WRITING AN ABSTRACT

Below are some hints and tips on how to write an abstract that will hopefully maximise the chance of having your paper accepted at a conference.

1. Ensure that you:
   - Begin with a catchy title that is relevant to the topic/theme of the conference.
   - state the issue to be discussed
   - give a brief background to the issue
   - brief description of what you proposing to discuss further in the paper
   - implications/outcomes: why is what you've done important?
   - All the above is structured in a logical and coherent flow.

2. Ensure that the abstract relates to the conference theme in a “real” way – if it doesn’t fit the theme of the conference, don’t submit.

3. Ensure that practical aspects of the abstract comply with requirements:
   - it meets or is under the specified word length
   - is typed in the specified font type, size – and on a template if provided.
   - spacing and setting out are correct - if no guidelines are given then a standard format is usually:
     - 200-250 words
     - Times 12pt font
     - 1.5 line spacing and centred on the page

4. Look at past abstracts/conference papers to pick up the tone and style of that particular organisation’s conferences:
   - run your abstract past someone familiar with both the topic you wish to present and the conference style: such as a university colleague, work colleague, member of professional society, someone who has presented before at the conference
   - Submit on or before the due date and in the required way (electronically, via e-mail, is usually preferred)
   - ensure computer compatibility of documents (especially in converting Macintosh to IBM formats)
   - saving in ‘Rich Text Format’ in Word is better (*.rtf)
   - not all are able to access documents in html formats easily – stick to established word processing programs such as Word
   - Ensure you include your name, title, organisation and contact details, including phone, fax, street address and e-mail

5. Finally, remember that your abstract serves two purposes:
   1. to interest and intrigue the committee so they will select it
   2. to introduce/outline your topic for the conference handbook – so it needs to stand alone as a record of your presentation