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Sessional Assignment: Technical Report Writing

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Question:

Define and explain Abstract and Conclusion in Technical writing, also explain on what basis we differentiate abstract and conclusion?

Answer:

Abstract: The word abstract comes from the Latin abstractum, which means a condensed form of a longer piece of writing.

Definition: An abstract is a brief summary of a research article, thesis, review, conference proceeding, or any in-depth analysis of a particular subject and is often used to help the reader quickly ascertain the paper's purpose.

Explanation:

Abstracts are important parts of reports and research papers and sometimes academic assignments. The abstract is often the last item that you write, but the first thing people read when they want to have a quick overview of the whole paper. We suggest you leave writing the abstract to the end, because you will have a clearer picture of all your findings and conclusions

How do I write an abstract?

1. First re-read your paper/report for an overview. Then read each section and condense the information in each down to 1-2 sentences.
2. Next read these sentences again to ensure that they cover the major points in your paper.
3. Ensure you have written something for each of the key points outlined above for either the descriptive or informative abstract.
4. Check the word length and further reduce your words if necessary, by cutting out unnecessary words or rewriting some of the sentences into a single, more succinct sentence.
5. Edit for flow and expression.

What makes a good abstract?

1. A good Abstract
2. Uses one well-developed paragraph that is coherent and concise, and is able to stand alone as a unit of information
3. Covers all the essential academic elements of the full-length paper, namely the background, purpose, focus, methods, results and conclusions
4. Contains no information not included in the paper
5. Is written in plain English and is understandable to a wider audience, as well as to your discipline-specific audience

6. Often uses passive structures in order to report on findings, focusing on the issues rather than people
7. Uses the language of the original paper, often in a more simplified form for the more general reader
8. Usually does not include any referencing
9. In publications such as journals, it is found at the beginning of the text, while in academic assignments, it is placed on a separate preliminary page.

Types of Abstract

(1) Descriptive abstracts

(2) Informative abstract

Descriptive abstracts: Descriptive abstracts are generally used for humanities and social science papers or psychology essays. This type of abstract is usually very short (50-100 words). Most descriptive abstracts have certain key parts in common. They are:

- background
- purpose
- particular interest/focus of paper
- overview of contents (not always included)

Informative abstract: Informative abstracts are generally used for science, engineering or psychology reports. You must get the essence of what your report is about, usually in about 200 words. Most informative abstracts also have key parts in common. Each of these parts might consist of 1-2 sentences. The parts include:

- Background
- Aim or purpose of research
- Method used
- Findings/results
- Conclusion

Conclusion: A **conclusion** summarizes the **report** as a whole, drawing inferences from the entire process about what has been found, or decided, and the impact of those findings or decisions,

A conclusion is the last paragraph in your research paper, or the last part in any other type of presentation. A conclusion is, in some ways, like your introduction. You restate your thesis and summarize your main points of evidence for the reader. You can usually do this in one paragraph.

Explanation:

How to Write A Conclusion

In a conclusion paragraph, you summarize what you've written about in your paper. When you're writing a good conclusion paragraph, you need to think about the main point that you want to get across and be sure it's included. If you've already written a fabulous introductory paragraph, you can write something similar with different wording. Here are some points to remember:

- **Use your introductory paragraph as a guide.** You may have started by saying, "There are three classes at school that I absolutely can't wait to go to every day." You can start your conclusion by saying, "Gym, Math, and Art are the three classes I try to never miss."
- **If it's a longer paper, a good place to start is by looking at what each paragraph was about.** For example, if you write a paper about zoo animals, each paragraph would probably be about one particular animal. In your conclusion, you should briefly mention each animal again. "Zoo animals like polar bears, lions, and giraffes are amazing creatures."
- **Leave your readers with something to think about.** Suggest that they learn more with a sentence like, "We have a lot to learn about global warming." You can also give them something to do after reading your paper. For example, "It's easy to make your own popsicles. Grab some orange juice and give it a try!"

Summary: How to Make a Good Conclusion Paragraph

Remember that it's important to wrap up your writing by summarizing the main idea for your readers. This brings your writing to a smooth close and creates a well-written piece of work.

What is a conclusion paragraph?

A conclusion is what you will leave with your reader

It "wraps up" your essay

It demonstrates to the reader that you accomplished what you set out to do

It shows how you have proved your thesis

It provides the reader with a sense of closure on the topic

Structure

- A conclusion is the opposite of the introduction
- Remember that the introduction begins general and ends specific
- The conclusion begins specific and moves to the general,

What to include

- Your conclusion wraps up your essay in a tidy package and brings it home for your reader
- Your topic sentence should summarize what you said in your thesis statement
- This suggests to your reader that you have accomplished what you set out to accomplish
- Do not simply restate your thesis statement, as that would be redundant
- Rephrase the thesis statement with fresh and deeper understanding
- Your conclusion is no place to bring up new ideas
- Your supporting sentences should summarize what you have already said in the body of your essay
- If a brilliant idea tries to sneak into the final paragraph, you must pluck it out and let it have its own paragraph in the body, or leave it out completely
- Your topic for each body paragraph should be summarized in the conclusion
- Wrap up the main points
- Your closing sentence should help the reader feel a sense of closure
- Your closing sentence is your last word on the subject; it is your “clincher”
- Demonstrate the importance of your ideas
- Propel your reader to a new view of the subject
- End on a positive note
- Your closing sentence should make your readers glad they read your paper.

Difference Between Abstract and Conclusion

Abstract:

Role: Highlights the major points of the thesis (Scientific Paper).

Aim: Enables the interested reader to decide whether the work as the whole is worth reading.

Place: We should place it at the beginning of the thesis (Scientific Paper).

Conclusion:

Role: Summarizes the major point and results of the thesis (Scientific Paper).

Aim: Enables the interested reader to be sure of what he should get from this report since it. Focuses more on the contribution of the thesis.

Place: We should place it at the end of the thesis (Scientific Paper).

Difference Abstract and Conclusion:

An abstract should be a concise summary (often with a limited word count) of the entire document. It might contain a brief mention of some main contribution or statistic, but it should summarise the whole work. It is frequently used by readers to determine whether the entire paper is relevant to them, and so it needs to be short, concise, and nothing more than a summary.

In contrast a conclusion provides the ending for a paper. It should revisit the objectives/aim/hypothesis stated at the start in the introduction and summarise the evidence presented in the work that meets/fulfils/confirms or refutes them.

For example, while you may be able to get a general impression of a scientific paper from its abstract, you should be able to understand **all** the key findings and novel contributions in some detail from its conclusion.