

This guidance document is meant to assist writers with creating successful AACP meeting proposal submissions. Be sure to review the submission requirements as you read this guidance document. Note that programming decisions are complex, so even good proposals may be rejected due to the need to balance programs among various types of schools and colleges, presenters and type of sessions, length of sessions, conference venue/room options, programming from prior years, number of total proposals received, and other variables. This document has been designed to show you *successful* and *unsuccessful proposal examples* in italics for each section of a proposal, along with tips and guidance for writing successful proposals. The text bubbles call out helpful reminders to include in your submissions.

Section I: Title

Successful Example: "Secret Sauce: Vitality, Resiliency and Empowerment"

1. This title tells the audience what it's about - vitality, resiliency and empowerment. It promises something - it implies a secret recipe or sauce to get to these characteristics.
2. It can provoke curiosity - what is the secret sauce? What will I learn that will help me with these things?
3. The topic also is timely. There is a large interest in resiliency in academics thus it may have a large draw from the attendees.
4. It also shows some originality by the presenters. What is the presentation about? How much do I expect to learn (e.g., 5 teaching practices that...)
5. Additional considerations can include: What does the title convey about the speakers? Does it promise some sort of benefit for me as the audience member or does it tell me a story (e.g., how to develop..., how a successful student...)?
6. The title brings people in the door. If your title and your presentation are not aligned, people will leave disappointed.

Unsuccessful Example: "Strategies to Increase Resilience"

Compared to the title of the successful example, this title is vague.

There are no descriptors – what kind of strategies?

Resilience for whom? Using a thesaurus for some of the words may help me identify more interesting words to use. And while as a conference goer I may be interested in the general topic, if the title of this session does not sound like it will be an engaging and interesting workshop, I would not attend.

Remember your presentation title is the first thing the reader or audience will see - it is the first impression. It sets the tone –

In this unsuccessful example, the title can be *FURTHER* improved by considering who is the secret sauce about? Students? Faculty? Everyone?

Section II: Description

Successful Example: "Secret Sauce: Vitality, Resiliency and Empowerment"

Personal storytelling, professional and personal development, and academic skills are essential ingredients to motivate and strengthen resiliency and vitality among students and faculty. Well-being is cross-cutting to all disciplines and specializations. Promoting solutions to improve individual and organizational well-being strategies are essential to foster vitality and empowerment.

1. Use brief succinct sentences about what the presentation will cover/what attendees will learn.
2. Begin with the end in mind. The description and overall purpose should be well developed, providing enough details to paint a picture of the session along with measurable benefits.
3. Ensure the description is specific in describing relevant background to the issue/content as well as what the session hopes to accomplish.
4. Seek to attract program reviewers to select this session by choosing a timely (HOT) topic, skill building or process that can appeal to broad audiences and stakeholders.
5. Think of this section of the proposal as marketing collateral/elevator speech as to why it should be selected.

Unsuccessful Example: "Strategies to Increase Resilience"

Burnout and stress are a problem across the country. Presenters from different schools and colleges will share data regarding this issue nationally as to why it is important and what can be done to address it from an institutional perspective.

1. While concise this description does not provide sufficient detail of who this is targeted for and what attendees will come away with.
2. Attendees are looking for practical information they can apply/take back with them.
3. How is this proposal unique?

Pay attention to word count.

Can you map the description to relevant ACPE standards, guidelines, and statements?

Is this a contemporary topic?

Was this topic covered last year?

Who is intended audience?

Section III: Program Design

Successful Example: “Secret Sauce: Vitality, Resiliency and Empowerment”

- *Welcome (introduction of speaker, objectives of session and overview of the next 60 minutes) [5 minutes]*
- *Define vitality, resiliency and well-being [5 minutes]*
- *Describe the critical importance and key internal and external drivers influencing individual and organizational health [10 minutes]*
- *Complete individual self-assessments on one’s emotional exhaustion, resiliency and well-being [15 minutes]*
- *Explore strategies that can be easily implemented to improve one’s well-being (reflection, mindset, etc.) [10 minutes]*
- *Create personalized well-being plans [10 minutes]*
- *Final Q/A [5 minutes]*

Be sure to describe the basic outline of your proposed session with time allotments for each session element.

1. Be clear with how the time is allotted.
2. Be succinct. There is no benefit to be overly lengthy here. In fact, you could describe the program design in outline format to avoid the possibility of writing a paragraph.
3. Include an appropriate balance of content delivery (you talking) and attendee application (active learning activity/activities) of material. If you are planning an introductory session, slightly more background information may be needed. If it is for an advanced audience, limit that content even more.
4. Build in a little time in the beginning for introduction of speakers and a little time at the end for questions, answers, and discussion.

Unsuccessful Example: “Strategies to Increase Resilience”

- *Three speakers will talk for 13 minutes each describing methods for resilience [39 minutes]*
 1. Quantity of speakers is not part of the program design.
 2. Avoid making the reviewer do the math (13x3) and best to round to nearest whole number. Saying 40 minutes for description of methods of resilience would be better. Also be more granular with specifics of the content.
- *Show one initiative- groups work on a plan for starting a resilience initiative on their campus. [15 minutes]*
 1. Make sure the activity is clearly described and not written as an instruction to the audience. Confusing elements here include: Are these table groups? How will they decide which one of their campus' resilience initiatives? Will ideas be posted online during or after the session?
- *Participants can put ideas in online form and shared with attendees*
 1. Avoid “could” or “can” in the description. Sounds unsure.
- *Q/A [5 minutes]*

Section IV: Objectives

Successful Example: “Secret Sauce: Vitality, Resiliency and Empowerment”

- *List the personal qualities that can be developed to build student and faculty resilience.*
- *Describe how organizations can create a culture of caring, connection, empowerment, and meaning that supports resiliency.*
- *Develop an individual and organizational development plan to implement strategies in the respective workplace settings using the 12-factor organizational health model.*

1. Your objectives tell the audience the specific learning outcomes and the level of learning you expect them to achieve by the end of your presentation. They give the audience insights about whether your presentation will cover introductory (low level facts and definitions) or advanced (high level application and evaluation), which is important information when people are determining if your presentation will fit their professional development needs.
2. Your objectives should be written in terms of the learner and should be specific and measurable. You should include an objective that addresses the available evidence for your topic as well as an active learning/application objective. Therefore, one example of an introductory (low level) objective from the proposal that meet these specifications is item (a.) above
3. Some additional low-level objective can include examples such as:
 - b. List 3 reasons that students lack resilience.
 - c. State the 4 steps to build your students’ resiliency.
 - d. Outline the process of empowering students to improve their learning and retention of course material.
4. Examples of two advanced (high level) objectives from the proposal that meet these specifications are items (b. and c. above)
5. Some additional high-level objective options include examples such as:
 - a. Evaluate 2 resiliency measures to determine the best fit for use with your students.
 - b. Create a timeline for implementing a new empowerment plan in your course.
 - c. Compare and contrast the impact and outcomes of resiliency training using a pre-posttest and reflective essay.
6. Allow the audience to do a practical activity in your presentation that positions them to apply your topic in their class or program.

Unsuccessful Example: “Strategies to Increase Resilience”

- *List resilience strategies.*
- *Describe how to support resiliency.*
- *Develop a plan to use at your college to increase resiliency.*

Compared to the objectives of the successful example, these are a lot less descriptive and more difficult to measure because of the lack of specificity. Other DON'Ts when writing objectives are:

1. Don't make your objectives so vague that they could apply to any presentation.
2. Don't say: Define relevant terms and definitions.
3. Don't write high level objectives and give the impression that your talk is an advanced presentation and then spend all your time covering definitions and terms.
4. Avoid writing too many objectives for your time allotted.

Write specific and measurable objectives that make it clear if the presentation is introductory or advance.

Note, 60-minute special sessions are limited to three learning objectives. Mini-sessions can have a maximum of two learning objectives, and each micro-session presenter should have one learning objective.

Section V: Audience Engagement and Active Learning Strategies

Successful Example: “Secret Sauce: Vitality, Resiliency and Empowerment”

- *Self-assessment questions at the beginning of the session (polling the audience) [3 minutes]*
 - *Brain-dump activity: used to gauge the level of knowledge on the topic [3 minutes]*
 - *Self-assessment survey for the individual’s self-awareness [5-8 minutes]*
 - *Modeled a resiliency strategy (self-worth using image on your personal camera) [5 minutes]*
 - *Closing activity to create personal action plan [5-10 minutes to get started then post-session continuation]*
1. “How will you engage your audience?” is to focus on making them feel a part of your session. As stated previously, your title and learning objectives should make them interested in attending your session - and when they leave, you need to make them feel like they got what you told them they would learn.
 2. Consider using storytelling, reflective question(s) or interesting facts about the why of your presentation in the very beginning - get your learner hooked on the topic.
 3. Keep them engaged throughout your time together. Consider incorporating active learning using the mnemonic: CPR. Content - setting the stage for the activity and providing the expectations of the activity; Participation - engaging the audience in the learning and Reflection - connecting the activity back to the learning process.
 4. There are several different ways to engage the audience and you do not need to use all the bags of tricks. Use the ones that are most familiar and comfortable for you.
 5. Create active learning activities that connect to your learning objectives and should vary in complexity and time. Low-complexity activities may be think-pair-share, brain-dump, self-assessment survey or muddiest point questions, compared to higher-complexity activities like a case-based scenario.

Active Learning = CPR:

C – content

P – participation

R – reflection

Engaging the audience takes time – plan for it – 60 minute session should have 3-4 active learning activities depending on the complexity; if more complex, fewer activities at they take more time.

Just like assessment questions, learning activities should be connected to your learning objectives.

Unsuccessful Example: “Strategies to Increase Resilience”

This session will engage the audience by asking questions and having them fill out a survey for the presenters to collate and later share with interested individuals.

1. This broad statement does not tell the reviewer what you want the audience to do and the activities appear to be helping you (the presenter) vs. helping the audience see application or relevance of the topic.
2. When using polling questions, you do not want them to be viewed as helping you (the presenter) in a manner to gather data for your scholarly activities vs. helping the learning / audience members learn what they know versus they don’t know. Not to mention IRB!
3. There is no variety nor depth in the activities stated. Mix up the engaged strategies – have variety and move beyond the low-complexity only type activities such as poll questions, think / pair / share, question / answer. Consider self-awareness tools, case-based application scenarios with ‘grey’ answers, difficult discussions that individuals usually want to avoid but need to be addressed, etc.
4. Consider what the attendee could walk away with and implement upon returning from the conference as another means for engaging the learner.

Section VI: Assessment

Successful Example: “Secret Sauce: Vitality, Resiliency and Empowerment”

- *Polling questions*
 - *Self-assessments/inventories (wellbeing, emotional exhaustion, burnout and resiliency)*
 - *Application exercises of what can be strategically implemented at home institutions and resources needed/worksheets and supplemental guide provided.*
1. The assessment aligns the learning objectives and the instructional strategies employed during the presentation to answer “how do you know they now know?”
 - a. Align with learning objectives - something that’s important.
 - b. Polling questions, which aligned with the learning objectives, were used at the beginning of the session to gauge pre-session knowledge and again at the end of the session to measure learning that occurred.
 2. Assessments can also function as a learning tool, informing and clarifying concepts.
 - a. Align with instructional strategies - something that was taught.
 - b. Self-assessments were used to apply the concepts being introduced. As part of the discussion, the assessments were debriefed and intention/alignment discussed.
 3. Short multiple-choice questions administered via audience response systems or short-answer survey questions for guided discussion may be more efficient than creating concept maps or conducting a debate.
 - a. Follow good exam question writing guidelines.
 - b. Methods to assess learning should be practical and efficient.
 - c. Written polling questions and verbal prompting questions followed guidelines, such as avoiding negative phrasing, idioms and “all of the above/none of the above” options.

Align assessing with what you are teaching.

Treat assessment as part of teaching.

Follow good question-writing guidelines.

Unsuccessful Example: “Strategies to Increase Resilience”

- *One polling question at the beginning of the session*
OR
 - *Self-assessments/inventories (leadership/research design)*
OR
 - *A buzz group discussion about two cases with plans to improve both. Each group will present to the entire audience.*
1. Don’t miss the opportunity to make assessment part of learning or be vague in the description of how the assessment(s) will measure the learning objectives.
 - a. Using just a polling question at the beginning of the session.
 2. Don’t assess something not discussed or taught.
 - a. Asking the audience to participate in a leadership self-assessment.
 3. Don’t create a time-consuming assessment that cannot be completed.
 - a. Selecting a complicated assessment strategy, such as a group activity followed by a report-out to be completed in 5 minutes.

Program Purpose

The US healthcare system is rapidly changing and placing added pressures and stress on the healthcare workforce. Many healthcare professionals have a high degree of emotional exhaustion and high depersonalization (i.e., cynicism/compassion fatigue), with less personal accomplishment from work. The literature demonstrates substantial symptoms of burnout evident in healthcare professionals, residents, and students enrolled in professional degree programs. This is also correlated with higher rates of depression, job dissatisfaction, and intent to leave the position of employment. This session will explore strategies and solutions aimed to improve work-life balance, individual and organizational health, well-being and job satisfaction.

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Additional Successful Proposal Example

Session Title - *Interprofessional diagnosis: A call to action for pharmacy*

Program Description

Accurate and timely diagnosis is the foundation of safe, effective patient care. The Society to Improve Diagnosis in Medicine has developed 12 interprofessional competencies for individuals, teams and systems to improve diagnosis. This session will introduce the competencies, share how they map to the pharmacist patient care process and entrustable professional activities, and challenge participants to consider ways to incorporate the competencies into existing pharmacy curriculum.

Program Design

Will include audience participation polls via cell phone app to identify education gaps [30 minutes]

Cases/brainstorming in active learning small groups [15 minutes]

large group report out of work [10 minutes]

Q&A [5 minutes]

Program Purpose

The purpose of this session is to engage the pharmacy education community on a national interprofessional initiative that requires pharmacy participation to be successful. Twelve key competencies to improve diagnosis were developed by an interprofessional advisory group convened by the Society to Improve Diagnosis in Medicine and supported by a Josiah Macy, Jr Foundation grant. The group reviewed the current literature on how to address diagnostic error, and in particular the recommendations from the National Academy of Medicine's "Improving Diagnosis in Healthcare" report. The 12 competencies align with and complement the existing pharmacy education competencies found in the ACPE Standards, entrustable professional activities, CAPE outcomes, and the Pharmacist Patient Care Process. Since pharmacy educators face many demands for ensuring adequate curriculum coverage, additional content to meet these competencies should not be needed, but education needs to acknowledge and promote the unique role pharmacists play in the diagnostic process and in preventing and detecting diagnostic errors.

Learning Objectives

- 1. Provide the context and development of interprofessional diagnosis competencies*
- 2. Discuss the role of pharmacists in the diagnostic process and in preventing and detecting diagnostic errors*
- 3. Describe how the interprofessional diagnosis competencies map to ACPE standards, the pharmacist patient care process, and entrustable professional activities.*
- 4. Synthesize examples of how existing curriculum can address interprofessional diagnosis competencies.*

Active Learning Exercise

Several case examples of how schools can layer these competencies will be discussed. A facilitated discussion will follow on opportunities and barriers to including the interprofessional diagnosis competencies into existing curriculum.

Assessment

Ask tables to complete short written summaries of their discussions; what are the barriers/challenges of including competencies and ideas around ways it could be incorporated without creating a curriculum/content burden? Each participant will complete a 5-question survey (with a 5-point Likert scale response) via the cell phone polling app on:

1. *This presentation is relevant to my role in pharmacy education*
2. *The content was well presented*
3. *The content is novel for me personally*
4. *The content is novel for our school. We aren't currently addressing diagnostic safety*
5. *Pharmacy education should improve curriculum content to improve diagnostic safety*

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