SPEAKER ABSTRACT GUIDELINES & EXAMPLE

ABSTRACT GUIDELINES and RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of the abstract is to write a complete and concise description of the proposed speaking content to encourage and entice potential readers into 'wanting to know more' about the proposed topic for inclusion into the 2014 Conference.

An abstract must be a fully self-contained, capsule description of the paper that does not assume (or attempt to provoke) the reader into flipping through it looking for an explanation of what is meant by a random or vague statement. The requirement is for the standing document to make sense - all by itself.

To assist the process, itSMF recommends that all entrants use the six key components listed and described below as a checklist and guideline prior to abstract submission for the Conference. Typically each of the six components lists one or two questions as prompters that require one or two sentence responses, to encourage a succinct summary and to assist adherence to the word limit (300 – 500).

CHECKLIST – SIX KEY COMPONENTS (in order)

1. Executive Summary / Introduction - In a business context, an ‘executive summary’ is often the only piece of a report read by the people who matter, and should be similar in content and tone to a journal paper abstract.
   a. What is your proposed topic?
   b. Reading through the six streams for the 2011 Conference, list the top one or two streams that ‘best fit’ your topic.
   c. Explain ‘why’ your topic/speech would be perfect for the Conference.

2. Motivation – Addresses ‘What needs to be resolved and why?’
   a. What problem have you or your organisation been trying to solve?
   b. Why is addressing this problem important?
   c. How did you or your organisation go about solving (or making progress on) the problem? For example:
      - Did you use frameworks, analytic models, prototype construction or field data analysis for an actual product?
      - What was the extent of your work?
      - Did you look at one or 100 programs in 20 different programming languages?
      - What important variables did you control, ignore or measure?

3. Problem Statement – Address ‘What problems or challenges occurred?’
   a. What problem or challenges needed to be addressed?
   b. How long had the problem been occurring?
   c. How had this attempted to be addressed in the past?
4. **Approach** – This is sometimes referred to as the ‘nuts and bolts’ section that really illustrates the uniqueness of your approach, and explains to the reader what happened that was worthwhile.

   a. How did you approach this topic/problem?
   b. What did you do to find the results for the topic?
   c. What results were gained?
   d. What happened to gain this understanding/solution?

5. **Results** – Results are very important to a powerful abstract, and best delivered in a fashion that avoids vague hand-waving statements that can dilute the impact. If you must be vague, you are only given license to do so when you can talk about orders-of-magnitude in improvement. There is a tension here in that you should not provide numbers that can be easily misinterpreted but, on the other hand, you don’t have room for all the caveats either.

   a. What was discovered?
   b. What were the answers established from the results?

6. **Conclusion** – Wrap it up.

   a. Provide clear conclusions that were discovered or established.
   b. Describe the implications of the answer.
   c. Were the results general, potentially general, or specific to a particular case, organisation or group of people?
   d. Any major restrictions or limitations on the results should be stated, if only by using ‘weasel-words’ such as ‘might’, ‘could’, ‘may’ and ‘seem’.
   e. Provide a short summary for a 30 to 60 day, and 12-month Action Plan for delegates to take away and implement in their workplace.

**WORD COUNT:** Keep to the 300 - 500 word count – if it runs too long, either it will be rejected or someone will take a chainsaw to it to get it down to size. Your purpose will be better served by doing the difficult task of cutting yourself, rather than leaving it to someone else who might be more interested in meeting size restrictions than in representing your efforts in the best possible manner.

**NAME:** Please do not list your name in the abstract.

**STREAM:** Please list the one stream you believe best suits the abstract.

**KEYWORDS:** List ‘keywords’ to help the committee assign papers for review, which can be extremely important to the fate of the paper. Make sure that the keywords you pick make assigning your paper to a review category obvious (for example, if there is a list of conference topics, use your chosen topic area as one of the keywords).

Also, using keywords within your presentation helps facilitate keyword index searches so your paper turns up at the top of a search result listing. So think of a half-dozen search phrases and keywords that people in the industry might use and be sure to include those exact phrases in your abstract.

**Questions:**

Please address any questions regarding the application process to Sheryl Kingsley, on (03) 9879 5466 and questions regarding topics to Conference Manager Barbara Hines on 0414 977 359 or barbara.hines@itsmf.org.au.
Sample Abstract

The Hitch-Hiker’s Guide to ITIL

Executive Summary
This paper reveals a little known truth about ITIL: that Douglas Adams was in fact the key driving force behind the development of ITIL.
This talk is quite light-hearted in nature, and could fit into any of the streams (it addresses Adams’ (and others’) approach to the basics, practice, people, governance, metrics and innovation). Alternatively it could be used as a presentation where levity is good, such as before the Gala Dinner.

Motivation and Problem Statement (could also be separate paragraphs)
The motivation behind this talk is to raise awareness of the valuable contribution that Douglas Adams has made to development of the ITIL framework.

Approach
There are many elements in the Hitch Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy series of books that demonstrate early ITIL thinking. So, too there are examples in the Dirk Gently series of books (also by Adams). These examples provide the selection panel with a taste of some of the examples (there are more in the talk) that will be used to build a compelling case that Douglas Adams was in fact the key architect of ITIL:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Douglas Adams Initiative</th>
<th>ITIL Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Babelfish</td>
<td>Common language used in IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demolition Plans not being well advertised</td>
<td>The importance of good communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaphod Beeblebrox</td>
<td>Not having the same person be Incident Manager and Problem Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marvin the Paranoid Android</td>
<td>IT Service Continuity Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie the shipboard computer</td>
<td>Service Level Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunglasses of Peril (the shades that go dark at the first hint of trouble to prevent you from seeing anything that may disturb you)</td>
<td>Not wanting to see any issue with Service Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining the answer to the Ultimate Question</td>
<td>Problem Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Additionally, a little known fact is that the early 1980s TV series used the Incident Management process flow in some of the background on-screen graphics.)

Results
This research included in this paper clearly demonstrates that Douglas Adams had a major hand in the shaping of ITIL, and that ITIL influences are in fact pervasive throughout western literature and film (with Ron Howard films being a notable exception).

Conclusion
Given that either the architects of ITIL were heavily influenced by Douglas Adams, or, more likely, Douglas Adams was a key person in developing ITIL, it will be interesting to see what other frameworks have similar shadowy backgrounds. The author is already adducing considerable evidence that Joseph Heller’s Catch-22 is actually COBIT 1.0.
Sample Biography

- Written in 3rd person
- Full sentences
- Under 100 words

Paul Edwards Biography

Manager of Global Operations & Strategy at ANZ Technology, Paul is a strategic ITIL Expert certified advisor with a solid record of enabling cultural change and aligning IT to Business. As a senior manager, Paul is responsible for delivering ITSM solutions and strategic ITSM advice to the business and its clients. Paul’s education and career expertise focused on the importance of engaging with people in IT organisations to implement lasting, meaningful and successful change. Paul has spoken at many itSMF events on IT governance and is a member of SAGE-AU.

Sample Conference Guide Presentation Summary

- Written in 3rd person
- Full sentences
- Under 100 words

The Hitch-Hiker’s Guide to ITIL

This session will reveal to the ITSM community a little known truth about ITIL: that Hitch Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy author Douglas Adams was in fact the key driving force behind the development of ITIL. There are many elements in the Hitch Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy series of books that demonstrate early ITIL thinking. So, too, there are examples in the Dirk Gently series of books (also by Adams). These examples will be explored, discussed and dissected throughout this session that will be used to build a compelling case that Douglas Adams was in fact the key architect of ITIL.

Sample Keywords

- ITIL background
- All Streams
- Douglas Adams
- Humour
- Conspiracy