

### General Guidelines

- An abstract is a single paragraph summary of a research report<sup>1</sup>. It must stand alone. It must be a clear and concise description of the hypothesis, experimental design, and results. Journal readers usually decide whether or not to bother reading the report based on the information conveyed in the abstract.

### Specifics

- The abstract is a single paragraph of 250 words or less. It must clearly state the hypothesis being tested, the methods used to test the hypothesis, and the resulting acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis.
- Results must be presented in several well-worded sentences. Because the main purpose of the report is to provide a complete discussion of the results, only the most important conclusions should be stated in the abstract.
- No references are allowed in the abstract; therefore, introductory and supportive material from the literature is presented later in the introduction and discussion. But you still will need to have read and be familiar with this background work. This is necessary in order to fully understand the experiment, its implications and analysis. This understanding is crucial in preparing and submitting a quality abstract.
- Because the abstract must stand alone, abbreviations must be avoided.
- Usually the abstract summarizes the new contribution of knowledge to the field without introduction or discussion.

### Additions not normally found in an Abstract

- In addition, you can add a table or graph of results presented in a well-designed graph or table. This graph or table must represent either the best data or be a summary graph. It should be noted that the figure does not carry a numerical designation (i.e. "Figure 1.") and will be referred to in the abstract by "as seen below . . .".

---

<sup>1</sup> It must be noted here that this will be a standalone abstract and not one that will accompany a report. Please keep this in mind.