Getting it Right:
Tips for Writing a Scientific Meeting Abstract

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Learning Objectives

At the end of this program, participants will be able to:

1. **Define the components of an abstract**
2. **Describe what makes an abstract effective**
3. **Recognize common "do's" and "don'ts" of abstract preparation**

Questions & Answers

Please email your questions at any time during the program using the "Chat" feature on the WebEx screen. We will have a moderated Q&A at the end of the program.

We'll do our best to get to as many questions as possible!

Today's Program

Part 1	• Background
Part 2	• The Review and Programming
Part 3	• Writing an Effective abstract

Part 1: What is an Abstract

- **An abstract** is a concise summary of a completed research project or paper.
  Therefore you must include results with data to support your conclusions!
- A well-written abstract will make the reader want to:
  - Learn more about your research
  - Attend your presentation and provide feedback for new research
  - Read your paper soon to be published

  Thus, you are presenting innovative/novel findings: you should emphasize how your work adds something new or different!

An Effective Abstract:

- Presents complex information in a clear, concise manner;
- Serves as a mini report on research completed;
- Provides condensed summary for database searches; and
- Communicates your research to others.

Part 2: Abstract Review

All ASN abstracts are peer-reviewed for quality assurance and scientific integrity.

Goals of Abstract Review

- Support Objective of ASN Strategic Plan:

  Develop processes to ensure excellence of all the Society's scientific and clinical programming and content.

- Show ASN's organizational approach to the abstract review process; and
- Improve consistency of ratings among reviewers.

This ASN abstract review process is based on the results of a 2-year pilot that was guided by the leadership of ASN Research Interest Sections.

Abstract Review Process

Abstracts submitted to topic categories which are sponsored by the respective RIS or Councils.

Topic experts review and score all abstracts .

Oral and poster sessions are formed by the RIS leadership based on reviews and author preferences.

Sessions are assigned a timeslot in the program by a separate planning committee.

Abstract Scores Summary

Score	Description
10	**Exceptional:** Highly relevant; extremely well-executed; a very important study.
9	**Outstanding**
8	**Excellent:** Well-done; important to our understanding of this particular field of science.
7	**Very good**
6	**Good:** Worthy of presentation and dissemination; provides information that may be of value.
5	**Satisfactory**
4	**Fair:** Of limited value and importance; not particularly novel or very well executed.
3	**Marginal**
2	**Poor:** Lacks significant and substantial merit
1	**Incomplete:** No results or insufficient data to support the conclusion

Best score possible is 10.

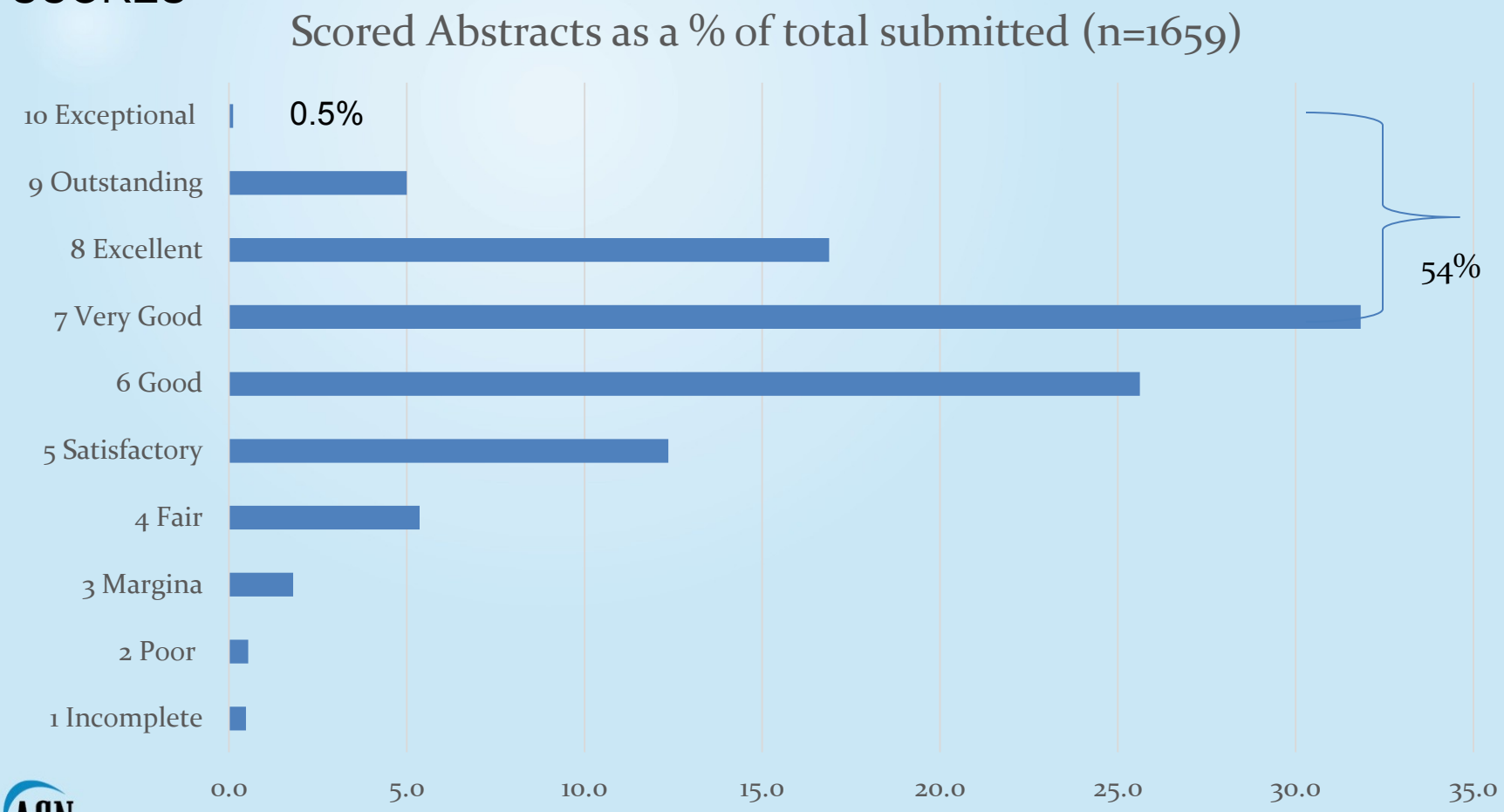
Goal is to elevate the quality of every abstract submitted!

Average Score for 2014: 6.7

Incomplete abstracts (e.g., no results reported) will not be programmed.

Abstracts Reviewed for 2014

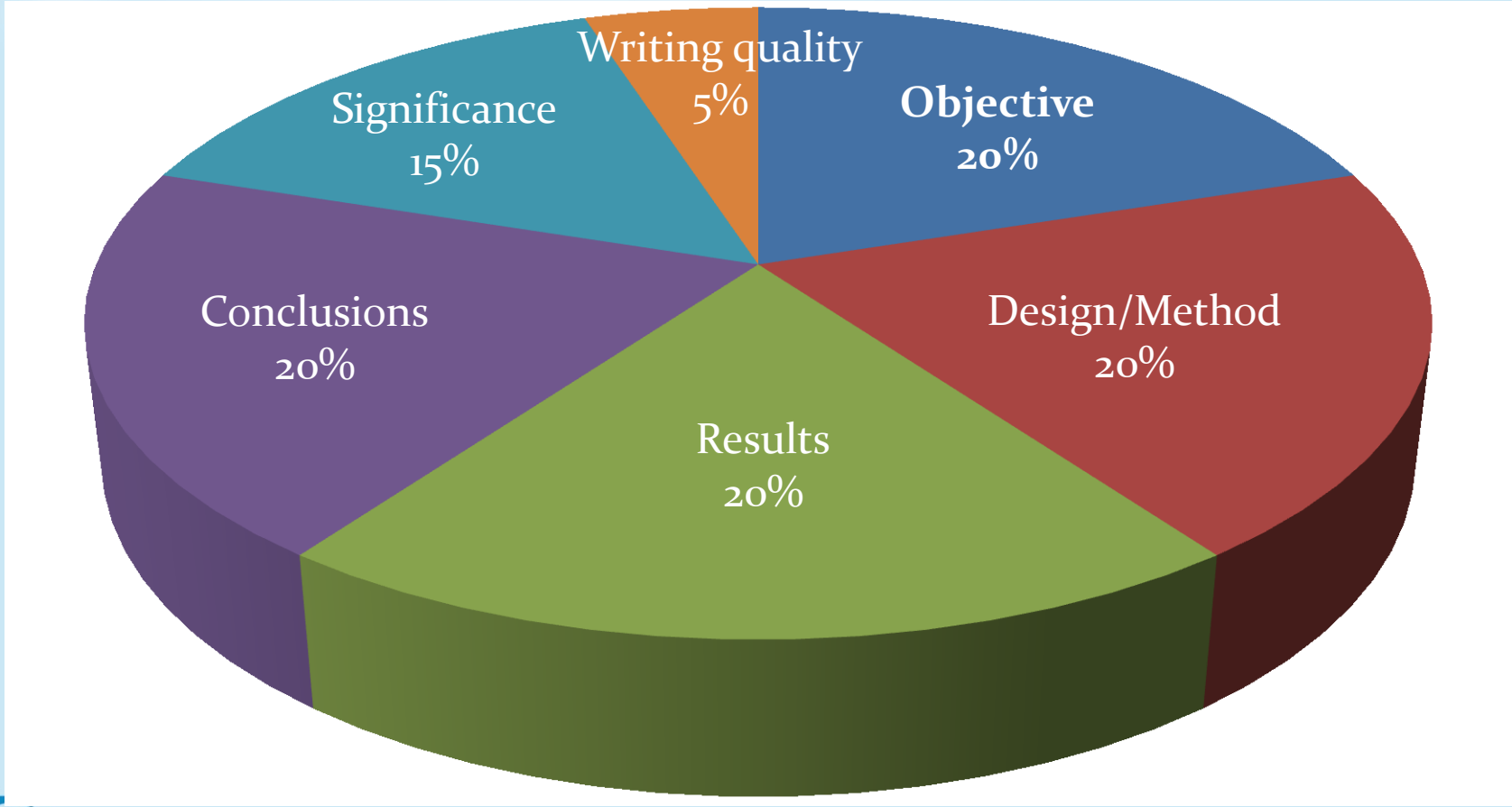
SCORES



How Scores are Used

- Awards
  - RIS and Councils may offer travel awards and competitions
- Programming preferences
- Monitoring quality and improvement over time

Weighting of the Criteria Used



Criteria and Weighting

Criteria for Scoring Abstracts		Suggested Weighting
Format	**Objective/Aim/Hypothesis** Defines the purpose, content or expectations of the work being presented. Why do we care about the problem? What practical, theoretical, scientific or gap is the research filling?	20%
	Design/Approach/Methods A clear, concise description of the methods used to include research design and appropriate statistical terms/statistical analysis.	20%
	Results Data aligned with methodology and objectives. Must include at least preliminary data. *"Results will be presented at EB"* is not acceptable.	20%
	Conclusions Sound and justified by the data and/or statistical analyses.	20%
Significance	Novel or innovative topic or methods Relevance to nutrition research/practice/policy	15%
Writing Quality	Is the writing clear, concise and grammatically correct?	5%

Most Common Errors…

1. **Objective** unclear
2. Poorly **designed**
3. **Results** incomplete
4. **Conclusions** not valid or consistent with results
5. Not novel
   - Not relevant to nutrition field
   - Very limited appeal

   Significance
6. Grammatical/spelling errors
   - Difficult to comprehend

   Writing quality

Part 3:
How to Write an Effective Abstract

#1: Background or Statement of Problem; Objective or Hypothesis

This section must outline the content or expectations of the work being presented:

- Why do we care about the problem? What is the problem?
- What practical, theoretical or scientific gap is your research filling?
- What do you hope to accomplish?
- Statement of objective or hypothesis.

#1: Background, Statement of Problem or Objective

Example

The purpose of this study was to describe the dietary habits of breast cancer survivors, ACS guideline knowledge and risk perception.

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Word/ character count

Improved Example

Little information exists about the relation between perception of cancer risk, knowledge of preventive behaviors and self-reported behaviors, especially diet. The purpose of this study was to describe risk perception, knowledge of American Cancer Society (ACS) guidelines, and the diet quality (HEI-2005) of breast cancer survivors.

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#2: Methods, Design or Approach

- A clear, concise description of the methods used - *What did you actually do to get your results?*
- Include research design and appropriate statistical terms/statistical analysis
- Must relate to the objectives and rationale of the presentation or project.

#2: Methods, Design or Approach

Example

Methods: A sample of female breast cancer survivors was surveyed regarding personal and family medical history, knowledge of ACS cancer prevention guidelines, perceived risk of breast cancer recurrence, and usual dietary intake. Women were at least 21 years of age and out of major chemotherapy and/or radiation for at least 3 months.

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Design? How were the data acquired? Statistics?

Improved Example:

Methods:

In a cross-sectional study, breast cancer survivors responded to online questionnaires about perceived risk of breast cancer (3 items), knowledge of ACS guidelines (1 item), and diet (a validated 156-item Vioscreen© food frequency questionnaire). Attributes were contrasted between those with and without family history of cancer using chi square tests and general linear models .

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#3: Results

- **Clearly** state what you learned – ***What did the study find?***
- Align with methods and objectives.
- Must include data……

… ***"Results will be presented at EB,"*** is not acceptable.

#3: Results

The average age of survivors was 53.0 ± 8.5 y (mean ± SD), 88% were non-Hispanic white, and 51% were overweight or obese. Of the total sample, 72% of women did not consider themselves to be at a higher risk for recurrence than other breast cancer survivors, nor was there a difference in risk perception between family history groups (p=0.34). The median HEI-2005 score for the total sample was 75.7 (68.3, 81.7). Scores were similar between those with and without family history.

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Example:

Results:

In this largely non-Hispanic white (88%) overweight /obese (51%) sample of 85 middle-aged (age, 53 y) survivors, 72% did not consider themselves to be at a higher risk for recurrence, nor was there a difference in risk perception between family history groups (p=0.34). The median HEI-2005 score for the total sample was 75.7 (68.3, 81.7). Scores were similar between those with and without family history.

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#4: Conclusions

- Reflective of data provided in abstract
- Supported by appropriate statistical analysis
- Aligned with study objectives
- Practical research implication

#4: Conclusions

Overall, survivors did not manifest high risk perception for recurrence, nor was family history associated with risk perception or diet quality. Even though women believed a dietary behavior contributed to breast cancer risk or risk of recurrence, the majority did not adhere to the dietary behavior. However, diet quality scores were not reflective of beneficial dietary behaviors when assessed by aMed dietary index scores. These were not representative of a higher quality diet.

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too long!

presents conclusions not found ...results

Conclusions:

Overall, survivors did not manifest high risk perception for recurrence, nor was family history associated with risk perception or diet quality. Diet quality scores (HEI-2005) were reflective of beneficial dietary behaviors.

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ASN Abstract Submission Instructions

- Use an introduction-body-conclusion structure
  - **Objective /Purpose**
  - **Research questions**
  - **Methods**
  - **Results**
  - **Conclusions**

  in paragraphs that are unified, coherent, concise, and able to stand alone
- In order to fit in the "box":
  - Your abstract body must have a maximum of **1220** characters
  - Our Abstract: 288+326+342+193= **1149** characters
- The abstract title, authors, affiliations and body of the abstract should not exceed 1720 characters excluding spaces.

scientificsessions.nutrition.org/abstract-information/

Abstract Deadline for ASN's Scientific Sessions at EB 2015

- **Abstract Submission Deadline:**

  11:59 PM EST, Thursday, November 6, 2014
- To submit, go to http://scientificsessions.nutrition.org/abstract-information/
- The topic that you select from the topic category list determines which society receives and programs your abstract.
- It is important that you review the **society topic categories** and the **abstract instructions** before submitting your abstract.

Questions?

Please use the chat feature.

Questions?

If you have additional questions after the webinar, please feel free to email Moira Guenther at mguenther@nutrition.org

Thank You for Joining Us!

Related resources are available at:

www.nutrition.org/education-and-professional-development/abstract-development/

We will be posting a taped version of this webinar on this page by the end of this week!