



Discovery Day

Tips for Successful Posters



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A great poster is...

- Readable – use clear language, good grammar in all poster text
- Legible – all poster text should be readable from 5 feet away
- Well-organized – group items logically, visually for maximum impact
- Succinct – you have 10 seconds to grab your audience's attention



Guidelines: Content

Remember: The purpose of your poster is to attract the attendee's attention to your work.

Items you may wish to present include:

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Methods
- Hypothesis
- Results
- Significance
- References
- Acknowledgements
- Conclusions



Guidelines: Content

Remember: You need not duplicate the full text of your work **on** your poster.

Hit the high points!

You may provide hard copies of your paper or other handouts for attendees to read after the event.



Guidelines: Aesthetic

Use color, photos, charts, graphs to support your poster.

Remember: A little color goes a long way. Stick to two or *at most*, three colors for text and graphical elements.



Guidelines: Aesthetic

Use an easy-to-read font for all text at a minimum size of 16pt.

Avoid ALL-CAPS for extended blocks of text, as they are HARD TO READ.



Guidelines: Aesthetic

Studies show that serifed fonts are easiest to read for long blocks of text.

Limit yourself to two fonts – generally one serifed and one non-serifed.



Guidelines: Aesthetic

Poster Presentations

SIMPLIFY.



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Guidelines: Technical

Your poster may be as large as 3.5 ft tall by 3.5 ft wide

Several places on campus print large posters including, CAS and the School of Medicine (check max size)

Use a readily available graphics program for creating your poster – PowerPoint, Illustrator, Photoshop, etc.



Guidelines: Technical

Bitmap vs. Vector

A bitmap image is one that consists of a specified number of dots or pixels. Bitmap images are tricky to resize but are a must for photos and scanned images.

A vector image consists of instructions to draw its component shapes. Vector images can be scaled to any size with no loss of quality. Charts, graphs, and other graphical elements should be created as vector images when possible.



Guidelines: Technical

Bitmap vs. Vector, con't

For the purposes of printing, your bitmap images should contain a minimum of 150 dots-per-inch at the size you will print them, i.e., if you want to print a photo at 3x5 inches, the image will need to be 450x750 pixels minimum.

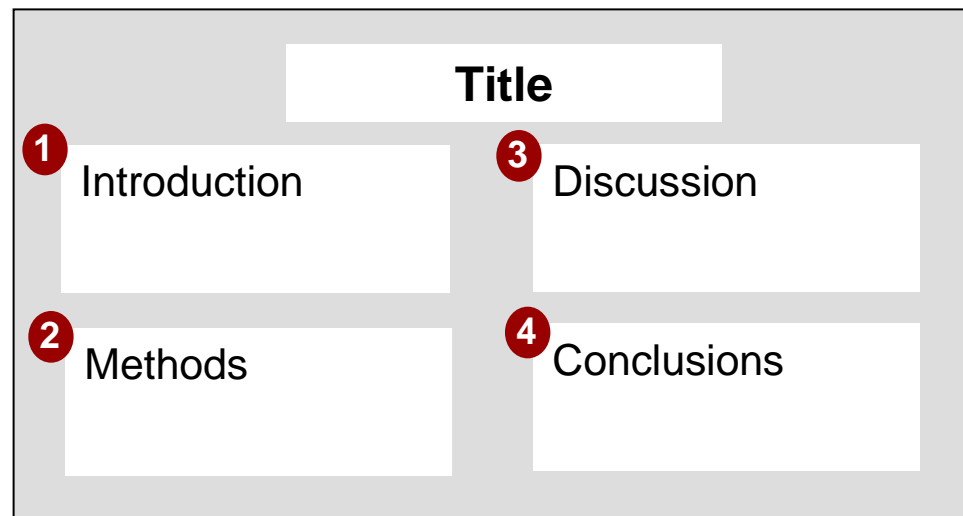
If using PowerPoint, charts and graphs are best created within PowerPoint to ensure they are treated as vector graphics.



A few more hints...

People take in information according to a known spatial sequence: capitalize on this in your layout.

The most common layout is effective:



A few more hints...

When choosing colors for your poster, err on the side of conservatism. Chartreuse and pink? Not so much.

Certain colors when side-by-side “vibrate” making text difficult to read:

Headache

Yikes



A few more hints...

Clip art is evil. Ok. Not evil. Occasionally useful. But in general, in scholarly work, you will do well to avoid anything drawn by an underpaid Microsoft employee.

If your work depends on illustration but you can't draw to save your life, make friends with someone who can, learn Adobe Illustrator (tons of tools for drawing without talent), or learn to do without.



Just a few more... (promise)

Don't use images you find on the Internet for your poster unless you know that:

1. The images are not copyrighted
2. The images are large enough to print well on your poster (remember dpi!)



Putting it all together:

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Columbia, SC

Abstract:

Many students need guidance in designing their first poster. A slideshow is determined to be efficacious in allaying concerns.

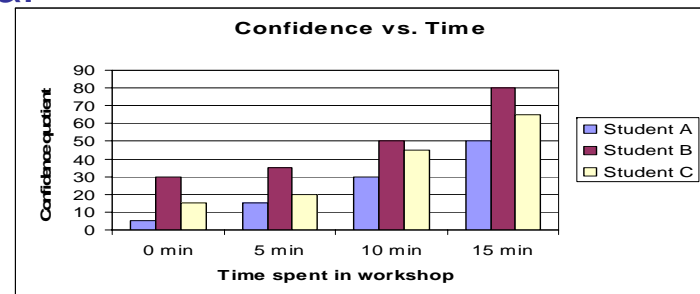
Discussion:

As we hypothesized, students in our informal poll said overwhelmingly they needed guidance. We determined a slide show would be helpful in educating these students.

Introduction:

Students will display their scholarly work from across all disciplines at USC's annual Discovery Day. We suggest many students have never prepared for a poster competition before and don't know where to begin.

Data:



Methods:

We took an informal poll of students, asking if they knew how to create effective posters.

Conclusion:

Although corny, this poster demonstrates many of the key points covered in the preceding slideshow.