

Guidelines for Poster at the American Academy of Optometry

The Basics

1. Size
 - Your poster must fit on a board that is 4 feet by 8 feet.
2. Time and Day
 - Check the time and day your poster is scheduled for.
 - Posters are displayed all day.
 - Authors are scheduled to be at the poster for only a portion of the day. Be sure you know when you are scheduled.
 - Take down your poster at the time indicated in the schedule.

Helpful Hints

1. A poster is a VISUAL presentation. It must first attract the viewer. There are a lot of poster and competing activities during the meeting.
 - Divide the poster into 3 or 4 main sections using color or borders/boxes.
 - Boxes and borders allow related elements to be visually grouped together.
 1. Scientific Poster – introduction, methods, results and conclusions.
 2. Case Report – background, case details (DX, TX/management, outcome) take home message or bottom line
 3. Also include acknowledgements and conflicts of interest.
2. Hints in improve visual presentation
 - Use bullets and short phrases NOT lengthy text.
 - Graphs are better than tables and tables are better than text to communicate key points.
 - Summarize key points under the graphs/tables that illustrate them.
 - Use simple clean design – too many colors and fonts can distract from the message.
 - Color should be used with purpose, not randomly applied just for the sake of color.
 - Information must be easy to obtain.
 - When preparing your work for presentation, remember:
 - Many may read your title.
 - Fewer will read your abstract.
 - Fewer still will read the entire body of your work.
3. Fonts and Sizes
 - Recommend proportional type fonts (easier to read)
 - Times New Roman
 - Arial
 - Century Schoolbook

- Font Sizes
 - Title – visible from 25 feet – 72 point
 - Body of text – visible from 4 to 6 feet – 20 to 24 point
- 4. Typically there are two levels of interest from those attending the poster session.
 - Those interested in the “bottom line”
 - These are people interested in the subject or result but not all the details. They want to know what you found and why it is useful, but usually not how you got there.
 - For these people, the question and the conclusion or bottom line should be easy for them to find. They should be able to get all the information they want in less than 3 to 5 minutes.¹
 - If these people stop by your poster while you are there, think about being able to present your results in about 3 sentences, as if you were at a cocktail party or having a short conversation in an elevator.
 - Those working in the area or very interested in the are and want all the details
 - These people will want to go through the entire poster. However, they should be able to get all the information for the poster without your present. They should be able to review your entire poster in about 10 minutes.¹
 - They should be able to determine the purpose, overall methods/design, results and conclusion just by reviewing your poster. Remember that your poster will be up all day but you will only be at your poster for 2 hours. Due to the varying schedules and interests, attendees frequently view your poster when you are not there.

¹ Legibility Guidelines from Sarah Boslaugh, Ph.D., a senior statistical data analyst in the Department of Pediatrics at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri. <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/HA012276421033.aspx>

Other sources

<http://www.acm.org/crossroads/xrds3-2/posters.html>

<http://www.cis.udel.edu/~pollock/fse04/posterauthorinst.html>