

## Tips on Writing an Effective Research Abstract

An abstract is a brief, comprehensive summary of your research or project. It gives the reviewer an opportunity to survey the contents of the document quickly and decide whether to continue reading. An abstract should represent as much as possible the information in your poster/paper.

In writing an abstract – consider the following:

- ✓ **Context or Background and Significance**
  - What is the importance of what you are doing? What gaps in research or practice are you trying to address?
- ✓ **Objectives/Aims**
  - What is the purpose of the study, integrative review, or theoretical paper
- ✓ **Methods**
  - For research, include sample size, design, methodology, analytic approach
  - For integrative reviews, list sources of search, terms, dates, how analyzed
  - For theoretical papers – describe approach (e.g. theory or concept analysis)
- ✓ **Results**
  - Concisely describe findings (e.g. statistical findings; themes, patterns, etc)
- ✓ **Conclusions/Implications**
  - Summarize important findings and describe next steps for research and/or practice

All pieces of the abstract should flow and fit together.

In writing an abstract, present concrete, specific ideas. Adhere strictly to abstract guidelines and deadlines. Make sentences short, use simple words, and make sure text flows. Include in the abstract the most important concepts, outcomes, and implications. Don't leave the reviewer or your audience guessing.

### ***A GOOD abstract should be:***

- **Accurate**
- **Self-contained**
- **Concise and specific**
- **Coherent and readable**

Getting feedback on your abstract from a trusted mentor, faculty member or colleague, or peer is important. This is especially true if you have not submitted an abstract before. The quality of the abstract reflects on the quality of the research. You can have a great research project – but a bad abstract.

References:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/hswriting/abstract.htm>

<http://www.leidenuniv.nl/hil/abstr.htm>

Adapted from: Norma Martinez-Rogers PhD, FAAN President-elect, National Association of Hispanic Nurses.