

Making a Poster Presentation?

Whenever you attended congresses, you are always witness to many different types of posters. Posters are an excellent way of promoting your work, but you have to be aware that the way in which you present your poster reveals a lot about yourself, and the work being displayed. The following guide will help you when preparing professional posters for conferences and events and includes a list of recommended references if you want to find out more.

Step1: Deciding What Information to include

Your poster should tell readers **what, when, where, who, how** and **why** as well as **so what?** And **now what?** You should aim to "answer" each of these questions in a sentence or two, using language that the "intelligent layperson" can understand. In more formal "research" terms these are often listed as the introduction, methods, results, discussion and conclusions and references.

The method is central to the validity of your study so must be clearly detailed but you may want to keep this as brief as possible to allow more space for information on the background to the study (the why), the results and a view on the implications of the results and proposed follow-up studies.

Step 2: Designing your Poster

When preparing your poster, your resources are likely to be limited, and you also have the added challenge of surrounding poster displays in the Exhibition "competing" with yours. Therefore, you must carefully plan your poster to ensure it attracts the maximum possible number of visitors.

Every poster Exhibition is different so it is essential to carefully read any instructions provided by the organisers of the Poster Exhibition. If you don't respect the requirements stated, you may not be permitted to display your poster or you may find that your poster will not fit on the poster boards provided for the Exhibition.

Here are some basic tips:

- Only use primary colours for the text (**not** shocking pinks and yellows).
- Use complementary colours (yellow and purple, red and green, orange and blue) as a background to text and art work.
- Use **large fonts** for the title and for "news caption" phrases ("news caption" phrases are excerpts from the written text that capture the essence of some of the central ideas).
- Use at least 72 point font for the title, and 36 point font for the news caption phrases.

- Use 14 or 18 point font for the text.
- Use small blocks for the text -- a wall of text is not attractive! Make sure that the small blocks of text can stand alone. That way, if someone comes up to your poster and reads only a small portion of it, it will still make sense.
- Use photographs, charts, and/or graphs.
- Use only one type of font (mixed fonts have an unprofessional look).
- Avoid using too many style changes (i.e., shadow, bold, italics, underscoring, etc.).
- Consider using right-ragged text (justified text looks nice from a distance, but is more difficult to read; remember that people will be standing and reading the text on the spot -- you want to make the text as easy to read as possible).
- Use lots of "white space" around your work -- light and empty space attracts the eye (and the reader).
- Use simple fonts such as Helvetica or Times New Roman.
- Run your spell check (twice!) and have a friend read the poster text in draft form before you mount the work.
- Bring various types of adhesive materials to be sure that you are prepared for whatever surface you are given to mount the poster (you don't want to attract people's attention by having the only poster that keeps falling down).
- Be sure you respect the size measures the organization determined!

Step 3: Tips for Exhibiting your Poster

You may want to prepare a handout to accompany the poster session. This can be a reproduction of the text displayed (5 or 6 pages), or it might be a full research paper (15-20 pages) or it might be an abstract, providing a summary of the work (1 page).

Be sure to stand by your Poster whenever possible, if you have to leave it, remember to provide information about where/how you can be contacted.

It is helpful leave a place, for example a small envelope, where interested people can leave their business card for further contacts.



More Information

You'll be able to find more information and guidance on the following websites:

Creating Effective Poster Presentations (**recommended**)

<http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/IndexStart.html>

Developing a Poster Presentation -

http://www.kumc.edu/SAH/OTEd/jradel/Poster_Presentations/PstrStart.html

Developing a Poster Presentation II -

<http://www.gmu.edu/departments/writingcenter/ppt/>

Expanded guidelines for Giving a Poster Presentation -

http://www.asp.org/education/howto_onPosters.html

Poster & Podium Presentation -

<http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~mezza/nur390/Mod5/poster/lesson.html>

Poster Presentation (**recommended**)-

<http://www.strath.ac.uk/Departments/CAP/poster/>

Poster Presentation Guidelines

<http://www.hope.ac.uk/gnu/stuhelp/poster.htm>

Tips for Paper/Poster Presentations

<http://www.psichi.org/conventions/tips.asp>

Scientific Literature and Writing : Poster Presentations

<http://people.eku.edu/ritchisong/posterpres.html>