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Useful Rules for Professionally Written Abstracts

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Being prepared for writing a professional abstract

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Summary

Dr. Alyssa Colton' article placed on Falcon Scientific Editing in July, 2016 tackles five important tips for writing a professional abstract. In addition to that, we are addressing outdated and latest abstracts as full articles published in British English together with browsing specific sites allowing to get familiar with abstracts and proceedings ever issued by winners of famous research contests. Finally, it would be also useful to follow those publications and talks which were issued or recorded by so-called "unfortunate scientists" in the beginning of their then brilliant careers.

Dr. Alex Sokolov, successful manager of scientific writing has shared with us the following article to be useful for instructors and attendants of courses on Scientific Reasoning (1). That article tackles five new tips for writing a good professional abstract. These rules are supposed to assist in making the abstract professionally impeccable. Then the abstract is to be submitted as a short communication to a journal or an abstract of international or local conference.

If we get back shortly to these rules they look as follows:

Rule 1. Follow the guidelines.

Rule 2. Make the abstract having everything but not less or more.

Rule 3. Use keywords.

Rule 4. Report only key outputs and conclusions.

Rule 5. Make the title as strong as possible.

In our opinion, it is very useful to read both old and freshly posted abstracts completed by a range of full papers published in British English. It would be also a helpful tip to visit nobel.org site and other research foundations, scientific communities and competitions websites to get acquainted with a number of lectures, proceedings and abstracts ever posted by the prize winners, successful candidates, hosts and invited speakers (2). Last tip would be to track those publications and talks which were issued or recorded by so-called “Jonahs”, or “unfortunate scientists” in the beginning of their then brilliant careers. In particular, we recommend to read the proceedings published by Matthew Meselson and Franklin Stahl, famous couple of molecular biologists, and listen to their memoirs on principal experiments then conducted (3, 4).

References:

1 Colton, A. 5 Golden Rules for Writing an Abstract. Falcon Scientific Editing, July 12, 2016. falconediting.com/en/blog/5-golden-rules-for-writing-an-abstract

2 Hodgkin, D. C. (1964). The X-ray analysis of complicated molecules. Nobel Lecture, December 11, 1964. http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/chemistry/laureates/1964hodgkin-lecture.pdf

3 Meselson, M. & Stahl, F.W. (1958). The Replication of DNA in *Escherichia coli*. PNAS, 44: 671–82.

4 Meselson, M. (Harvard). The Semi-Conservative Replication of DNA. www.ibiology.org/ibioeducation/making-discoveries/discovery-talk-the-semi-conservative-replication-of-dna.html