Title of Essay

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Abstract

The abstract should be a single paragraph in block format (without paragraph indentation), and the appropriate length depends on the journal to which you are submitting, but they are typically between 150 and 200 words. (Students should consult their instructor for the recommended length of the abstract.) Section 2.04 of the APA manual (American Psychological Association [APA], 2010) has additional information about the abstract. The abstract is important because many journal readers first read the abstract to determine if the entire article is worth reading. The abstract should describe all four parts of an empirical paper (i.e., Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion). Consider writing one or two sentences summarizing each part of a paper, and you'll have a nice abstract.

Title of Essay

And so begins the essay over which you have been stressing. Your introduction will begin on what is officially page 3, and you will be sure to capture the attention of your readers and to provide contextual information about the topic you will be discussing in the following pages. Your essay should be typed and double-spaced on standard-sized paper (8.5" x 11") with 1" margins on all sides. You should use a clear font that is highly readable. Many instructors will accept Calibri or Times New Roman. The font size should be no smaller than 11 but no larger than 12. Calibri 11 is the default font and size when you open a new Word document. Keep in mind that your essay should include four major sections: the Title Page, Abstract, Main Body, and References.

You will notice that though the Abstract is written in block format, the body of the essay is typically formatted with traditional indentation to indicate paragraph changes. You will want to be sure that you set your spacing to true double-spacing, as the default setting for Word is to use a multiple spacing, which leaves large gaps between paragraphs. You do not want this. To prevent this from happening, click on the arrow at the bottom right side of the “Paragraph” section of the toolbar. Find the words “Line spacing,” and be sure to choose “Double” from the dropdown box. To the right of this, you will see the words “Before” and “After.” Set both before and after to 0pt. This will eliminate those troublesome spaces.

References

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