EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: ABSTRACT WRITING FOR THE MAGNET CONFERENCE

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WHAT IS AN ABSTRACT?

• A concise summary of completed or current projects/research
  • Generally hypothesis driven (if research)
  • Data supported
• A tool used by meeting planners to determine the content and organize the meeting
• An abstract is NOT:
  • An editorial or philosophical musing
  • A description of future studies
  • A presentation of case studies
WHY WRITE AN ABSTRACT?

• Main Goal: To communicate your work
  • Increases personal and institutional visibility
  • Travel to various places and network with others
  • Reason for the organization to pay for you to leave Houston
WHY ARE ABSTRACTS MOST COMMONLY NOT WRITTEN?

• Difficulty knowing *where* to start
• Not knowing *how* to start
• Anxiety about *writing* skills
• Lack of *confidence*
SOME OF THE REASONS TO WRITE

• We are the largest pediatric facility in the nation, rated number four in quality with four Magnet Designations
• Trying to grow a nationally recognized nursing research program
• Publicize our good work, including research, and obtain feedback
• Increase personal/professional/organizational visibility
• Helps advance your career
TIME SPENT WRITING AN ABSTRACT

Consternation, Anxiety, Thought Process 80% Actual Writing 20%
GOALS FOR TODAY’S SESSION

Discuss a step–by–step approach to writing abstracts

Provide a “formula” for efficient and effective abstract writing
ANATOMY OF AN ABSTRACT

• How to write an abstract
  • Components of an abstract
  • What works
• How are abstracts reviewed
• Why do some abstracts get rejected?
BEFORE YOU BEGIN!

• Read the instructions!
  • *Word/Character limits*
  • *Format specifications*
  • *Other seemingly minor details*

• Know the deadline

• Do not procrastinate – the earlier the better

• Line up your resources

Follow the instructions to the letter!

STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR TOPIC, CONFERENCE TRACK AND GOAL

• Identify the Track & Goal for your abstract (character limits and focus different with each track)
  • Tracks:
    • Evidence-Based Practice
    • Leadership
    • Innovation
    • Research
MAGNET 2019 CONFERENCE GOALS

• Translate evidence-based strategies into solutions
• Leverage the Magnet® nursing culture to optimize organizational performance
• Distinguish the long-term impact of transformational leadership and the Magnet® culture on organizations and patients
• Synthesize science-based innovations, technology, and research to advance nursing practice, enhance patient safety, and promote optimal health and wellness
STEP 2: ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOUR C'S OF ABSTRACT WRITING

• **Complete** — The writing covers the major parts of the project/case
• **Concise** — It contains no excess wordiness or unnecessary information
• **Clear** — What’s presented is readable, well organized, and not too jargon-laden
• **Cohesive** — The presentation flows smoothly between each addressed

Here, we are less concerned about Carat, Cut, Color and Clarity
STEP 3: KNOW THE COMPONENTS OF AN ABSTRACT

Title

Author Identification

What did you do?

**Why** was it needed?

**How** did you do it?

What were your results?

What does it mean going forward?
CHARACTER LIMITS BY TRACK (INCLUDING SPACES AND HEADERS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EBP / Leadership / Innovation</th>
<th>Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose (What)</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance/ Significance (Why)</td>
<td>Background/ Significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy and Implementation (How)</td>
<td>Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation/ Outcomes (So what)</td>
<td>Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for Practice (And now):</td>
<td>Conclusions and Implications for Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevance/ Significance</td>
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<td>Strategy and Implementation</td>
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*Be sure to review Abstract Call Instructions for Track descriptions.
• Write it last!
• We will discuss later...
  • P. S. Limited to 60 characters for Magnet
PURPOSE

• The **WHAT**
  • Broad statement
    • Give background in a focused, comprehensive review that corroborates claims
  • Be sure to clearly state the problem, hypothesis, question, goal or purpose
    • “Our goal was to...” OR
    • “The purpose of the ....”
The WHY

- Provide context and information about why project was needed
- Provide pre-project data
- What is the gap?
  - Be sure to indicate why this project was important.
STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

• The **HOW**
  • Basic information about the actions taken
  • Describe the progression of the process
  • Identify key elements
EVALUATION / OUTCOMES

- Write the results in clear, succinct sentences.
  - Tell the story.
  - It must be logical.
- Provide ample data.
  - Present current data, at the least to demonstrate the problem
  - DO NOT state “data will be presented”, give them what you’ve got
IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

• Recommend 3\textsuperscript{ish} sentences
  • 1\textsuperscript{st} – Be sure you answer the question posed in the \textbf{Purpose}
    • Be direct
  • 2\textsuperscript{nd} – Interpret your findings
    • Explain the relevance to nursing practice/ process improvement
  • 3\textsuperscript{rd} – Your artistic license (aka the Hook)
    • Leave them wanting more
TITLE

• Write it last!
• Create a winning title
  • Convincing, Appealing, Catchy is fine (in fact, Magent likes it), so do not fear to be memorable BUT do not try to be too cutesy.
  • Action oriented and based on Outcomes/Results
• Be sure to describe what is presented
• Limited to 60 characters (including spaces)
GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

• **Minimize** jargon and abbreviations
  • Why? Some reviewers may share your expertise, but not all will
  • Every reader, no matter their background, should be able to understand your abstract

• Write in the **Active Voice**
STEP 4: BEFORE FINALIZING

- Check for accuracy
- Reach out to a mentor/peer/SME for help
- Don’t be thin skinned, but do not let others change your intent
- Make revisions based on feedback
- Have others read your draft in order to check for technical errors, such as spelling and grammar mistakes -- “Kiss of Death”
- Use your resources, but NOT ON THE LAST DAY

KISS OF DEATH
STEP 5: SUBMIT FOR REVIEW

• Send drafts in WORD document format to **NAS Team and Nursing Research and Evidence Based Practice** in global email list **NO LATER THAN November 30, 2018**

• Include intended Track and Conference Goal
  • Multiple drafts may be required.
  • The earlier we receive your draft, the more likely it will be ready to submit before the December 10, 2018 deadline.
MAGNET SUBMISSION SPECIFICS

- Two author limit per presentation
- Abstract may not be submitted until all Conflict of Interest (COI) statements are complete
- Include a description for program (50 word limit)
- Identify applicable Conference Goal and Track before submitting
- You will receive an email confirming submission
- Any changes made after confirmation will require another COI from all authors
- Magnet Submission Deadline: December 10, 2018 @ 10:59 PM CT
STEP 6: SUBMIT

• Follow the instructions very carefully
• Do not waiting until the final day
  • Co-author acknowledgement/signature required
  • Submission systems often slow down closer to the deadline
• Notify Nurse Scientists and NAS group by email that submission is complete.

THEN WAIT
STEP 7: WHEN ACCEPTED

- Celebrate!
- Notify Nurse Scientists, NAS team and your leader to ensure that you receive appropriate support and assistance.
THE TYPICAL REVIEW PROCESS
HOW ARE ABSTRACTS REVIEWED?

• Each abstract is reviewed by multiple reviewers blinded to the author(s).
• Reviewers assign a score based on a rubric.
• Average of scores used to determine position on program.
  • Oral vs. poster vs. reject
WHO WILL BE THE REVIEWERS?

• Depends on the conference
  • Some are peers who go to the same types of meetings you want to go to
  • Some are on editorial boards of major journals within your specialty
  • Some will have no clue about the work you do
ABSTRACT REVIEW 101

- Is it in the proper track?
- Do the methods/story support the data?
- Does it read well and does it make sense?
- Are there grammatical or spelling errors?
- Is it a hot topic? Does it contain Magnet buzz words?
YOU WILL NOT MAKE IT TO REVIEW IF...

• You do not follow submission instructions

• Formatting does not match the requirements stated in the call
  • Some systems (like Magnet) will not accept submissions that do not follow requirements
WHY SOME ABSTRACTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED

- Poor presentation
- No question asked and/or answered
- Weak discussion
- Lack of originality
- Poor methods
- Inappropriate analysis
- Inadequate results
- Boring/ not interesting
WAYS TO IMPROVE FUTURE ABSTRACTS

• Writing is an art, that can be learned
  • Attend classes for writing skills
• Read published abstracts from conference proceedings with a focus on detail and efficiency
• PRACTICE
• Follow-up with mentors and other colleagues for feedback
WHO TO CONTACT FOR ASSISTANCE

• Nurse Scientists: nursingrsrchevidence@texaschildrens.org
• NAS Team: NAS@texaschildrens.org
• Your Leadership
SUMMARY: Well-constructed abstracts answer the following questions:

- **Why** is this work important?
- **Where** is the setting and which population did you use?
- **How** did you design your project/research?
- **What** are/were the outcomes, findings and lessons learned?
- **What now** and how should others use this information?
SUMMARY: YOUR STORY DIAGRAM

Complete

Why

What now

Where

What

How

Clear

Concise

Cohesive
FINALLY

• Follow Magnet abstract directions
• Submit draft in WORD format with Track & applicable Goal identified, following guidelines and character limits
• You may not submit to Magnet until approval is provided by Nurse Science or the NAS team.
• FIRM deadline for internal submission is 11/30.