

GENERAL POSTER GUIDELINES

Like other forms of presentation, the main purpose of a poster is to convey a scientific message to an interested audience. A poster presentation combines visual, written and verbal communication. A good poster balances these three elements and is:

- Brief and clearly organised
- Simple with one or two obvious take home messages
- Easy to read from 1 or 2 meters away
- Attractive and aesthetically pleasing

Audience

When designing your poster, consider your audience. Most viewers will be 1-2 meters away as they read, and your material must not only be attractive and interesting but clearly legible to hold their attention. Most people will be standing as they view your poster and it is tiring to read this way. Large blocks of text are challenging and most viewers will be put off by them. Therefore, keep text to a minimum, separating blocks of text with figures or pictures.

The experts suggest that blocks of text should not exceed 20 lines, although 10 is probably best (Davis, 1997). Whenever possible use bullet lists. Studies show that a typical reader will spend only 90 seconds perusing a poster before moving on. Who is your audience? Essentially, members of the audience will fall into one of three categories:

- Colleagues who follow your work closely
- Those who work in the same general area
- Those whose work and interests have nothing to do with yours

Your poster should target the second group. The first group will visit you to get an update on your work. The third group will just not be interested. Your work will be interesting and meaningful to the second group, if you can capture their attention.

Content

- *Abstract:* The abstract should be short and concise, stating: the problem, hypothesis or objective and its relevance; what was done to solve the problem, test the hypothesis or meet the objective; and what happened.
- *Introduction:* Briefly justify your study. Highlight the objective, purpose or hypothesis using a separate subsection or by a bullet list or bold print.
- *Methods:* Keep this section brief, unless your purpose is to present a new method. Wherever possible use pictures, flowcharts, or bullet lists to summarize methods. In most cases great detail is not required. Intricacies can be saved for verbal discussion with interested parties.
- *Results:* This is the most important section of the presentation. Limit text, but use clear tables, graphs or other illustrations for the data. Present enough relevant data to make your points. Extraneous information, no matter how interesting, will detract from your main point. Save such material for another presentation.
- *Discussion:* Briefly, explain why the results are significant. This section often can be merged with the Conclusions.

- *Conclusions*: Keep them brief and in list form. Do not restate results. Clearly, summarize the key significant points or contributions of your study. Place your results in the context of current theory.
- Literature cited (if appropriate).

Presentation

Your poster should tell a short story with one or two memorable take home messages. Two problems commonly obscure the message. The first concerns content, the second visual presentation.

Avoid presenting too much. Focus your presentation to include the one or two most significant aspects of your work. Present only the data that supports these significant aspects. Remember, you can save all the other exciting things you have found for a verbal discussion or another presentation. One way to keep your message simple and focused is to think of your poster as an expanded abstract rather than a condensed journal article.

Keep the display simple, clear and pleasing to the eye.

Dimensions and Location

- All posters must have a title and author(s) names
- Posters should be A1 in size
- Materials can be pinned or velcro to the boards
- Posters should be prepared in advance and brought in person by the author(s)
- Poster boards will be positioned in the Castlereagh Room
- Requests for power, tables, brochure holders etc will be at the presenters expense
- Poster viewing will be available at the Welcome Reception, during meal breaks and morning and afternoon tea breaks.
- Please remember to bring all materials required for assembling your poster/s (pins, velcro, tape, etc.), as the organisers are unable to supply these on the day.

Schedule

It is important that posters are mounted one hour before the first session on day one.

Contact details

All enquiries regarding the Poster Display should be directed to:

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