

<p>Presenting Your Poster Tips to make your poster session a success</p>  <p>Macie Hall Senior Instructional Designer Center for Educational Resources macie.hall@ju.edu February 2015</p>	<p>I'm Macie Hall from the Center for Educational Resources. Today I'll be talking about best practices for presenting your poster. Then my colleague Reid Sczerba will discuss graphic design principles and layout. This won't be a tutorial on how to use a particular software to create a poster and we don't have time to cover some things we'd like to. We do have handout online for you and will make our presentations available as well.</p>
<p>Why a poster?</p>  <p>Image source = <a href="https://www.flickr.com/photos/queensucanada/8616736438/">https://www.flickr.com/photos/queensucanada/8616736438/</a></p>	<p>For the upcoming Undergraduate Research Day you will be creating a poster to showcase your research project.</p> <p>Posters are a great way to communicate to others the value of your research. A good poster will convey the essence of your work in a clear and compelling manner. There is a level of personal interaction with a poster presentation that isn't possible when you give a talk to a larger audience. But knowing how to create a poster that will be captivating and how to present the information effectively and efficiently is not necessarily an intuitive process. So, this afternoon Reid and I will be discussing the fine arts of poster design and presentation.</p>
 <p>Image source= <a href="http://colinpurrington.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/neurosciencemeeting.jpg">http://colinpurrington.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/neurosciencemeeting.jpg</a> © Dominique Naegele-Clifford</p>	<p>When I think of poster sessions, I think of crowded spaces, bad lighting, and a chaotic atmosphere. The advantage is that there are lots of people. The disadvantage is that there are lots of posters. How can you be a shining star and stand out in the crowd?</p>

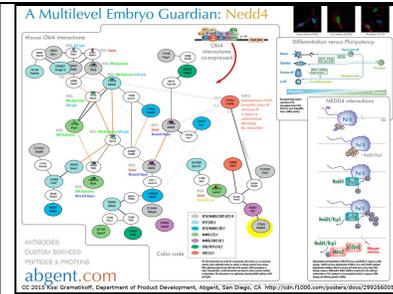


Image source =

<http://cdn.f1000.com/posters/docs/299266005> CC 2015 Kosi Gramatikoff, Department of Product Development, Abgent, San Diego, CA

Reid will talk in more detail about the art of design. I show this to demonstrate that a poster that is highly visual with little text and a pleasing color scheme is more attractive than...

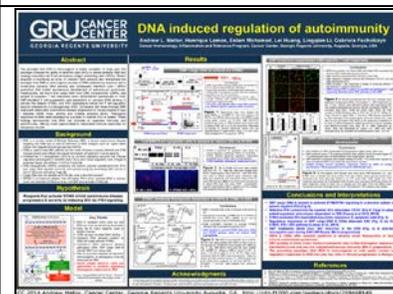


Image source =

<http://cdn.f1000.com/posters/docs/299468149> CC 2014 Andrew Mellor, Cancer Center, Georgia Regents University, Augusta, GA

... one that is dense with text and has tiny, difficult to read tables, charts, and graphs



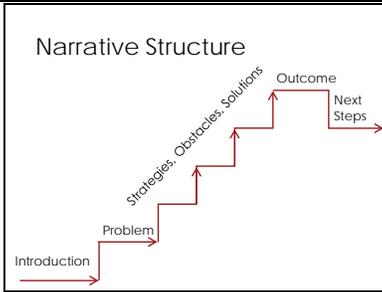
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<http://cdn.f1000.com/posters/docs/298609081> CC 2014 Caspar Zialor, The Univeristy of Nottingham, UK

Be careful not to overdo it though! Too much design plus too much text is a deadly combination.

<p>Who is your audience?</p>	<p>The first thing to consider in both designing and presenting your poster is who you are talking to. Pretend for a minute that you are a professor at a university. Think about presenting your research. How would your presentation differ if you were talking to your peers at a scholarly conference, to an undergraduate class, to an alumni group, or to a group of high school students who may be considering a major in your field? Knowing to whom you will be talking will determine your content, the complexity of the information you present, the approach you take. The big question is: How can you enhance their understanding of your work?</p> <p>If you intend to pursue a research or academic career, this may be the first of many posters. Down the road, your audience may be like-minded professionals in your field. They likely will have at least a basic understanding of your topic. That is not the case for the poster you are designing and presenting for the Undergraduate Research Day. Your poster may be required for honors in your major, so you want to make a strong, scholarly impression on the faculty who will be grading you. At the same time there will be students and faculty representing all of the KSAS and WSE departments attending the event. As well, there will be the admitted high school seniors and their families. How can you help them understand your topic?</p>
<p>Why should they care?</p>	<p>I think this really comes down to why do you care about your research? If you can articulate why it matters to you, and speak to that with enthusiasm, you will have half the battle won. Even someone who knows nothing about your topic will want to find out more. How do you spark interest so that people will stop to listen to your presentation?</p>

<p>The Elevator Speech</p>  <p>Image source =  <a href="http://photography.mojado.com/archives/2004/06/11/elevator.php">http://photography.mojado.com/archives/2004/06/11/elevator.php</a>      Dennis Mojado</p> <p><a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elevator_pitch">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elevator_pitch</a></p>	<p>Wikipedia tell us that an elevator pitch or speech is a short summary used to quickly and simply define a profession, product, service, organization, or event, and its value. The concept is that it should be possible to deliver the summary in the time span of an elevator ride, thirty seconds to a minute.</p> <p>Creating an elevator speech to summarize the key points of your work and its relevance will help you to focus on what is most important. It will serve as the pitch to pull viewers in. Remember that your audience will have different levels of knowledge and understanding, so you want to avoid jargon, complex technical terminology, and acronyms.</p> <p>Once you give your pitch, and it should be just a couple of sentences, try to find out why viewers are interested in your poster BEFORE you launch into your presentation spiel so that you can meet their expectations. This will also help you to determine the level of information to give and how much explanation will be needed for those who may not be familiar with your discipline or research area. Then you can begin to present your research in more detail.</p>
<p>Tell it like a story.</p>	<p>There are a number of studies showing that storytelling is a very effective communication method.</p>
<p>How is my research a story?</p>	<p>What does this mean?</p>



It is useful to think about reporting on your research or your project as an opportunity to tell a story and the format of your presentation as having a kind of narrative arc. How do you do that? Explain what got you interested in the research, how you came up with your idea. What was the problem you wanted to solve and the challenges you encountered? What were the successes and the failures? And what was the end result? What will happen next? This approach will be much more compelling for your listeners than a recitation of facts and figures.

Start with the big picture. How does your work relate to it? What is the particular question you explored? What methods did you employ? Why are your results significant in terms of the big picture?

Think about this strategy when you are putting together your poster.

### Other structures

- Evidence by Example
- Process Analysis
- Cause and Effect
- Compare and Contrast
- Classification
- Deduction
- Definition/Redefinition

There are other ways of developing the structure for the thesis you are presenting in your poster. These might be particularly useful for humanities and social science research.

In building **Evidence by Example** you give concrete illustrations that provide a convincing argument supporting a thesis.

**Process Analysis** is a demonstration either of how something works, for example, erosion, or of how to do something, like bake a cake.

**Cause and Effect** focuses on what creates a particular outcome.

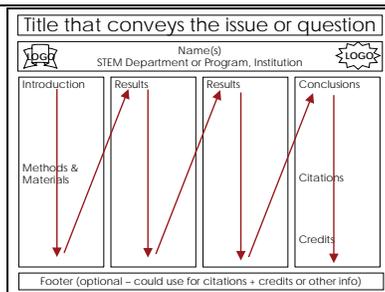
**Compare and Contrast** uses a comparison of like and unlike things to explore an idea and how it fits into a bigger construct.

**Classification** can help the audience sort through and understand detailed information or ideas by grouping them.

With a **Deductive** process you accumulate evidence to make a useful generalization.

**Definition** is used when a subject requires the understanding of terms, ideas, or phenomena, while **Redefinition** gives new understanding or new meaning to a topic.

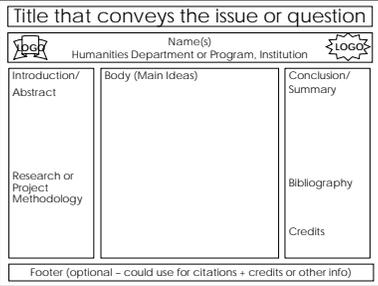
This is not an exhaustive list, but may help when you think about how to structure your argument.



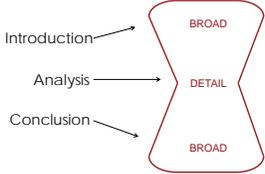
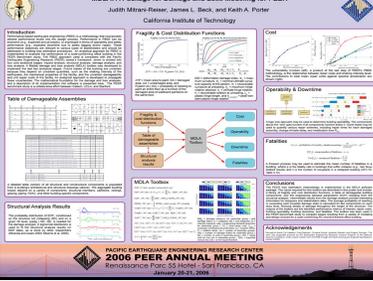
Once you consider the structure of your content you can determine the appropriate layout. Reid will talk more about this.

Here is an example of a common layout with sections to include for a STEM discipline poster:

Title  
 Introduction  
 Materials/methods  
 Results  
 Conclusion  
 Citations  
 Acknowledgements

	<p>The Footer might be used to designate the event where you are presenting, with the location and date, or as an alternate place for the citations and credits.</p> <p>[CLICK] This layout works because it has an easy to follow flow for your presentation.</p>
	<p>For the Humanities, a similar layout can be used but the content areas will be a bit different.</p> <p>Sections to include are:</p> <p>Title</p> <p>The Introduction may be your Abstract</p> <p>Research methodology</p> <p>Main Ideas</p> <p>Conclusion/ Summary</p> <p>Bibliography</p> <p>Acknowledgements</p> <p>Again the Footer can be used as best suits your purpose.</p>
<p>Title</p> <p><i>Titles with colons: are these necessary?</i></p>	<p>The title may not be the main thing that draws a viewer to your poster, but it should be catchy. You want to convey both the issue and your approach to finding the answer. If it is appropriate to your discipline, you should indicate the system. No more than two lines, please! And think twice about titles with colons as they are overused, and as the subtitle here suggests, have become a bit of a joke.</p>
<p>Introduction</p> <p><i>What is the question you wanted to answer?</i></p>	<p>Your introduction or Abstract should be short, easy to understand, and thought-provoking. You want to grab the viewer's interest. With a maximum length of about 200 words, your objective is to portray the big picture – meaning the context for your research – and how your work relates to it.</p> <p>What is the question, problem or challenge that you explored? You will want to present a clear hypothesis or research concept and let the viewer know what the significance and/or purpose of your work is. Then briefly describe how you tested your hypothesis or went about conducting the research to answer your question.</p> <p>The introduction is a good place for a strong graphic element, such as an image or compelling visualization.</p>

<p>Materials &amp; Methods or Methodology</p> <p>How did you answer your question?</p>	<p>In this section you will describe the analytical approach used, the equipment (if applicable), experimental methods, or methodology. Remember that “brevity is the soul of wit”* and lengthy text sections are tedious for the viewer. Use images, tables, flowcharts, or graphs to substitute for text where possible. Keep in mind that you will be presenting the poster and can speak to the gaps. Aim for a maximum length of around 200 words.</p> <p>*Shakespeare, Hamlet: Act II, Scene 2.</p>
<p>Results or Main Ideas</p> <p>What were the results of your research?</p>	<p>For STEM researchers, at the beginning of the results section you should state whether the experiments or research confirmed your hypothesis. Also in the first paragraph include qualitative and descriptive results. A second paragraph should provide specific data analysis to support your hypothesis or research question.</p> <p>Those in the Humanities may take a different approach. This will be the section that will present your main ideas, where you lay out the findings of your research in a descriptive manner.</p> <p>In either case illustrations, graphs, and tables should be used to reinforce the content.</p> <p>Avoid presenting background material on the poster; if someone is interested, you can answer their specific questions.</p> <p>Aim for a maximum length of about 200 words.</p>
<p>Conclusions or Summary</p> <p>How is this relevant? What are the key takeaways?</p>	<p>For STEM posters, remind the reader of your hypothesis or research question and the results. Did the research support the hypothesis? For Humanities presenters, summarize your main ideas and list the key takeaway points. Discuss why your findings are conclusive and interesting. What is the relevance to other published works? If applicable, mention future directions that might be taken. This section should be approximately 200 words.</p>

<p>Citations or Bibliography &amp; Acknowledgements</p> <p>Who contributed to your work?</p>	<p>The citations or bibliography should follow the standard used in your discipline. Your friendly Academic Librarian (the one assigned to your department, or the one on duty at the reference desk in MSEL) can help you with this. In fact, you should be in touch with your Academic Librarian early in the process to be sure that the literature that you are using is appropriate – for example, in most cases you should be looking at journal articles and books as opposed to websites.</p> <p>You will also want to thank individuals who mentored or advised you, and granting agencies or programs that provided funding.</p>
<p>Hourglass of Scope</p>  <p>The diagram shows an hourglass shape with three sections. The top section is labeled 'BROAD' and 'Introduction'. The middle section is labeled 'DETAIL' and 'Analysis'. The bottom section is labeled 'BROAD' and 'Conclusion'. Arrows point from the text labels to the corresponding sections of the hourglass.</p>	<p>As you are preparing the content for your poster, think of an hourglass.</p> <p>[CLICK]You'll want the introduction to convey the big picture. [CLICK]The sections where you have the results or main ideas will be more detailed. [CLICK]With your conclusion, you will again think more broadly about how your work is relevant.</p>
 <p>The poster is titled 'Pedagogy &amp; Play: Revising Learning through Digital Humanities'. It features a grid layout with sections for 'Abstract', 'Examples of Play in Undergraduate Curriculum', 'Typology of Play', 'Professional Playfulness', 'References', and 'Art Contributions?'. It includes various images and text blocks.</p> <p>cc 2011 Katherine D. Harris <a href="https://triproftri.wordpress.com/2011/06/19/pedagogyplayposter/">https://triproftri.wordpress.com/2011/06/19/pedagogyplayposter/</a></p>	<p>I wanted to show one example of a poster from a humanities perspective and how it might differ from the STEM model. This one uses the building evidence by example structure as well as definitions of playfulness and typologies.</p>
 <p>The poster is titled 'MDLA: A Package for Damage and Loss Modeling for PEER'. It features a complex layout with multiple sections, including 'Introduction', 'Fragility &amp; Cost Distribution Functions', 'Capacity &amp; Ductility', 'Site of Damageable Assemblies', 'MDLA Analysis Results', and 'Acknowledgements'. It includes various charts, graphs, and tables.</p> <p>MDLA: A Package for Damage and Loss Modeling for PEER Justin Mitrov-Rosen, James L. Beck, and Keith A. Porter California Institute of Technology</p> <p>2010 PEER ANNUAL MEETING Performance Pac 25 Hotel - San Francisco, CA January 26-27, 2010</p>	<p>You don't have to use the headings on the template. In fact, using descriptive headers for each section can serve as "take home messages" for your viewers. These can also introduce the viewer to the content found within each section.</p> <p>And, just to point out, this is an example of how a footer can be used to designate the event.</p>

<p>Greeting your visitors Smile and show enthusiasm!</p> <p><a href="http://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design">http://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.uhd.edu/academic/colleges/sciences/scholars/files/workshop-poster.pdf">https://www.uhd.edu/academic/colleges/sciences/scholars/files/workshop-poster.pdf</a></p>	<p>Greet people with a smile.</p> <p>Show enthusiasm, because if you aren't excited by your work, your audience won't be either. Be sure to maintain eye contact with your audience.</p> <p>And remember to stand to the side so that everyone can see your poster.</p>
<p>After the elevator speech Speak from your head, not from a script.</p>	<p>Do not read directly from your poster or from a prepared script. Reading signals lack of knowledge.</p> <p>As you talk through your poster, use a pointer or your hand to refer to particular parts of the poster so that people can follow your talk.</p> <p>Spend extra time explaining the figures and tables on your poster.</p> <p>Make sure that you create a transition from one section to the next. For example, "Once I established a method of conducting the experiment, I began data collection. This next section shows the results."</p>
<p>Handling the crowd How to manage your (shifting) audience.</p>	<p>If people approach your poster after you have begun talking to viewers, pause to welcome them and identify where you are in your presentation, "Hi, I'm explaining the reasons that Pop Art was a cultural phenomenon in the 1960s. Please join us and I'll loop back in a few minutes." You don't want to restart each time someone new comes by, but letting newcomers know what's going on helps them to pick up the thread.</p> <p>Check your audience's understanding of the more complex concepts presented in your poster by paying attention to non-verbal cues or by asking them whether YOU have been clear or should go into a little more detail. DO NOT ask whether THEY understand what you've said. For example, say, "Should I talk a little more about how the algorithm operates?" "Have I been complete enough?" or "Would you like me to go over any of the</p>

	<p>parts again?" DO NOT SAY "Do you understand how this works?" or "Do you get this?" Such questions put pressure on the audience.</p> <p>If you must leave your poster for a break, attach a note alerting any viewers to your expected time of return</p>
<p>Express your appreciation  <small>A little thanks goes a long way.</small></p>	<p>Thank people for listening and talking with you about your project: "Thanks for stopping to talk with me." "Thanks for your feedback on X." Make your comment show YOU WERE LISTENING TO THEM, not just talking at them. Try not to use a cliché such as "thank you for your time," and don't apologize for perceived short-comings.</p>
<p>Be Professional  <small>To look like a pro, channel your inner Mom</small></p>	<p>I don't know if name tags will be provided for the URD event, but name tags are useful as it makes it easier for people to remember who you are. I'd recommend making your own. If you have business cards, bring those. If you have material that expands on your work, you can bring copies to hand out to people who are interested in learning more.</p> <p>In general, channel your inner Mom.          Think about your appearance. Dress neatly and professionally.          Stand up straight Do not put your hands in your pockets.          Look people in the eye.          Speak clearly/don't mumble.          And no chewing gum! It's distracting.          Avoid strong perfume, cologne or body spray.</p>
<p><del>Cellphone!</del></p>	<p>This should go without saying... [Do Not Even Think About Checking Your Cellphone!]</p>



Image source =  
<http://colinpurrington.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/pinkposter.jpg>

I'd like to leave you with this image and a tip.

Consider the color scheme of your poster and make sure that your outfit doesn't clash. Lest you think I am kidding, there was a research study done on this subject (Keegan and Bannister, 2003\*) that indicated a poster will be visited more if you're attire color coordinates, or at least doesn't clash, with it. [http://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design Tip #21]

In any event, if you convey this kind of confidence and enthusiasm, you'll be on your way to becoming a poster rock star.

\*Keegan, D.A., and S.L. Bannister. 2003. Effect of colour coordination of attire with poster presentation on poster popularity. *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 169:1291-1292. <http://www.cmaj.ca/content/169/12/1291.full.pdf+html>

Questions?

Any questions?