

WHY TITLES, ABSTRACTS AND KEYWORDS ARE IMPORTANT

An effectively written title and abstract with carefully chosen keywords can greatly improve your article's search engine optimization (SEO), improve your Google search ranking, boost your citation metrics, increase your readership and impress your tenure committee!

Your article title should be descriptive and frank. Unlike human readers, search engines do not understand semantics and irony—so make sure your title (or at least your subtitle) can be taken literally. The abstract and keywords can strongly influence an article's online worth to readers, and both must be carefully considered and constructed very early on in the article's development. Readers should know whether or not they want to read your entire article just by reading the abstract and keywords.

An effective abstract must do the following things:

It must motivate – Why do we care about the problem and the results?

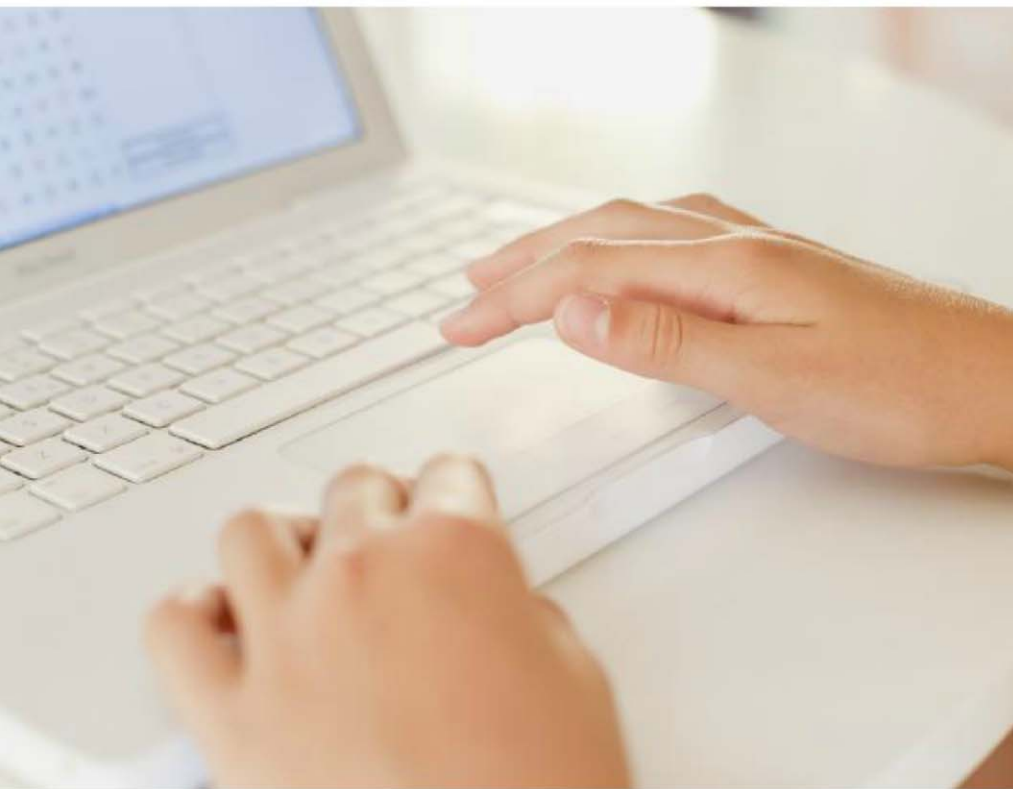
It must provide a problem statement – What problem are you trying to solve?

It must describe an approach – How did you go about solving or making progress on the problem?

It must describe the results – What's the answer?

It must summarize the conclusions – What are the implications of your answer?

The best keywords are not just individual words, but 2- to 4-word plain-language phrases that precisely describe your work (words that researchers might type into a search engine).



Boost Citations and Readership!

Publish in a well-read, well-respected journal

Make sure your article can be found online easily - choose your title and keywords carefully

Entice readers with a carefully constructed abstract

Talk, blog, promote your article and link to the original version

Join the conversation in your research community - go to conferences, follow and comment on blogs and social media, network with researchers in the field, write a review, present a paper, publicize yourself, etc.

Common mistakes in choosing article keywords:

- ✗ Using single-word terms
- ✗ Choosing terms that are too broad and not focused on your work
- ✗ Using terms that are too specialized, which nobody searches for

For examples of how you can improve your ability to write effective abstracts, see James Hartley's article in the *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, "[Making the Journal Abstract More Concrete](#)"

Many considerations must go into making an article fit for online use. Learn about these in Jöran Beel et al.'s article "[Academic Search Engine Optimization \(ASEO\): Optimizing Scholarly Literature for Google Scholar & Co](#)" in the *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*.