Title and Abstract

A title labels a research paper.

An abstract is a stand alone miniversion of a research paper.
What is the Purpose of a Title?
What is the Purpose of a Title?

• Indicate the **subject** of your research.

• **Distinguish** your research from others of its kind.

• **Show continuity** with preceding papers.

• Provide **key words** for indexing.
Rules of Thumb for Titles

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- Use a minimum of technical terminology.
- Use fewer than 80 characters.
- Avoid active verbs, numerical values, abbreviations, and punctuation.
Some Bad Titles

• Studies on Brucella

• Action of Antibiotics on Bacteria

• On the addition to the method of microscopic research by a new way of producing color-contrast between an object and its background or between definite parts of the object itself

• Isolation of Antigens from Monkeys Using Complement-Fixation Techniques

• Using a Fiberoptic Broncoscope, Dogs Were Immunized With Sheep and Red Blood Cells
Some Good Titles

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Enhanced Recovery of Bitumen by Steam with Chemical Additives

Adaptive Nulling in the Hyperthermia Treatment of Cancer
What’s a Running Title?
What’s a Running Title?

- Shorter version of the title printed at the top of each page to save space.

- Also called a “running head.”

- Maximum character count given in instruction to authors.

- Best to write it yourself.
What is the Purpose of an Abstract?
What is the Purpose of an Abstract?

• A stand alone, miniversion of the paper (250 words or less).

• Summarizes the main sections of the paper.

• States the purpose, findings, and impact of the work.
Economy of Words

- Provide an abstracted version of your paper in as few words as possible.

- Choose each word carefully. Make them clear and significant.

- Provide only the key points.

- It’s why we write them last!
What are Some Pitfalls of Titles?

- Too general or too specific.
- Too long or too short.
- Incomprehensible (sometimes from the use of jargon).
- Inaccurate (often a syntax problem).
- Contains abbreviations, chemical formulas, jargon.
What are Some Pitfalls of Abstracts?

- **Extraneous detail** or information or conclusions not stated in the paper.

- **Wrong type** (informative versus descriptive).

- Contains *abbreviations, chemical formulas, jargon or references to the literature, tables, or figures.*

- Failure to state the **purpose of the work at the outset.**

- Failure to state the **importance of the work** and where it leads **at the end.**
Descriptive Abstract:
Example

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Informative Abstract: Example

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Informative Abstract: Example

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Abstract Checklist

• Every abstract has a little:
  □ Introduction
  □ Methods
  □ Results
  □ Discussion
  □ Conclusion

• Make the bottom line of your Abstract match the bottom line of your discussion.

• Write it last.