



## Writing a Research/Innovations in Medical Education Abstract

### Criteria & Guidelines

#### Standard Purpose and Criteria of RIME/IME Abstracts

##### Innovations in Medical Education (IME) Abstracts

**Purpose:** To promote dissemination and discussion of educational innovations.

**Criteria:** 300 word abstract, outlining:

- Objective or purpose of innovation
- Background or theoretical framework and importance to the field
- Instructional methods and materials used
- Educational outcomes to date
- Innovation's strengths and areas for improvement
- Feasibility of maintaining program and transfer to other schools/programs
- References (Not included in word count)

##### Research in Medical Education (RIME) Abstracts

**Purpose:** To promote dissemination and discussion of research and its application to medical education.

**Criteria:** 300 word research abstract outlining:

- Introduction including background, purpose and significance of the study
- Methods
- Results to date
- Conclusions
- References (Not included in word count)

##### Guidelines for Writing IME/RIME Abstracts<sup>1</sup>

An abstract:

- Is a condensed version of a full research/innovation description paper.
- Provides reviewers a brief synopsis of innovation/research purpose, design, findings to date and implications.
- Focuses on primary issues of why the work was done, how it was/is carried out, what was found, and what the potential implications are.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on existing guidelines from professional associations and Pierson, DJ. How to Write an Abstract That Will Be Accepted for Presentation at a National Meeting. *Respiratory Care*; 2004, 49: 1206-1212.

- Is written clearly with strict adherence to published specifications and format requirements.
- Is proofread carefully.

Abstract sections should answer the following questions:

<b>Abstract Section</b>	<b>Question</b>
Introduction	<i>Why did you start?</i>
Methods	<i>What did you do?</i>
Results	<i>What did you find so far?</i>
Conclusions	<i>What does it mean?</i>

### **Closer look at each section**

#### **Introduction**

- Provide a context or explanation for doing the study/innovation.
- State the aim of the study/innovation.
- Show relevance of the work to the field.

#### **Methods**

- Introduce the design/approach of the study/innovation.
- State the context in which it was done and who participated.
- Describe how the study/innovation was executed (including data sources and analysis).

#### **Results**

- Include key data/outcomes that flow from previous sections and from which you will draw your conclusions.
- Do not include interpretations.
- Report descriptive data (response rate, final pool of participants), inferential values with *p* values, functional significance (effect size), and/or emergent themes and sub-themes, if applicable.
- A table or figure may be included if permitted and it conveys the findings of the study/innovations more effectively than text alone.

#### **Conclusions**

- Interpret results.
- State the implications/importance of the results.
- Relate to the purpose of the study/innovation.

## **Other considerations**

### **Title**

- Convey as much as possible about context and aims of your study.
- Alert readers to the overall “take-home message.”
- Describe what was investigated/done rather than to state results or conclusions.
- Don’t use jargon, or unfamiliar acronyms
- Include key aspects of study/innovation design

### **Writing**

- Use simple declarative sentences; active voice is preferable to passive voice.
- Spell out all but the most commonplace abbreviations or acronyms the first time they appear.
- Re-read the instructions before printing the final onto the submission form, and to make sure they have been followed to the letter.
- Avoid grammatical mistakes, misspelled words, or typographical errors.
- Read colleagues’ accepted abstracts and/or published abstracts from recent meetings (if they are available).

### **Authors and Affiliations**

- The list of authors should be restricted to those individuals who actually did the study—conceived it, designed it, gathered the data, crunched the numbers, and wrote the abstract.
- Author lists are rough rank orders of the relative contributions of the persons named, with the exception that the senior author (the mentor) is often listed last.
- The author listed first is the person who conceived the study and did most of the creative work on the project. With few exceptions, this should be the person who will present the abstract, if it is accepted.