

How to Write a SESUG Abstract

By definition, an abstract is a self-contained, short, and powerful statement that summarizes the content of a larger work. For conference presentation purposes, it promotes interest in your particular focus and/or expertise. Your abstract should provide a brief description of your topic including the scope, products used, and the effectiveness or value of your particular paper/presentation to the target community. The language style of an abstract does not have to be formal but should match the language style of the completed paper or poster.

Although there is always room for creativity, your abstract should include, at a minimum, a few sentences that cover the following items:

- **Why your topic is important or interesting or what problem it is solving**
- **How you approached this topic (technique) and for what audience;**
- **Implications for user community or sub-community.**

We have color coded these items within the following examples. The first demonstrates a technique for general use or SAS feature highlight (1. Mira Shapiro: CMISS® the SAS® Function You May Have Been “MISSING”), while the second solves a specific industry issue (2. Karen Wallace - Using SAS® to proactively monitor drug alerts: Implementing the URAC “DrugDrug Interactions” measure for a specialty pharmacy).

1. **Those of us who have been using SAS for more than a few years often rely on our tried- and-true techniques for standard operations like assessing missing values. Even though the old techniques still work, we often miss some of the “new” functionality added to SAS that would make our lives much easier. In effort to ascertain how many people skipped questions on a survey and, what percentage of people answered each question, I did a search of past conference papers and came across a function that was introduced in SAS 9.2-- CMISS. By using a combination of CMISS and Proc Transpose, a full missing assessment can be done in a concise program. This paper will demonstrate how CMISS makes assessing survey completeness an easy task.**
2. **To satisfy annual URAC accreditation requirements, one of the mandatory reported “Safe Care” domain measures is “Drug-Drug Interactions” (DM2012-13). This measure relies upon pharmacy and enrollment data to assess the percentage of patients who: 1) received a prescription for a target medication during the measurement period, and 2) were dispensed a concurrent prescription for a precipitant medication. The resultant data are stratified by line of business (URAC, 2016). Using SAS® Base programming, in conjunction with technical and clinical review, the preliminary methodology: 1) imports and joins several files using the data elements of patient identifier as well as medication and insurance plan, 2) cleanses the mixed-case, punctuated MediSpan-generated drug alert text, 3) categorizes the text into discrete flags based upon predetermined criteria, 4) sums the number of flags per observation, and finally, 5) segments data by insurance type. The reporting showcases de-identified, summarized descriptive statistics that may be used to better monitor drug alerts and, more importantly, intervene where there is perceived harm in the patient population. This paper is intended for the SAS® novice who may be challenged on ways to perform on-the-fly textual analysis with a mindset towards implementing standardized, automated reporting after receiving requisite oversight and sign-off.**

Other considerations:

- ✓ Compare your abstract to the word count limits and make sure yours falls within the required range. SESUG abstracts must be between 50 and 250 words.
- ✓ Make sure your abstract includes any terms that you would consider keywords for your presentation.
- ✓ Include appropriate trademark and copyright symbols.
- ✓ Keep your abstract positive and confident. Words like ‘might’, ‘seem like’, ‘perhaps’, ‘could’ all suggest a lack of confidence.
- ✓ Avoid jargon and abbreviations that are not commonly understood.
- ✓ If not intended for general users, include information about audience level or segment.
- ✓ Read the abstract out loud. This will give you a better sense of how it will be read by others.
- ✓ Spell and grammar check the abstract before submission.

Writing an effective abstract is not always easy, but taking the time to do so will result in a better understanding of your topic, increased audience interest, and an increased likelihood of paper acceptance. Make sure that all the components of a good abstract are included in the next one you write.