How to Develop an Abstract for a Clinical Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Info to Include</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>• Clearly identifies the topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background (Introduction)</td>
<td>• Explains what your research is about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Why did you start the project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provides context for your study (results/conclusions of previous research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identifies a problem or question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What did you hope to learn/discover?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>• Who/what was involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How did you conduct the project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• When and where did you do it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What statistical tests/equipment did you use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>• Presents findings without interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What did you learn/discover?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>• Interprets results, relating them to the info and hypothesis in the Background section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identifies the clinical/scientific relevance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tricks of the Trade**

1. Include the same information as that required for a full manuscript, but present it as a summary—in a condensed form. Focus on the most important points and do not include extra nice-to-know/interesting information and discussion. Limit your abstract to 250-300 words.

2. A good strategy is to write the outline headings—Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion/Conclusion—on a piece of paper and then fill in the sections with bullet statements that answer the questions in the table above.
   a. Rank the bullet statements under each heading in order of importance.
   b. Eliminate all but the top three bullet statements.
   c. Develop the bullet statements into complete sentences.
   d. Check your word count and edit/delete sentences as necessary.

3. Use short sentences with action verbs.

4. Do not include tables, figures, or references in abstracts.