



How to Write an Abstract (and do a Great Conference Presentation)

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Independent Pathways: Orientation & Mobility and CVI Solutions

Why Do YOU Attend Conferences and Symposiums?

- In the chat, write down why you attend conferences or symposiums?
- What do you hope to get from them?



Why Present at Conferences? (1)



O&M needs evidence-based research – presenting an individual case study might lead to someone else’s PhD topic or an innovative new program.



Share what you are doing in your ‘neck of the woods’.



Help newer (& older) members of the field stay up to date.

Why Present at Conferences? (2)

- Inspire other O&M specialists.
- Give people different ideas about how to work with their clients.
- It's actually quite fun!



What do you need to do?

- Think of a topic.
- Does the conference or symposium have a theme?
- In a field like O&M, a presentation doesn't need to be academic. Case study examples of O&M programs are always valuable and interesting.
- Think about the best presentations you have seen. What did you like most about them?
- Think also about presentations that you didn't enjoy. What didn't you like about them?



How to Write an Abstract for a Case Study



Read the abstract requirements - what is the word count? Do you also need to submit an author bio or any other information?



Include a **clear title** - e.g. if it is a case study, make that clear in the title.



Background: what is the the background of the case - why is it interesting? What does it add to current knowledge?



Case description: demographics, information about the person, what intervention did you provide, how did it work, what went right (or wrong).



Conclusion: what is the main 'take home' message?

How to Write an Abstract for Other Presentations

The issue: Why is this topic/work important? How does it connect to the theme?

Description of the work, research, project, experience, innovative idea, etc.

Lessons learned: conclusions/outcomes/learnings and implications of the research, program or project that you perceive important for the audience.

Practical applications: how might the audience be able to implement strategies; bringing your learning into their everyday practice.

Example of an Abstract (1)

Title: Implementing a routines-based approach to early childhood orientation and mobility with children with vision impairment (International Society on Early Intervention ICF Conference Taiwan 2018)

Description of content (for non O&M audience): For children who are blind or have low vision, the development of orientation and mobility (O&M) skills which enable them to travel safely and independently through their environment is critically important. O&M with children aged birth to five years includes the development of purposeful and self-initiated movement, concept and sensory development, and the use of a mobility aid such as a long cane where appropriate.

Broad description of presentation: This presentation **describes** how O&M Specialists can incorporate a routines-based approach to O&M assessment and intervention. This approach builds the capacity of parents and caregivers to support their child's O&M development, including the use of a long cane, within their daily routines. **One strategy that will be discussed** is the use of a 'teaching cane', which empowers families, caregivers and other early childhood professionals to develop a first-hand understanding of long cane mobility to support a child's early independence.

Example of an Abstract (2)

Title which links to SPEVI conference theme of “Creating a Clear Vision for the Future”: CVI Community Australia: Building Meaningful Connections (SPEVI Conference 2020)

Description of content (don’t assume everyone has the knowledge you have about your topic):

Cortical Vision Impairment (CVI) refers to vision impairment caused by damage or disorder to the visual pathways and visual processing centres of the brain and is now recognised as the leading cause of vision impairment in children in developed countries.

CVI is indicated when all the following characteristics exist:

- an ocular eye exam that is normal or cannot explain the functional vision impairment;
- a history of a significant congenital or acquired brain injury or neurological disorder; and
- the presence of unique visual characteristics and behaviours associated with CVI (Roman-Lantzy, 2018).

Example of an Abstract (3)

Why is this topic important? Research has shown that with the appropriate intervention, the functional vision of children with CVI can improve significantly.

Description of tool being discussed and the context: The development of the CVI Range Assessment tool (Roman-Lantzy, 2007, 2018) provides a means of understanding how children with CVI see, developing appropriate interventions, and monitoring progress and improvements in functional vision. **This presentation will provide a case study example from the perspectives of an O&M specialist and a parent in how the CVI Range assessment tool was used to develop appropriate interventions for a very young child diagnosed with CVI.**

Practical application for audience: In addition, **the presenters will introduce** “CVI Community Australia”: a new voluntary, web-based forum for Australians to learn more about and connect with others in relation to CVI. While there are communities existing in the UK, USA and Europe, there is currently no community for this purpose in Australia. CVI Community Australia **would like to fill this gap** in creating a community for parents, professionals and the wider community for the purposes of education, discussion and creating meaningful connections.

Finding Inspiration...

- Read other examples of abstracts for ideas:
- [https://www.academia.edu/78127374/Abstracts of the 2018 Southeastern Orientation and Mobility Association SOMA Conference](https://www.academia.edu/78127374/Abstracts_of_the_2018_Southeastern_Orientation_and_Mobility_Association_SOMA_Conference)
- [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334257202 Abstracts of the 2018 Dutch Mobility Conference](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334257202_Abstracts_of_the_2018_Dutch_Mobility_Conference)
- [https://s5.goeshow.com/aerbvi/bic/2022/conference schedule.cfm](https://s5.goeshow.com/aerbvi/bic/2022/conference_schedule.cfm)



Tips for Putting Together a Good Abstract (1)

- Start with the theme.
- Next OMAA Symposium: “Future Proof – addressing future client needs”
- What are the first things that come to mind when you think about this theme? How might aspects of your work relate to this theme?

Tips for Putting Together a Good Abstract (2)

- Write your abstract well – use plain English wherever possible.
- Keep it to the word count (300 words) – it can be less than this!
- Ask for feedback from colleagues before you submit.

Writing Presentation Learning Objectives (1)

The OMAA Symposium asks for at least 3 learning objectives.

Learning objectives are based on Bloom's Taxonomy (a way of classifying educational goals and objectives)

Use **action verbs** to write measurable objectives.

<https://www.celt.iastate.edu/instructional-strategies/effective-teaching-practices/revised-blooms-taxonomy/>

Writing Presentation Learning Objectives (2)

- Learning objectives should be in this format:
 - **Audience:** Typically “participant”, “attendee”, or “learner”.
 - **Behaviour:** This will include an action verb.
 - **Condition:** What the audience will learn.

Use words and phrases such as:

Demonstrate....

Describe....

Explain....

Identify...

Show...

Writing Presentation Learning Objectives (3)

Example learning objectives:

- Participants will identify new tools for...(working with clients with CVI).
- Attendees will be able to recognize...(how the O&M specialist can work collaboratively with educators).
- Participants will develop ideas on...(how to incorporate technology into their O&M programs with older adults).

Application to O&M Practice

- “This presentation has application for O&M practice because...”
 - CVI is now the most common cause of vision impairment in developed countries.
 - A shortage of O&M specialists requires us to work more collaboratively with other professionals.
 - Technology such as xxxxx can improve the independent mobility of older clients.



Putting Together a Good Presentation



Start with **'why'** – what made you want to present on your topic?



Tell a story (this is why case studies generally make for interesting presentations).



Let video do some of the 'talking' for you.



Less is more!! You'd be surprised how quick a 20-minute presentation goes.....
Choose one or two ideas that you can talk about in-depth.

Common Presentation Mistakes

Too much
information!!!

Getting carried away
with the 'transitions'
and the 'animations'
buttons on
PowerPoint.

Running out of time
(this is **really** easy to
do!).

Common (and generally unfounded) Fears

- I have nothing to say.
- I don't have enough experience, everyone else in the room will already know this....
- What if someone asks me a question and I don't know the answer?
- I'm terrified of public speaking.



Easing Presenter Anxiety (1)

- Acknowledge if you are nervous! People understand and appreciate that you are sharing your knowledge/experience with them.
- Present with a partner.
- Know your topic!
- Use notes! Either use presenter view (but be aware that doesn't always work) or have written notes for the important points you don't want to forget.
- Don't put together your presentation the night before you present – try to leave some time to go back to it and tweak/revise it.

Easing Presenter Anxiety (2)

- Practice your presentation beforehand.
- Have a back-up plan in case the technology fails.
- Make sure your presentation is on a USB stick. Save it to the hard drive of your computer if you are using your own device. In-person conferences may require you to email the presentation beforehand –they usually have a time before you present to check everything is working properly.

Dealing with Questions

- “That’s a good question. I don’t have the answer right now, but I’ll get back to you on that.”
- Shift the question to someone else in the room or back at the audience directly: “That hasn’t been my experience — does anyone have thoughts or a view on that right now?”
- “I’d be happy to talk to you in the break in more detail.”
- “I don’t know the answer to that – our program didn’t focus on that aspect.”
- “Good question – that would make a great future research topic!”

In Conclusion...

- Every person we work with is different – there is no ‘one way’ to do O&M.
- Therefore, we ALL bring something new to the conversation every time we work with a new person or family.
- Our profession is amazing – sharing your experiences helps us all feel more connected.
- Look forward to hearing you at the next symposium!