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## POSTER SESSION

### **WHAT SHOULD YOU PUT ON YOUR POSTER?**

The content of your poster will summarize and lead viewers through the hypothesis, methodology, results, and conclusion of your research project. It conveys scientific information in a visual format. A viewer should grasp a basic understanding of your project just by viewing your poster. The message should be clear and understandable without oral explanation. It should fit on a poster no larger than 36" x 24" (91.44 cm x 60.96cm).

- Title, researcher(s) name, advisor(s), *institution where research was performed*
- Abstract (condensed version)
- Goals and Objectives
- Methodology
- Results
- Conclusions
- Acknowledgments
- Easy to read textual data and summary
- Graphics

NOTE: All poster session participants will be responsible for producing materials. A foam core board, 36" x 24" (91.44 cm x 60.96cm) and easel will be provided. Items may be attached to the foam core board with pins or tacks. (NO TAPE)

### **WHAT WILL YOU DO DURING A POSTER SESSION?**

- Stand next to your poster
- Answer questions that people ask about your research project. Viewers will ask a variety of technical and non-technical questions. Be prepared to speak to persons who will have little knowledge of your project and to those who may be well versed in your subject matter.

## **GUIDELINES FOR CREATING AN EFFECTIVE POSTER**

*Courtesy of Vito Gervasi and the Milwaukee School of Engineering*

NOTE: The following are meant as guidelines to produce the best possible poster. They are not meant to be requirements.

A good poster tells a story – the story of your research work. *A well-designed poster will attract viewers and provoke conversation.*

A good poster is uncluttered and clear in design. The message should be clear and understandable without oral explanation. It has legible text and logical organization. The main tenet of a good poster design is simplification. Do not tell the entire research history, present only enough data to support your conclusions and show the originality of the work. Discussions with viewers will allow time to highlight project details.

*Posters should be readable by viewers five feet away.* An 8 ½ x 11” sheet of paper photostatically enlarged 50% makes the text readable from five feet.

1. **Initial Sketch** – Begin the design process by asking yourself, “What am I trying to communicate?” Focus your attention on a few key points.  
  
Try various styles of data presentation to achieve clarity and simplicity. Does the use of color help? What needs to be expressed in words? Suggest headlines and text topics.
2. **Rough layout** – Enlarge your best initial sketch, keeping the dimensions in proportion to the final poster. Take advantage of the impact of the large format by focusing the design on one main visual. Filling up the page with a lot of smaller images minimizes the powerful effect of the large format.
3. **Final Layout** – The artwork is complete. The text and tables are typed. Now ask, is the message clear? Do the important points stand out? Is there balance between words and illustrations? Is there spatial balance? *Is the pathway through the poster clear?*
4. **Balance** – The figures and tables should cover slightly more than 50% of the poster area. If you have only a few illustrations, make them large. Use elements of different size and proportion. Do not omit the text, but keep it brief.
5. **Eye Movement** – The movement (pathway) of the eye over the poster should be natural – down the columns or along the rows. Size attracts attention. Arrows, pointing hands, numbers, and letters can help clarify the sequence. A large and/or bright center of interest can draw the eye to the most important aspect of the poster. Use color to add emphasis and clarity.
6. **Simplicity** – Resist the temptation to overload the poster. More material may mean less communication.
7. **Title** - The top of the board should consist of a large, easy-to-read title, including the author’s name and institution where research was performed. The title letters should be about 2” to 3” with subheadings ½” to 1” high.
8. **Graphics** – Make illustrations simple and bold. Enlarge photos, graphs, etc. to show pertinent details clearly. Graphics should be eye-catching, but used to support content.
9. **Text** – A minimum type size for text should be *no less than 20 points, but 24 points is preferable*. Titles will be much larger – 72 point font. Use a consistent font throughout. Avoid trendy fonts; go with fonts that are clearly legible. Avoid abbreviations, acronyms, and jargon.

## 10. Other

- ✓ Use short, punchy headlines. Your visual and headline should work together to communicate the essence of the piece in a five-second read.
- ✓ A poster should not contain a lot of details – the presenter can always communicate the fine points to interested participants.
- ✓ Keep text to a minimum. Bulleted lists are effective.
- ✓ Check your spelling. Then check it again!!!! ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹
- ✓ Avoid using all caps, as they are more difficult to read.
- ✓ Make sure your text contrasts strongly with the background. Use lighter colors against a dark background or dark colors against a lighter background.
- ✓ Avoid light blue, light yellow or light green text, as these colors are always hard to read.
- ✓ If you are using a textured background, be especially careful that it doesn't overwhelm the other elements. A background shouldn't call attention to itself.
- ✓ The text material should be reduced to convey your points quickly and clearly.
- ✓ Don't forget your acknowledgment to any school or organization that provided support for your project.