



# Workshop on How to Publish Papers in International Journals: February 2018

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## How to write the Abstract.



# The Abstract

- It is the first thing people read so if your abstract is bad generally they do not read any more of the paper.
- The Abstract is critical for getting your paper read and cited.
- Be absolutely explicit.
- State what your study has shown.
- Give the basic results you found, not allusions to them. The Abstract is not an Introduction.
- Talk integratively about the results of your study.
- Must have some sort of conclusion sentence.
- An abstract normally does not have any references.
- Abstracts have strict word limits, normally 150 to 300 words. Nearly all papers are submitted through the ScholarOne software produced by Thomson-Reuters. Elsevier uses a licenced version called Editorial Manager. If your abstract is even 1 word over the limit the software prevents you from submitting your paper. Know the word limit beforehand.
- Every word counts so do not use superfluous phrases like “This study has shown ....”. Databases search for info in Abstracts.
- ScholarOne is very user unfriendly. It will not work on some browsers.

## **Some things you should not do in the Abstract**

- **Every word counts so write very simple sentences. No long complex sentences. You have to be brief but do not make grammatical mistakes such as sentences with no verb.**
- **You do not have to talk about every single Table, Graph and Figure or experimental result. You do not refer to Tables or Figures in the paper. Key results and overall conclusions please. Some data is OK.**
- **If you have given a talk about your work at a conference it is perfectly OK to use it as the basis for your paper abstract but you need to rewrite it to fit the circumstances. Do not self plagiarize out of laziness.**
- **Try to use all the space the journal allows. If your abstract is 250 words and the journal will accept 300 then expand the abstract to 290-300. You need to make use of as much of your Abstract space as possible.**

# Highlights

- The latest fashion in publishing is to demand a set of highlights in point form.
- Highlights are extremely difficult to write. I think they are useless.
- If there is a Highlights section in ScholarOne it is usually a rude surprise because older copies of papers from the journal often do not have them and suddenly when you are battling with ScholarOne you discover they want highlights! Try not to write them off the top of your head.
- Like in the case of the Abstract word limits the ScholarOne software will not accept your highlights if they do not conform to the format.
- Usually only 5 highlights, and only 80 - 85 characters *per highlight*.
- Highlights are one of the more useless recent innovations in publishing.

# References

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