

Preparing a poster presentation

Choose a Topic:

- First of all, interesting, motivating, promising, ... (**Have fun.**)
- Second, It is important to choose a topic with enough available material to make the poster factual and interesting, but not so broad that you cannot discuss the topic well in just a few minutes.

Research the Topic:

- Literature survey (survey the survey or tutorial papers first, then identify most influential work and people, followed by recent publications in top conferences and journals, related industry news)
- Zoom-in a bit to avoid too broad coverage
- Ask yourself: what is the **key message** you want to share with the audience, and put the key message in one paragraph, and in a few bullets.
- Is there controversy in the community over this topic, or general agreement?
- Collect relevant graphs, figures or tables that can be used in the presentation

Outline Your Poster:

- Introduction (background material, what is ***, why it is important or promising?)
- Body (objectives, methods, results, resources, ...)
- Summary (a bulleted list of the key message)
- Conclusions (draw legitimate conclusions instead of speculating)

Tips:

- It is important to always **keep the key message in mind as a common theme during the body of the poster**. If you wander from the main point, you may lose your audience.
- Balance between figures, tables and text. Figures and tables should occupy approximately half of the viewing area. If you have only a few illustrations, make them large. Use text to state the problem, frame the problem in the appropriate context, summarize results, and state major conclusions.
- A poster is not a copy of any written paper glued onto a poster board.
- It should be quickly readable from a distance. Lower Case is easier to read (Readability vs. READABILITY).

Format:

- suggested size: within 4 by 4 feet, e.g., 4x3, 3x4, 4x4 letter-sized papers
- An easy way to prepare figures and text for posters is using Powerpoint, printing out individual 8x11 pages and attaching them to a poster board (poster tape will be provided)
- Title: Use characters 1 inch high (Geneva or Arial 96 point bold works well).
- Text: Use limited text to convey the essential information; Use a serif typeface (Palatino, New York, Bookman); Point size should be between 24 and 36; Use plain text
- Headings: Use a sans-serif typeface (Geneva, Helvetica, Arial) ; Point size of font should be larger than text; Use Bold
- Figures:
 - Design figures that can be understood without reading the entire poster
 - Information in figures should not be duplicated in text or elsewhere.

- State the key results in a complete title for each table.
 - Set up columns for ready comparison of data from left to right in a logical order.
 - Each column should have a heading, include symbols of the unit of measurement.
- Layout: Reading order: down columns instead of across rows; Line length: do not exceed 60 characters across

Critique Poster Before Production:

- Is the poster appropriate for your audience?
- Does it with the right size?
- Is it readable from five feet?
- Has it been carefully edited and proofread?
- Does the title accurately reflect the content?
- Does the background establish the need for the study?
- Does the objective adequately state the purpose of the study?
- Do the methods and results tie back to the objectives?

Presentation:

- Stand by your poster at all times during your session. Dress professionally and ask people if they would like you to "walk them through" your poster. Viewers appreciate having important information pointed out to them. Prepare a 5-minute talk to explain your poster to me. The talk duration can be adaptive to other audiences according to their interests and feedback.
- Do you display a professional appearance and demeanor?
- Are you responsive to questions?
- Are you willing to approach people who appear interested in your poster?
- Are you able to talk about your work with different audiences?
- Are you enthusiastic about your work? Can you convey this to others?

Grading:

- Quality of poster (50%)
- Presentation and question handling (50%)

Enjoy the poster workshop and have fun!

Acknowledgement:

The above guideline is prepared with the help from the following resources:

Preparing a poster presentation,

<http://www.uwlax.edu/biology/communication/PosterPresentations.html>