



Exhibit Synopsis Page

What is it and why you need one
February 2014

What is a synopsis page(s)?

In spite of what we have traditionally called it,

NOT a “synopsis” i.e. a brief summary of the exhibit proper.

What is a synopsis page(s)?

- Informational page(s) sent in advance, seen only by the jury
- Your opportunity to provide information to the judges not contained on the title page

Reason for a synopsis page(s)?

- Help your exhibit to achieve the best medal possible
- The information provided by the synopsis should:
 - Assist the judges preparation
- It may also:
 - Answer potential questions
 - Boast about your material
 - Establish your credentials

Structure of a synopsis page(s)

- Pattern after UEEF with sections for:
 - Treatment and Importance
 - Knowledge, Personal Study and Research
 - Condition and Rarity
 - Presentation (optional)
- We will cover reasons stated on previous slide, then sort them into the above sections

Before we go further

- Synopsis pages, in general, should NOT repeat information on the title page
 - You **DON'T HAVE SPACE TO WASTE**
 - Ideal synopsis pages are NO LONGER than 1 page double sided

Assisting judges to prepare:

Provide an annotated list of references

- “Best” general reference, regardless of language. Cite specific chapters or pages
- “Best” English language reference, cite specific chapters or pages
- OK to state no good general reference exists
- If citing articles, be specific (Publication, year, volume, page) - realize judges will NOT read all of them but may want a sampling
- Verify that web references are still valid

Assisting judges to prepare:

Provide an annotated list of references

- Very IMPORTANT to point out problems with any reference
 - If thematic subject – check Wikipedia articles (and similar obvious search results) and comment
- Even MORE important to state why older or obvious references are not included.
 - Scott Catalog – not detailed enough, for example
 - Book written 30 years ago – now “known” to be incorrect. **May be known to specialists in your area but probably not to judges.**

Assisting judges to prepare:

Provide deeper background information

- Likely only required if subject is esoteric or complex
- Mini history lessons are OK – MINI being the key word
 - Pointers to information on the web a helpful technique (make sure it's correct!)
- Use as a way to include information that is in exhibit section introductions - remember this is for the judges in advance

Answering potential questions: Elaborate on exhibit “approach”

- Discuss reasoning behind chosen organization, especially if complex or “different”
- Answer the questions most often asked by the non-expert ... natural expectations for your subject not being met by your exhibit.
 - Inclusion/exclusion of aspects of your subject
 - Presence/absence of certain items
- Discuss treatment techniques used as “guide posts” within the exhibit proper – colored text, symbols, etc.

Pay attention to feedback: “have you ever considered?”

Note that sometimes these “answers” belong in exhibit proper

Boasting about your material:
Discuss the importance
of your chosen subject

- In the context of philately of a country/system
 - Time period
 - Innovations
 - Political/historical significance
- Comparison to a more well-known collecting area
- As a significant theme subject

Boasting about your material:

Provide lists of significant material

- Remember this is for the judges BEFORE they get to the show, don't forget to "Highlight" listed items in the exhibit proper – because we WILL look for them
- List only your very best pieces
- Can give you instant "credibility" - HOWEVER
- Beware of "underwhelming" the judges

OPTIONAL – state what is NOT in the exhibit and why

If known "key items" are in museums or the Queen's collection SAY SO

Boasting about your material:

Discuss difficulty of acquisition

- Mention length of time to acquire
- Mention impossibility of duplication
- Mention efforts to find elusive but inexpensive items
- If your stuff is esoteric, compare availability with a better known collecting area

Establishing your credentials:

Discuss research efforts by the exhibitor

- Vitally important if you are a primary researcher
 - Mention publications, especially if there are numerous short articles
- Discuss new discoveries and conclusions that are in exhibit – personal study as well as primary research
- List sources, published and un-published that you have consulted
- Mention correspondence with others in your field

Establishing your credentials:

Discuss acquisition efforts by the exhibitor

- Discuss personal study that clarifies rarity statements
 - Definitely mention if you are a “census” keeper
 - Discuss awareness of sales history (major auctions)
- Mention years collecting in the area
- Make comparisons to other known collections (especially if favorable)

How to get started

If you are just getting started, don't panic: not all exhibit subjects require every point mentioned previously

- Create your annotated reference list – you **MUST** have one of these
- Design sections that match the UEEF – then add or subtract

Sections that match UEEF Treatment and Importance

- Restate purpose, scope and organization BRIEFLY from title page
- Answer those “questions” about organization
- Boast about your subject

Sections that match UEEF Knowledge and Personal Study

- Your credentials as a researcher, especially if some of the Bibliographic references are your work
- Personal Study findings, especially those that influence the exhibit in any way
 - Inclusion/exclusion of certain material
- Mention personal communications with other researchers in your field

Sections that match UEEF Condition and Rarity

- List of important items
- Length of time to assemble material
- Possibility of duplication
- Basis (your credentials) for rarity statements
- Reason for condition “issues”
- Reason for specific items not included

Additional Sections

Discuss changes to exhibit

Changes to a “mature” exhibit – especially at the gold medal level – are often subtle

- Alert judges to new material
- Alert judges to changes in treatment and development

Not needed when exhibit is materially changing from showing to showing....

Additional Sections

- That MINI history lesson
- Deeper background information
- Answer non-treatment related questions

Food for Thought

How will technology change our approach to an exhibit's "Advance Information"?

The American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors (AAPE) Education Seminar Series

The AAPE aims to assist all those interested in philately by:

- Sharing techniques and ideas on exhibiting/organizing and displaying philatelic material
- Improving standards for exhibiting, judging and exhibitions.

For additional information visit www.aape.org .

AAPE is an affiliate organization of The American Philatelic Society, www.stamps.org