ORAL ABSTRACT PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION

What is an abstract?

The abstract is a short synopsis of a research or clinical research study.

• A written conference abstract is printed in the conference proceedings and allows the reader to understand the study, the materials and methods, results and conclusions of the study. It can be anywhere from ~125–450 words. The ANZCVS Small Animal Chapter requirement is no more than 250 words. Abstract presenters at Science week must submit a written abstract of their study prior to the meeting to be considered for presentation at the meeting by a date selected by the SAM Chapter. The subject of the abstract must not have been published prior to the presentation date. Preference in selection will be given to prospective studies and clinical research studies. Presenting an abstract is an important opportunity for scientists/residents/clinical researchers to get their research recognised by the profession and to network with other clinicians and researchers at the meeting. Presenting also helps residents meet Fellowship credential criteria.

• An oral abstract is a concise presentation of research findings by the investigator whose written abstract was selected by the Chapter selection committee and is based on merit. The presentation will be a short, 15 min (12 min presentation and 3 min questions) oral PowerPoint presentation of the research/clinical research study.

How is the written abstract formatted?

The written abstract is prepared according to the format and specifications required by the meeting. These instructions are posted on the College website.

All abstracts must contain the following elements:

1. Purpose of the study
2. Hypothesis or Objectives
3. Materials and Methods
4. Results
5. Conclusion/outcome/relevance

Writing of the abstract should be concise and grammatically correct as acceptance of your work for presentation will be based on the written abstract alone.

How is the written abstract submitted?

The abstract must be submitted in accordance with the Chapter’s requirements and be submitted by the due date. Your abstract will be rejected or accepted as an oral presentation but remember that oral presentation slots are only given to the best abstr
How is the oral abstract presentation formatted?

**Format of Presentation**

1) **Title slide** (1 slide)
   - Title of the manuscript – be specific and accurate
   - Authors of the manuscript and their affiliations – the order of authors is important. The “corresponding author” is considered to be the principal investigator/grant-bearer of the work. This person is usually the last author but may be the second author. The first author is considered the one who did most of the work and writing and is usually in training (residency). Be sure you get the order right!
   - Conflict of interest disclosure (± may be presented as slide #2 after the title slide)
   - Acknowledge your university or practice by including the logo

2) **Background/Introduction** (3-4 slides)
   - Assume the audience doesn’t know about your interest area
   - Deliver only as much information as is needed to understand why you did the study
   - Why did you do the study? What information was lacking that prompted the study? Why is the subject of this study the best ever!??
   - Sources of key facts and figures must be referenced by citation

3) **Hypothesis and Specific Aims** (1 slide)

4) **Materials and Methods** (3-4 slides)
   - Be organised – order the methods in a manner that allows understanding of what you did
   - Break into segments/sections if multiple techniques undertaken
   - A picture can be worth a thousand words but don’t use images that are not relevant
   - Make sure to include statistical information for data analysis

5) **Results** (3-6 slides)
   - Tell a story!!
   - Title each slide with a conclusive statement
   - Give one-sentence rationale for why you did each experiment or procedure and how it led to the next
   - Know what your next slide is going to be and anticipate the transition (practise your talk!)
   - Show data in graphic form if possible and always orientate the audience to pictorial/graphical data before explaining
   - Use the pointer only when needed to influence where you want the audience to look

6) **Conclusions/significance** (1-2 slides)
   - Bullet point statements
   - Limitations/Future directions (may be a separate slide) Point out only the limitations that are significant.

7) **Acknowledgements** (1 slide)
   - Source(s) of funding
   - Personal acknowledgements – one slide only
   - Author contact information

**Questions**

Make sure you leave time for questions. If the total time is 15 min, 3 min must be left for questions.

**DO NOT GO OVER TIME**
DO NOT READ YOUR PRESENTATION - practice your talk *many times* before you present. Get a colleague or co-author to critique your slides and oral presentation beforehand. The refined end product is what the audience will see and hear. It must be good!!

**Slides**

General rules of thumb for slide content are;
- One slide per minute
- Fewer slides if you have video and/or tables/graphs
- 6 lines text per slide

- Do not put a list of references at the end of your presentation

If there are data that you don’t have time to include and you think it is likely that someone may ask about them, you can have a back-up slide of this just in case.

**IT requirements**

Have your presentation on a memory stick and be sure your presentation is compatible with the conference centre’s equipment and loaded *before* the session. There is no time to use your own computer or to change computers during a session. Communicate with the responsible Chapter organiser if you have special IT requirements but do so well before the meeting.

**General Tips**

- Practice, practice, practice
- Speak clearly and not too fast (give the audience time to understand what you are saying). A presentation that is too difficult to understand or follow is not a sign of impressive research.
- Avoid saying “um” – pauses are perfectly acceptable
- Look at the audience and not your slides
- Hold the pointer with two hands and use judiciously

**Slide layout**

- Keep visuals CLEAR and SIMPLE. Abbreviate your message.
- Make sure your font style and size, location of bullets and layout is consistent on all slides.
- Avoid the overuse of too many colors, bullets, patterns, graphics, or animation in one frame (carnival effect).

**Presentation of data**

- Simple graphs, charts and diagrams are much more meaningful to an audience than complex, cluttered ones.
- Don’t include data on your slides that you are not going to talk about.
- Don’t apologize for mistakes (typos etc) found during presentation (it only makes it worse)

**When answering questions**

- Always repeat the question if not asked using a microphone
- If asked a question you don’t know an answer to do not bull#$%$. Speculate or say how good the question is and that you don’t know the answer. Always acknowledge the usefulness of any recommendations.
• Take note of any questions you were asked or criticisms as they are likely problems that need to be preemptively addressed in the final manuscript.

**Avoid stress by planning ahead**
1) What are the time requirements? Speaking (range 6–20 min) vs.- questions (2–10 min)? Will there be a timer and what will be its settings?
2) Where do you need to be and on what day and time?
3) What should be the format/version of your presentation (slides, ppt, video etc)? Does the presentation need to be uploaded in advance of the session? Always bring a back-up copy of your presentation to the meeting (hard drive, thumb drive, CD).
4) Familiarise yourself with the room; podium, microphone (stationary or lavaliere), computer, slide advancement controls, pointer system (do you need to bring your own?)
5) Practice the abstract in the same room if possible
6) Dress like a professional
7) Remember you are proud of your work, open to suggestions to improve your work and are honored to have been invited to present your work – congratulations!