HIMSS25 Proposal Writing Guidelines

Please refer to writing guidelines listed below. For items not listed below, refer to the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook.

General
- **Employ short copy:** Minimize copy length whenever possible—say more with less.
- **Use keywords:** Include relevant keywords to help users find your content.
- **Be consistent with word usage:** o **3-D**, not *3D*
  - o **blockchain**, not *block chain*
  - o **Congress** vs. **congressional**
  - o **C-suite**, not *C-Suite*
  - o **cyberattacks**, **cybercriminal**, **cybersecurity**, not *cyber attacks, cyber criminal, cyber security*
  - o **decision-maker**, **decision-making**, not *decision maker, decision making*
  - o **email**, not *e-mail*
  - o **end user**, not *end-user*
  - o **healthcare**, not *health care*
  - o **HIMSS's**, not *HIMSS'*
  - o **internet**, not *Internet*
  - o **log in** (verb) vs. **login** (noun or adjective)
  - o **meaningful use**, not *Meaningful Use*
  - o **meetup**, not *meet-up, meet up*
  - o **mHealth**, not *m-health*
  - o **online**, not *on-line*
  - o **payer**, not *payor*
  - o **policymaker**, not *policy-maker, policy maker*
  - o **population health**, **pop health**, not *PopHealth, pophealth*
  - o **problem-solving**, not *problem solving*
  - o **smartphone**, **smartwatch**, not *smart phone, smart watch*
  - o **startup**, not *start-up, start up*
  - o **U.S.**, not *US*
  - o **web, website**, not *Web, Website, web site*

Titles
- **Content:** Make it interesting and informative to encourage viewers to read your session description.
- **Capitalization:** Capitalize all words except articles (ex: *a, an, the*); conjunctions of three or fewer letters (ex: *and, but, or*); and prepositions of three or fewer letters (ex: *at, by, in, out*). Capitalize:
  - o Conjunctions with four or more letters (ex: *After, Before, Than, Until, Which*)
  - o Prepositions with four or more letters (ex: *Above, From, Over, Through, With*)
  - o Second part of compound modifiers (ex: *Value-Based*), unless the second word is a preposition (ex: *Walk-in*)
  - o Both parts of phrasal verbs (ex: *Find Out, Hold Up, Take Off*)
  - o "To" in infinitives (ex: *To Be*)
- **Acronyms:** Don't define acronyms in titles; only define them in session descriptions.

Punctuation and Style
- **Acronyms:** Define an acronym on first use if referencing it again in copy. Don't capitalize the full term unless it is a proper noun (ex: *virtual learning environment (VLE)*, not *Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)*).
  - o Don't define common industry acronyms (ex: *CIO, EHR, EMR*).
  - o Use a lowercase "s" to make an acronym plural—not an apostrophe (ex: *Connecting with CEOs*, not *Connecting with CEO's*).

- *And* **vs. ampersands (&):** Only use ampersands when they are part of a proper name or title; otherwise, use *and*.
- **Commas:** Only use the serial/Oxford comma when required to clarify meaning—often due to long phrases or two uses of "and" in quick succession (ex: *Topics include cybersecurity, innovation, mobile health, and privacy and security*).
- **Designations:** Don't include periods in designations (ex: *EdD, MA, PhD*).
- **Ellipses:** Construct ellipses with three periods and one space to the right (ex: *Cybercriminals are getting smarter… are you prepared?)*.
- **Em dashes (—):** Use to indicate abrupt change or introduce extra material. Don't put space around them (ex: *No such interoperability tools have existed—until now*).
- **En dashes (–):** Use to indicate a range of numbers, including dates and times. Don't put space around them when linking two numbers (ex: *Development averages 30–40 hours*).
- **Forward slashes (/):** Don't put space before or after forward slashes (ex: *AI/machine learning*).
- **Hyphens:** Hyphenate compound modifiers that come directly before nouns (ex: *value-based model, world-class education)*.
- **Numbers:** Write out numbers one through nine; use figures for numbers 10 and higher.
- **Quotes:** Use double quotes (") and, not single quotes ('), unless quoting a word/phrase within a quote.
- **Semicolons:** Use semicolons to clarify long lists and complex sentences *(ex: Speakers included Brenda Swanson, CEO, Scripts for All; Robert Carlmore, director, product management, Healthmine; and Justine Lawson, education consultant, CareerCom)*.
- **Spacing:** Use a single space (not double) after colons and at the end of all sentences.