

ABSTRACTS

INTRODUCTION

Abstracts are basically summaries. Ever written a book report? Well, a book report is a very basic type of summary.

An abstract essentially provides the reader with a condensed (or shorter) form of a longer piece of writing.

Abstracts are important components in the academic world (of colleges and universities); however, abstracts are even extremely important in the professional world.

For example, when the chief executive officer (or CEO) of a company needs to make a decision and has a short amount of time, he/she reaches for a type of summary called an Executive Summary, which details longer documents (like corporate takeover bids, pending legal cases, supply processes, proposals, etc.).

In medicine, many medical professionals use a database called Pubmed, which contains long and short forms (a la Abstracts) of the latest medical information.

Shop online? Well, oftentimes, people want to read a product review before they buy something. Guess what? Another name for that product review is called an Evaluative Abstract.

So, yes, abstracts are everywhere, and they are important.

Typically, in college, you'll find abstracts in two places:

- 1) Courses which require papers with abstracts. And,
- 2) Courses which require bibliographies, specifically Annotated Bibliographies.

TYPES OF ABSTRACTS

Ultimately, three types of abstracts exist:

1) Indicative Abstracts (sounds like an index) - refers to a type of abstract which resembles a table of contents or an index. This abstract mostly names the content contained within a document (e.g., an article or a book).

2) Informative Abstracts (sounds like information) - refers to a type of abstract which essentially condenses a longer document's contents into a shorter form.

3) Evaluative Abstracts (sounds like evaluation) - refers to a type of abstract which evaluates something.