

AEA 2006
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The University of Melbourne

Poster Presentation Guidelines

Poster presentations are a common method of presenting data at international and national meetings. The main advantage of a poster presentation is that it allows the author to interact directly with interested members of the audience. The ability to present complex methodology and all of the data at one time allows for the presentation of complex and difficult material. This format can be extremely useful for the author to gain information from the audience.

Poster presentations are most appropriate when:

- (a) Material presented is complex
- (b) Subject matter is highly specialised catering to a smaller proportion of the audience
- (c) Feedback from informed members of the audience is desired
- (d) Comparisons between studies on the same topic are desired

Poster presentations are not an inferior form of presentation compared to an oral communication.

GENERAL POINTS ABOUT POSTERS

1. How to make a successful poster

A successful poster should be self-explanatory and communicate its message without requiring the author to explain the material. Simple diagrams will frequently explain more than reams of text. Bear in mind that your poster will be viewed from distances of 1.5 metres or more. Lettering should be at least 10 – 15 mm high and in bold type. Charts, drawings, etc., should be similar to slides, but more heavily drawn and without unnecessary details. Simplicity is the key. Brief captions, clear tables, with fewer rather than greater numbers of lines of data. The sequence of the poster should flow logically.

Most posters can be successfully divided into the following sections:

- a brief introduction and statement of aims
- methods
- results
- statements of conclusion

The message the author wants the audience to carry away should be clear. Posters ideally should not try to convey more than one main message.

2. Guide for preparation of posters

- (a) **Initial Sketch:** Plan your poster early. Focus your attention on a few key points. Try various styles of data presentation to achieve clarity and simplicity. Does the use of colour help? What needs to be expressed in words? Suggest headlines and text topics.
- (b) **Rough Layout:** Enlarge your best initial sketch, keeping the dimensions in proportion to the final poster. Ideally, the rough layout should be full size. A whiteboard is a convenient place to work. Print the title and headlines. Indicate text by horizontal lines. Draw rough graphs and tables. This will give you a good idea of proportions and balance. If you are working with an artist, show him/her the poster layout. Ask associates for comments. This is still an experimental stage.

- (c) Final Layout: The artwork is complete. The text and tables are typed, but not necessarily enlarged to full size. 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?
- (d) Balance: The figures and tables ought to cover slightly more than 50% of the poster area. If you have a few illustrations, make them large. Do not omit the text, but make it brief. The poster should be understandable without oral explanation.
- (e) Typography: Avoid abbreviations, acronyms and jargon. Use a consistent style throughout. If working without an artist, 24 point Arial printed onto A4 sheets and enlarged to A3 size is acceptable.
- (f) Movement: The movement (pathway) of the eye over the poster ought to be naturally down the columns or along the rows. Numbering the panels may be helpful. Arrows, hands, numbers and letters all may be useful. Size attracts attention. The most important information should be in the centre of the poster.
- (g) Simplicity: The temptation to overload the poster should be resisted. More material may mean less communication. Ask yourself, what do I want the viewer to remember?

3. Poster Rules

Each poster board is numbered. Please use the board number assigned to your poster. Posters are to be mounted, manned, and removed at the times specified in the letter of acceptance.

Posters should be in portrait layout. The maximum dimensions are 1.0 m high x 0.9 m wide. PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR POSTER DOES NOT EXCEED THESE DIMENSIONS.

This is maximum size and it is not advisable to cover the entire boards with closely packed panels. Prepare a heading for your poster that runs most of its width. Include title, authors and affiliations. Lettering for the title should be approximately 3-4 cm in height. A large typed copy of your abstract should be mounted in the upper left-hand corner under the poster board number.

4. Poster Prizes

Posters will be eligible for either the General Poster Prize or the Student Poster Prize. The prize winning posters will be announced at the final Plenary Session on Tuesday afternoon.

Acknowledgement

We are grateful for the kind permission of the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand to use their poster presentation guidelines.