Poster presentation
- The art of capturing interest -

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Objectives

• Bridging common pitfalls during preparation phase
• Preparing you for hands-on experience
• Motivate you to...
  – realize that “less is more”
  – use graphical formats
  – be organized
  – capture the viewer’s eye!
What is “poster presentation”?

Structure

• Quantitative research: Usually similar format as used by most scientific journals
  – Introduction
  – Methods
  – Results
  – Conclusions

• Qualitative research: variety of formats

• Objective is to find the equilibrium between tradition and novelty in presenting the highlight of your research
The elements

- Interesting scientific information displayed by visually attractive means on a poster
- The presenter – you!
- Audience

Posters – Poster presentations

- First used in current form early 1970's in USA
- Big part of scientific conferences worldwide
- First author usually presents the poster
  - Short time format
  - The time posters are up varies
- An opportunity to show your skills within your research area to other colleagues
- Communication via this format may lead to cooperation later in your career!
Audience

• Your audience are 1 – 2 meters away from the poster.
• Topic should be appealing, interesting and readable (!)
• You have 90 sec to convey your message.
  – Competition for time and attention
  – Often times hundreds of posters on display at any given conference
  – Design your poster to make it worthwhile for the audience to read up on your work

Audience

• Three groups:
  1. People who know a lot about your work
  2. People who work in your field but not in your area of expertise
  3. People who are outside of your field of work

• Group nr. 2 is often said to be your target audience when you prepare your poster.
Text

• You can skip the abstract.
  – The poster is an abstract!
• Do NOT make anything cloud the main scientific message.
• Short direct text – short paragraphs
  – 20 lines maximum!
• Lists are good, e.g. to highlight objectives and conclusions.
• Make sure to use FONT, SIZE and color to simplify your text.
• Hand-outs or business cards are good accessories.

Font and size

• Essential – poster must be readable
  – Thickness of title 23 mm at minimum (65pt)
  – Body text 5 mm at minimum (14 pt)
• Readable font types
  – Title: Arial, Helveca, Tahoma ofl.
  – Body: Times New Roman, Bookman Old Style, Palatino Linotype, Calibri
• Stay away from calligraphy and only use italics to follow accepted conventions in scientific writing.
Color

- Double edged sword
- Background should generally be light
  - Visually more comfortable
- Use colored text to e.g. harmonize sections
- Think of purpose before you color something
  - Don’t use color only to capture attention
  - Use it to organize your poster

Space and line-up

- Make sure you know the dimensions of your poster before you begin.
- First, use paper and pencil.
- Try to have no more than 5 sections on your poster.
  - About 50% of poster should be unused!
    - Or to be used to connect different sections
- Unusual forms are double edged swords too.
  - Use sparingly
- Line-up should be logical
Presentation of data

• Same common rules apply for figures and tables as in scientific articles, i.e. should be able to stand alone.

• **Tables:** best if max **20 items**

• **Figures:** best if max **3-4 lines per fig. or 6-8 bars.**

• **Main points presented CLEARLY**

• **Colors and Size** are important

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Presentation of data

• **Uniformity in display is important**

• **Photographs can say more than 1000 words**
  – Should have a more meaningful purpose than just to be visually interesting

• **Pictures must be easily understood**

• **Matte texture of pics better than glossy**

• Try not to use pictures as backgrounds
The presenter

- **You matter**
  - knowledge
  - sincerity
  - presence
  - confidence
- Acknowledge audience ahead of acquaintances during poster presentation.
- Whether the audience being two or twelve – be professional.

Hand-out

- Can better your poster presentation
- Business card with main info + reduced size poster as giveaways.
- Business card + abstract
- Something that doesn't take much space but holds vital information about you.
Making it fit

- Size of poster varies depending on field of study, type of conference etc.
- Must know size and shape before you start!
- “Clarity and beauty are closely related concepts” – Imhof (1982)
Time management - composition of poster

- Be organized – during your research expect to make a poster.
- Begin weeks before the conference is scheduled.
- Have someone read over your poster
- Print a preview version
- Murphy's law

Unorthodox examples

http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/the-billion-dollar-o-gram-2009/

http://store.informationisbeautiful.net/product/which-fish-are-okay-to-eat-br-digital-download

http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/2009/is-the-h1n1-swine-flu-vaccine-safe/
Books Everyone Should Read
A consensus cloud

10 issues

DON'T
JUST DO IT.
#2

Don’t make it too complex

#3

Don’t choose illogical order/context
#4

Don’t drown your poster in text

My new great super awesome poster where I present my greatest scientific achievement on my super duper great research project which no one cares to read because I put way too much text on this poster and the audience can’t make sense of the main points which is a shame because it took me months to prepare the presentation for the conference in Australia which was also super expensive.

#5

Don’t emphasize trivial things

EFFECT OF X ON Y IN A SCHOOL SETTING
By Kristjan Thor Magnusson

INTRODUCTION

METHODS

Results

Conclusion
#6
Don’t fail to underline important issues

**EFFECT OF X ON Y IN A SCHOOL SETTING**

By Kristjan Thor Magnusson

If you can’t turn your long story into shorter stories, you may be able to separate your text into standalone stories. Then place each of those stories in its own text box. To create a new text box in Word, go to Insert: Text Box and then click and drag to draw the box on screen. To give the box a shape, you can add a fill color or a border from the default border around the box, set Line Color to No Line.

Highlight a smaller chunk of text to separate the rest of your text, choose Format: Text Box and drag the edge of the box to create the desired shape. You can add a fill color or a border from the default border around the box, set Line Color to No Line.

If you can’t turn your long story into shorter stories, you may be able to separate your text into standalone stories. Then place each of those stories in its own text box. To create a new text box in Word, go to Insert: Text Box and then click and drag to draw the box on screen. To give the box a shape, you can add a fill color or a border from the default border around the box, set Line Color to No Line.

#7
Don’t go on a psychedelic trip
#8
Don’t focus on the methodology

METHODS

If you can’t turn your long story into shorter stories, you may decide to separate your text into smaller chunks by adding subheads, even in an empty line above each subhead, but not below. If you want the subhead to be highlighted, you may select the text you want to highlight and then click the Highlight button in the Font group. If you want to make a subhead more important, you can add a # symbol before the subhead.

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Then place each of these stories in its own text box. To create a new text box in Word, go to Insert: Text Box and click and drag to draw the box on screen. To give the box a background color and help separate it from the rest of your text, choose Format: Text Box and click on the Colors and Lines tab. To remove the default border around the box, set Line Color to No Line.

METHODS text box in Pages, go to Insert: Text Box and drag the edge of the box to create the desired shape. You can type a number or number and the colon after the box to indicate the source, e.g. “You can find the eye to associate the

#9
Don’t fail to conclude
#10

Don't be the wordy presenter
Another winning poster

COSNEWS

UCF student wins best undergraduate presentation

Joshua Solomon, UCF senior double majoring in biology and environmental sciences, won the best undergraduate poster presentation at the Fall 2010 Southeastern Estuaries Research Conference (SEERS).

The SEERS conference was earlier this month in St Augustine, Florida. Solomon’s poster was titled “Microwaves, Freezing, Boiling and Dissolution: Developing Techniques for Safe Disposal of Chlordane.”

“The poster explains how to prevent aquatic dumping,” Solomon said. “Since they pose a serious threat to ecosystems.”

Solomon tested potential techniques for safe disposal of excess of unwanted chlordane, which is a fast growing attractive algae that is found in many aquariums. He used his own research in addition to experiments conducted by other UCF biology students.

Solomon was able to do the research because of the funding secured for the project by Dr. Linda Walters. UCF biology professor Biology graduate student Rachel Odom also assisted Solomon in his research as the supervising author.

Solomon will likely continue the research he did for this poster when he attends medical school.

Another winning poster

The Effectiveness of Humane Teaching Methods in Veterinary Education

Introduction

Background

Methodology

Results

Discussion

Conclusion

References

Table 1: Comparison of Student Performance

Table 2: Teacher Feedback

Table 3: Student Feedback

Figure 1: Comparative Results

Figure 2: Teacher Feedback Survey

Figure 3: Student Feedback Survey

Poor poster
Properties of great posters

Focus

Simplicity

Graphics

Organization

...logistics and details that should make it easy to deliver without losing the thread.
Good luck!