Full Title Goes Here

Your Name

Abstract

The abstract should be approximately 100 -200 words long. It should be one paragraph with no indents. Use abstracts from APA journal articles as models. One way to write your abstract is to summarize each section of your paper with a sentence or 2, including the information in the same order as it is presented in your paper – introduction, method, results, and discussion. The title page, abstract page (if present) and reference list do not count toward the page total for a written assignment; see the APA Publication Manual for definitive information. As a rule of thumb, write the abstract after your paper is complete. There is no need to write an abstract from scratch; you may include sentences—sentences you have written, not literal quotations of others’ writing—copied from your paper. If you need to know what goes into an abstract, consult the APA manual.

Full Title Goes Here

The main body of your paper should follow the format shown here (double-spaced, indented paragraphs, etc.). Note that the default in Word does strange things to paragraph spacing. Check in the “Paragraph” tab that you have spacing set to 0 pt both for Before and After. Refer to the APA manual for more information on style and formatting. The paper’s title is always at the top of the first page of text. It should be the same as the title—not the running head or the manuscript page header—on the title page.

The introduction should contain an introduction to the topic, a concise discussion of previous literature that has addressed the problem being studied, a broad overview of the method used in the study, and statement of the hypotheses and how they were derived from previous research. It is always a good idea to make a rough outline of your introduction before starting to write (“Types of writing”, n.d.). Think of your introduction as funneling from the general topic that your study is about, progressing through to more specific research that justifies the hypotheses you propose. Once you have provided the rationale for your study, briefly describe the way in which you will address your research question and then state your specific hypotheses at the very end of your introduction. Support your argument with *specific* research findings and remember to cite appropriately depending on the number of authors and the occasion (first time or second time and thereafter) on which you are citing them (see APA manual).

When stating your study hypotheses, use phrases like “We predicted that…” or, for example “Reaction times should be slower when responding to emotional stimuli than neutral stimuli.” Try to use the active voice rather than passive voice. Again, refer to the introduction sections in articles in APA journals to see how other authors have introduced their hypotheses.

When you have finished writing the first draft of your introduction, check it carefully for sense. Are all the sentences complete sentences? Does one paragraph lead smoothly into the next paragraph? Reading your paper aloud to someone else (or to yourself if no one is available) is a good way to check for sense and flow of your sentences.

Now, a few notes about quotations. If you quote from a reference source, your citation must specify the pages or paragraphs which contain the quote (APA, 2010). Be careful in making literal quotations from other sources. You should usually try to write things in your own words, rather than substituting someone else’s words for your own writing in the form of a quotation. If nothing else, introductions that contain multiple quotations are very difficult for the reader to follow. If you do need to use a quotation, identify very clearly what you have taken from other sources. Follow specific instructions in the APA manual on how to do quotations.

**Method**

**Participants**

It is a good idea to break your Method into sections – this well help you think about how to organize the material. The ‘Participants’ section includes the number of participants used in the study and where they come from, the selection criteria, and any other important characteristics like age, sex, education level, or occupation. The term “subject” is no longer used when referring to human participants. Only animals are referred to as subjects.

**Materials**

*Describe* any materials – questionnaires, word lists, scenarios – that were used in data collection. You can use further subheadings for the different materials if you wish. You may also include the actual questionnaires, but put these in an appendix. See APA journal articles for examples of how much detail to include in your materials section.

**Design**

What type of experimental design is your study – experimental? 2 x 2? Between or within subjects, or a mixed design? Describe the different levels of your independent variables here and make it clear what your dependent variables are. Again, you do not necessarily need to state, “The independent variable was…” See other published journal articles for ideas on how to describe your design.

**Procedure**

This is where you describe, step-by-step, what your participants did in the study, from the moment they walk in the door. Walk the reader through how you will give the instructions, the different tasks and/or questionnaires that the participants completed in the order in which they completed them, and finally, the debriefing. Again, refer to APA journal articles to get a sense of what the level of detail should be. In general, as you write your method section, imagine that someone else wanted to replicate your study: they should be able to do this based on reading your method section (in conjunction with the materials provided in the appendices).

**Data analyses**

Describe the types of data analyses conducted –and which parts of your data were subjected to which analyses.

**Results**

Now you summarize the data collected and the results of your research. Refer to the APA manual (2001) for specific details on how to include tables and graphs and how to report the results of statistical analyses.

**Discussion**

Here you interpret your results and discuss the implications of your findings, based on your hypotheses. You also try to place your findings in the context of the broader literature. Does your research concur with what other studies have found?

Remember how the introduction funnels from broad research area, to specific research, and finally to your specific study and hypotheses? The discussion is the opposite of this. Now you start specific, with your own findings, and you gradually broaden this out to consider the more general implications of your findings.

First, discuss the results in relation to each of your hypotheses. Then, discuss possible explanations for your results. Think about how your results agree or disagree with the ideas that you introduced in the introduction. How do your results relate to previous literature or current theory? Identify and discuss limitations in the experimental design that may reduce the validity of your findings. Introduce new ideas that your results suggest. Generalize your results. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of applying your results to other groups, species, ages, or sexes. It is a good idea to suggest future research directions by identifying one or more experiments to be done in this research area that will clarify some of the problems you described earlier, or take the research a step further.

As with the other sections of your report, a good way to learn how to write a good discussion section is to read other discussion sections in the research literature. Note how other authors have structured their discussion sections, how they refer back to their hypotheses, and how they relate their results to prior research findings.

**References**

American Psychological Association. (2001).Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

*Appendix A*

Put your first appendix here. Remember to give it a title, so that the reader knows what it is. For example, if it is one of the scenarios or questionnaires from your study, label it so that the reader knows which condition it is for.

Start each subsequent appendix on a new page.