

# *How to write attractive abstracts*

Robert Whitney  
LPMMC, UGA & CNRS, Grenoble

# *Effects of the abstract*

## (1) Summary of your work

### **Contradictions:**

- Self-contained
- Make **everyone** want to read paper?
- Make **experts** want to read paper?

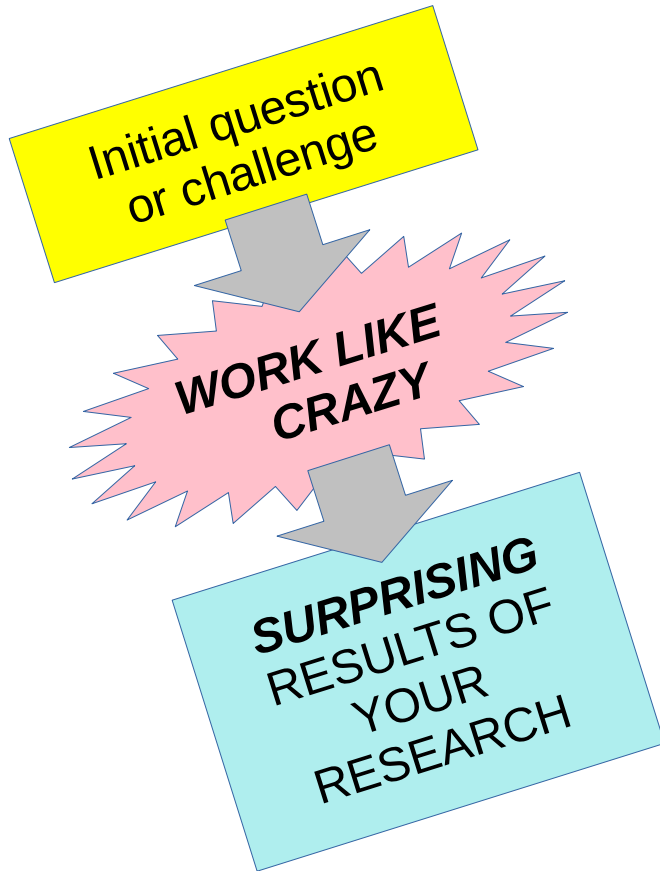
## (2) Helps experts find your work

Many will only read abstract

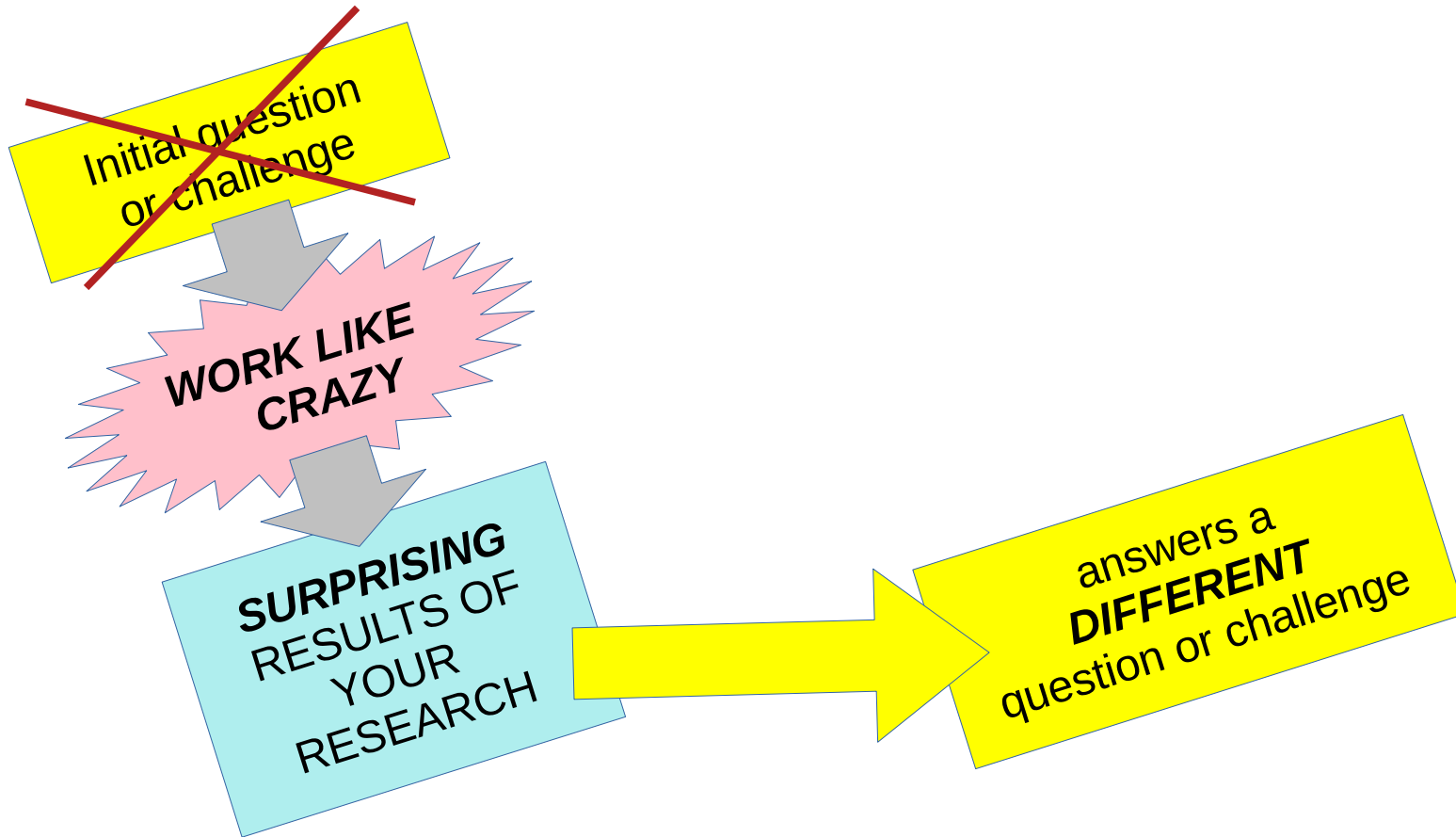
HOW TECHNICAL?

EXPECTED KEYWORDS

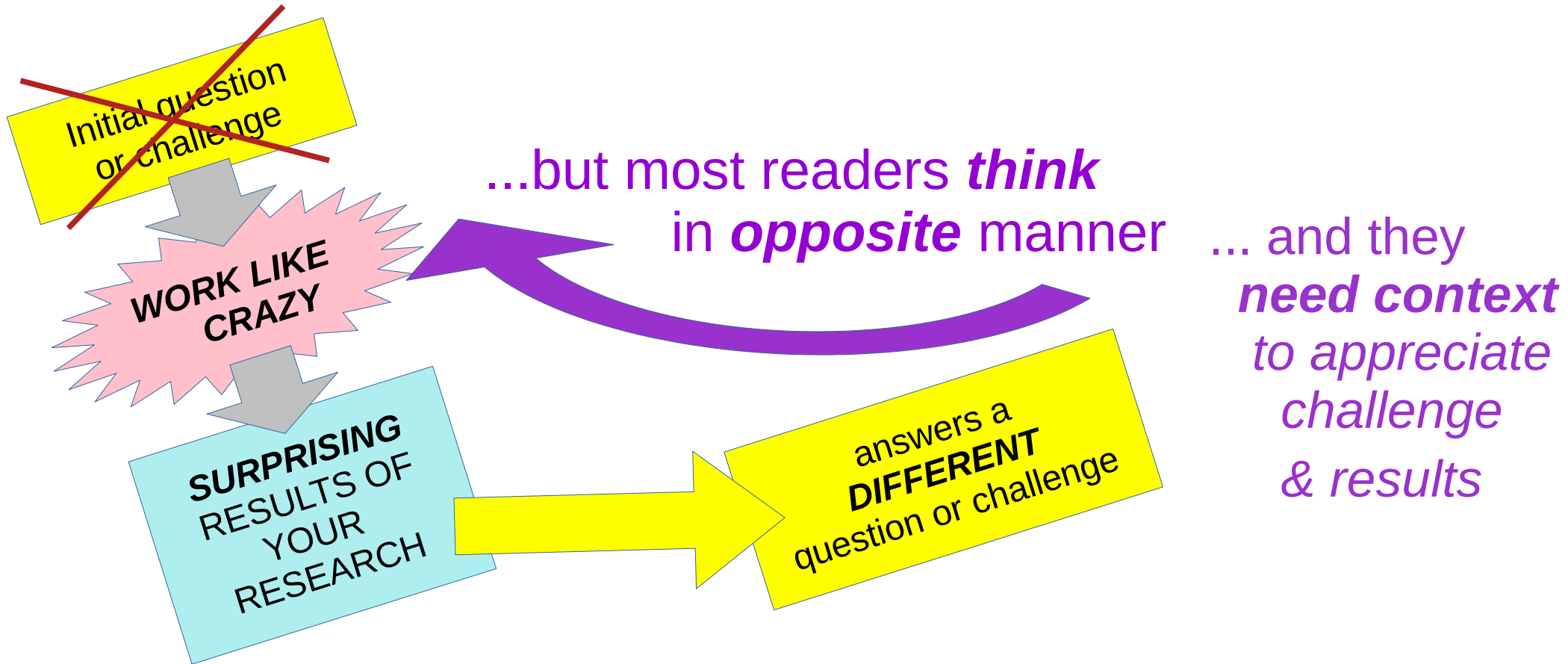
# *Typical research project*



# *Typical research project*



# Typical research project



# *Tool to build an abstract*

*from Randy Olson's book (2015) on scientific communication "Houston we have a narrative"*

*... AND ... BUT ... THEREFORE ...*

**ALMOST  
THE SAME AS**

**Situation – Challenge – Solution**

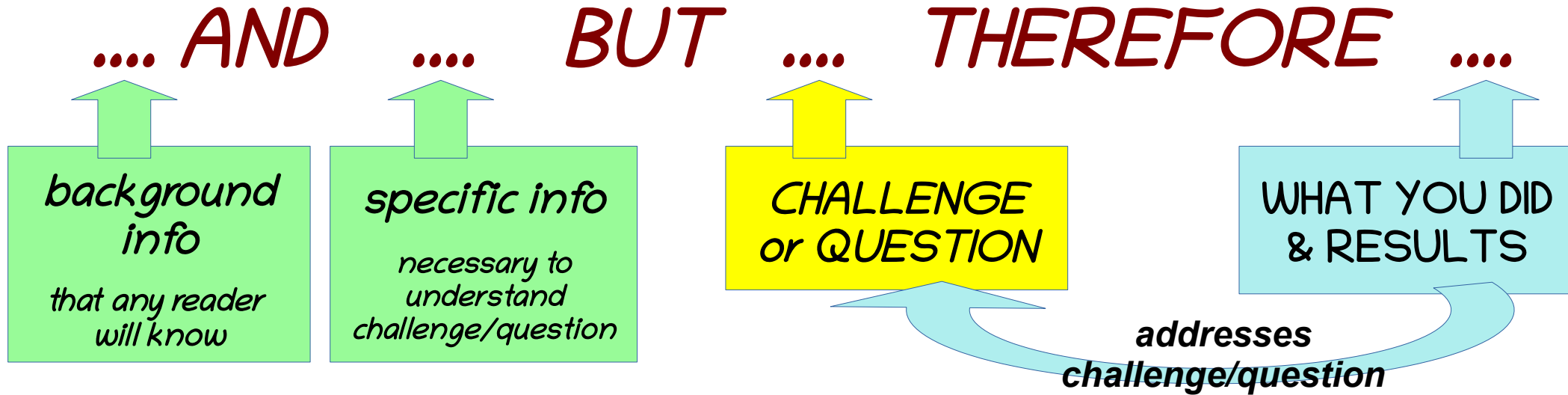
*in Barbara Minto's book for technical writing in business/industry  
"The Pyramid Principle:..." (1985)*

**Opening – Challenge – Action – Resolution**

*in Joshua Schimel's book "Writing Science: ..." (2011) soil microbiology & ecology*

# Tool to build an abstract

from Randy Olson's book (2015) on scientific communication "Houston we have a narrative"



**ALMOST THE SAME AS**

**Situation – Challenge – Solution**

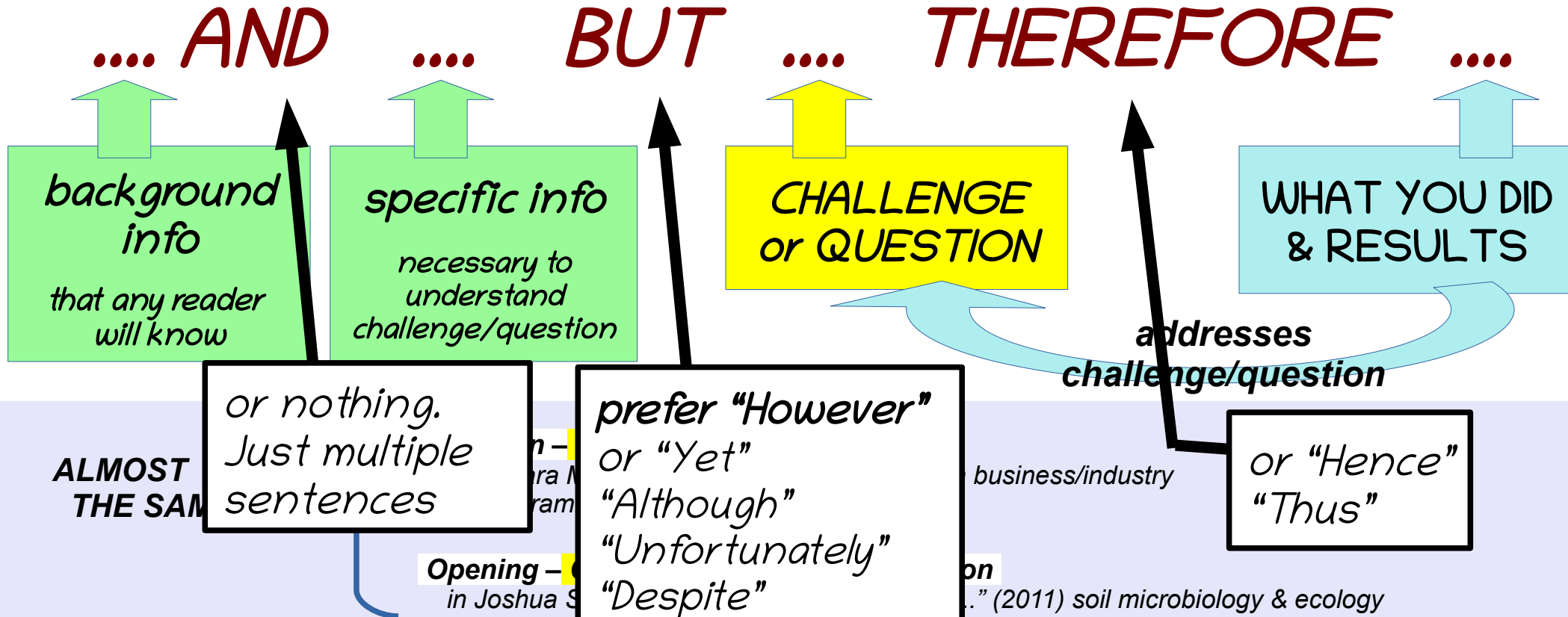
in Barbara Minto's book for technical writing in business/industry  
"The Pyramid Principle:..." (1985)

**Opening – Challenge – Action – Resolution**

in Joshua Schimel's book "Writing Science: ..." (2011) soil microbiology & ecology

# Tool to build an abstract

from Randy Olson's book (2015) on scientific communication "Houston we have a narrative"





## Curse of knowledge:

You know the goal  
but your reader does not

Most people need to  
**know the goal**  
**before** they can  
understand

- check the weather forecast
- bucket of water
- games for kids
- install near a shady tree
- people should bring chairs
- music
- tongs & apron
- some old newspaper to start
- folding table

