions**

2. Purpose

- 1. Helps readers decide if they should read an entire article**
- 2. Helps readers and researchers remember key findings**
- 3. Helps readers understand text by acting as a pre-reading of key points**
- 4. Indexes articles for quick review and cross-referencing**
- 5. Allows supervisors to review technical work without getting into too much details**
- 6. Research indexing databases like SCOUPS often show only the abstract of the paper as search results**
- 7. Many researchers check out the abstract to decide whether to further delve into the paper or not**
- 8. Abstract is the pivot of a research paper because many journals' editorial boards screen manuscripts only on the basis of the abstract**
- 9. Plays a key role when other researchers look for literature on a specific topic**
- 10. Plays an important role in the peer review process**

3. When to write an Abstract?

- 1. Submitting articles in journals, specially online journals**
- 2. Applying for research grants**
- 3. Writing a book proposal**
- 4. Completing the Ph.D. thesis or M.A. dissertation**
- 5. Writing a proposal for a conference paper**
- 6. Writing a proposal for a book chapter**
- 7. Writing a patent**

4. A 10-step Guide To Make Your Research Paper Abstract More Effective

- 1. Begin writing the abstract after you have finished writing your paper**
- 2. Pick out the major objectives/hypotheses and conclusions from your *Introduction* and *Conclusion* sections**
- 3. Select key sentences and phrases from your *Methods* section**
- 4. Identify the major results from your *Results* section**
- 5. Now, arrange the sentences and phrases selected in steps 2, 3, and 4 into a single paragraph in the following sequence: Introduction, Methods, Results, and Conclusions**

6. Make sure that this paragraph does not contain

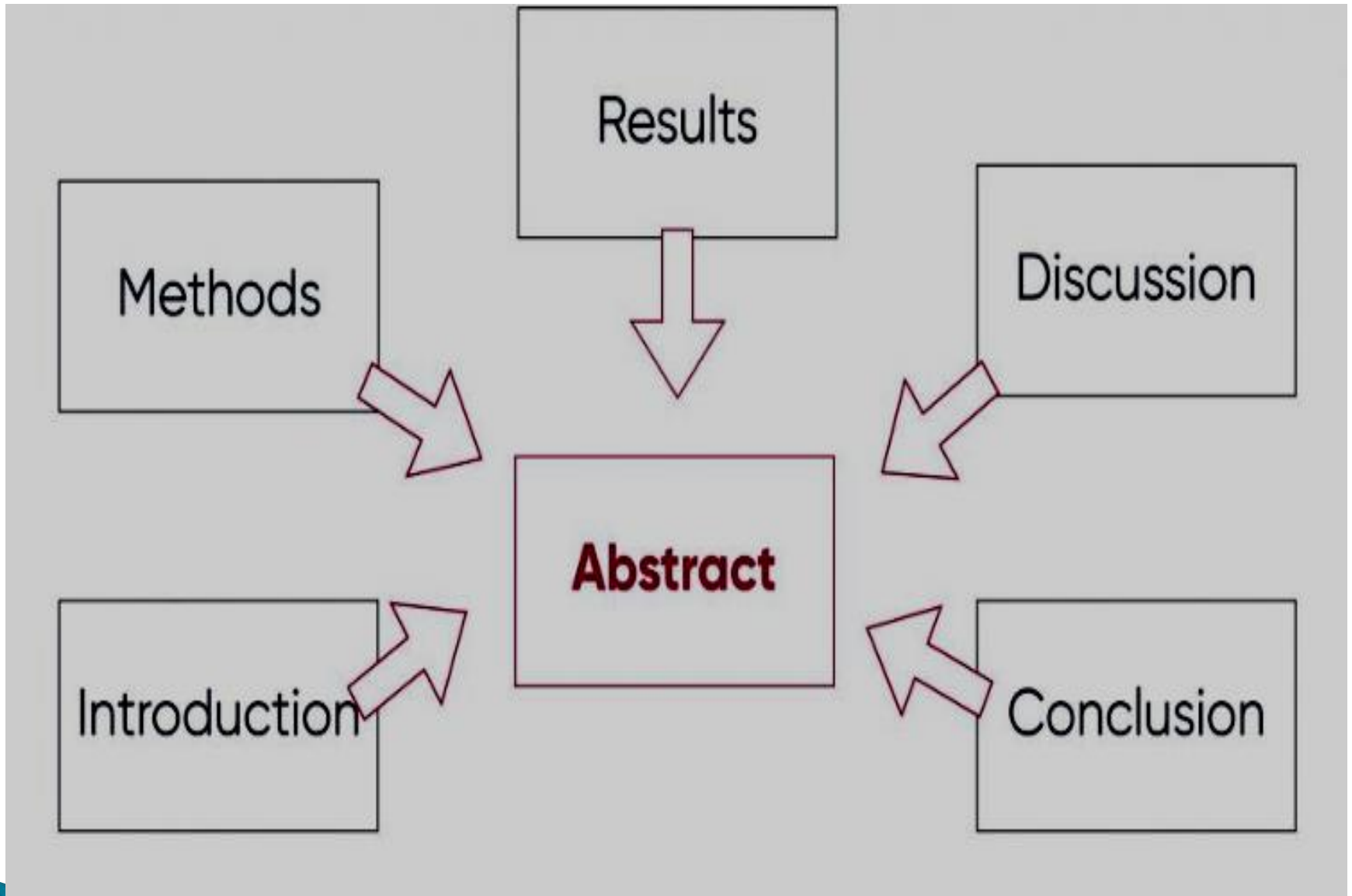
- **new information that is not present in the paper**
- **abbreviations or group names**
- **discussion of previous literature or reference citations**
- **unnecessary details about the methods used**

7. Remove all extra information (see step 6) and then link your sentences to ensure that the information flows well, preferably in the following order: purpose, basic study design, methodology and techniques used, major findings, summary of your interpretations, conclusions, and implications

- 8. Confirm that there is consistency between the information presented in the abstract and in the paper**
- 9. Have your abstract reviewed and check if the purpose, aim, methods, and conclusions of the study are clearly stated**
- 10. Check to see if the final abstract meets the guidelines of the target journal (word limit, type of abstract, recommended sub-headings)**

5. The abstract should not contain:

- **Unnecessary introductory sentences**
- **Lengthy background or contextual information**
- **First sentence of an article as the first line of its abstract**
- **Redundant phrases, unnecessary adverbs and adjective, and repetitive information**
- **Paragraphs**
- **Acronyms or abbreviations**
- **Reference to other literature, (Example: ‘current research shows that’ ... or “studies have indicated ...”**
- **Using elliptical (i.e., ending with “...”) in complete sentences**
- **Jargon or terms that may be confusing for the readers**
- **Citation to other works**
- **Any sort of image, illustration, figures, tables, or references to them**



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<https://youtu.be/NS81ihxdMx8>

6. Remember...

- **Abstract means a condensed form of a longer piece of writing**
- **Abstract is also typically written last, although it prefaces the paper**
- **Abstract is one of the most read part of a research paper, and is tricky for the same reason**
- **Abstract is essentially the researcher's elevator pitch to the world**
- **A good abstract is an invitation to read your paper**

References

- ▶ <https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/abstract#:~:text=An%20abstract%20summarizes%2C%20usually%20in,as%20a%20result%20of%20your>
- ▶ <https://www.scribbr.com/dissertation/abstract/>
- ▶ <https://grammar.yourdictionary.com/grammar-rules-and-tips/helpful-tips-for-writing-an-abstract.html>
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