Josh Clinton Vanderbilt University

All (good) abstracts have a very similar format that can be mapped out sentence by sentence.

Here is the roadmap, sentence by sentence.

- 1. What is the question you are asking? It can be written as a question. (1 question)
- 2. The answer to this question is important because... [describe the the larger implications of your findings for political science]. (1 sentence)
- 3. However, it has been difficult to answer because... [describe what has limited prior work that you are able to solve]. (1-2 sentences likely 1)
- 4. In this paper I argue that... [describe the argument/conclusion of your paper]. (1-2 sentences)
- 5. To make this argument I... [describe briefly what you do in terms of data and research design]. (1-2 sentences)
- 6. So doing improves our understanding because... [how does what you do improve upon the existing literature in terms of filling holes].

You can also find abstracts of recently published papers in the journals you are thinking of to get a good sense of what might be appropriate.