1 The General Idea

• The General Area
  – Why is the Area Interesting and Exciting?
  – What Would It Enable If It Succeeded?

• The General Problem
  – Why is it an Important Problem?
  – What’s Blocking Progress?

• The General Solution
  – Why is it Clever or Useful?
  – What’s the Key Make-a-Difference Idea?

2 (At Least) One Interesting Point

• Background About the Point
• What’s the Point?
• Why’s It Interesting?

3 (At Least) One Interesting Question

• Background About the Question
• What’s the Question?
• Why’s It Interesting?

First organize your thoughts, then write clearly, concisely, lucidly.
Use one page only.
Common Templates.

Here are three common templates for computer science papers. They follow different common simple stories.

— Template 1 —

X is an important problem because Y, and many people have worked on related topics [review literature]. We approached it by Z, with results P, Q, and R. The implications of these results are A, B, and C.

This template is commonly used when someone proposes a new technique to solve a problem.

— Template 2 —

Progress in area X is blocked by Y, and many people have worked on this [review literature]. To address this, we built a system that did Z. Its major subsystems are P, Q, and R. Future work includes A, B, and C.

This template is commonly used when someone describes a computer system that they built.

— Template 3 —

In the Introduction we motivate the problem, describe the relevant background, and compare other existing approaches [review literature] with the novel approach we take in this paper. In the Methods section we describe what we did to study the problem. In the Results section we describe what we found. Finally, the Discussion section tries to step back and put the Results into the larger context of the field as a whole.

This template is commonly used in papers appearing in the scientific (as opposed to technical) literature.