Logo

Having the logo of your university or research group is a great way to establish yourself. These can often be found by searching the marketing page of your university. Try and find a transparent background to avoid having a white background behind your image! A search for "[College name] marketing materials/logo download" will likely be successful. You can also use logos from previous posters used by your lab

Tips: The .png file format will often have a transparent background! Use the "remove background" tool on PowerPoint. You can also change the poster background color to match.

Poster Title

The best titles are short, attention grabbing, tell a story, and can share your findings. Using semicolons is encouraged. This is one of the places you can insert wit into your professional communications

Tips: Avoid using jargon in your title, it may scare people away! It's common for the findings to be included in the title so people can quickly understand the story you are telling.

Authors and Affiliation

Always list the presenter first. Different disciplines have specific preferences for authorship order. Consult your mentor! Use superscript numbers to denote affiliations. If you are a part of multiple universities, numbers can be separated with a comma

Tips: You can also add your department (Microbiology) or college (College of Science)

A Well-made Poster Can Take Your Project to the Next Level: An Instructional Guide

Undergraduate Star[1], Helpful Graduate Student[1], Other People[1], Faculty Mentor[1]

[1] Your Department, University College, Clever City, ST.

Sections

Most posters include an introduction, methods, results, discussion, conclusion, reference, and acknowledgement section. These generally provide an opportunity to cover everything you will need to say!

Tips: Use bullet points to break up long sections of text. Wherever possible, replace texts with pictures, figures, diagrams (SmartArt on Powerpoint), anything!

The Presentation

When presenting a poster, it's best to prepare a 3-5 minute elevator speech to give to interested attendees. You'll want to spend most of your time covering the discussion and conclusion. Practice your pitch a few times (with your mentor) before you present!

Tips: Give your presentation at a lab meeting to practice! Use your poster as a guide and point to relevant sections as your talk!

Abstract

Unless absolutely required by your mentor or conference, avoid abstracts. They are wordy, bulky, clunky, and take up space. Everything in this should be covered elsewhere.

Introduction

Use this space to share important background information relevant to this project. Tailor the intro section to your audience (experts in the field vs. undergraduate peers). Include a Purpose/Objective statement as well.

Methods

Figure 1. Scientist Hard at Work. Photo by presenter

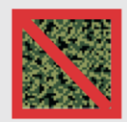

Figure 2. PIXELS = BAD

In this section you'll want to provide the reader an overview of the steps you took in running your experiments. This is commonly displayed in bullet form. When possible, exchange descriptions of methods to pictures of what you did to give the reader a better sense of what you did!

Results

This is where you can describe (but don't interpret!) your data! Use this space to show trends on charts, figures, and other visualization tools.

Avoid using tables. Graphs are much more visually pleasing and can help draw readers to your poster!

Figure 3. Neon colors are bad!

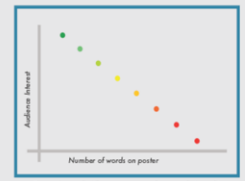

Figure 4. Moral of the story, use graphs instead of words!

Figure 3. Neon colors are bad!

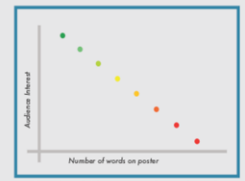

Figure 4. Moral of the story, use graphs instead of words!

Conclusion

This is where you talk about your findings in the context of the discipline. Ask yourself - what do you want the audience to take away from your study? Here are suggested bullet points:

- *What your findings add to the field*
- *Study limitations (small sample size, etc.)*
- *Potential sources of error, bias*
- *Future directions of study (what you'll do next)*

BRING IT HOME! Put one to two big, takeaway points that you want to stick with your reader.

Here is the take home from this poster: "With the right design, a researcher can dramatically improve their research by having a beautiful, well crafted poster!"

References

Often full references will be included on posters. However, a condensed in text citation (i.e. (Heinonen et al., 2016) may also be used to cite the work you reference throughout your poster. This may vary by discipline, however, so consult your mentor.

Acknowledgements

This is the space to thank all your supporters (emotional, physical, financial). Your may also include grant numbers here (i.e. R01..).

Photos and Figures

Along the research process, take some photos to add to your poster! Make sure they're high enough quality (i.e don't appear blurry at 100% zoom) so they won't end up pixelated! You may also download open source pictures to use.

Tips: Don't forget to label your figure axes and add units! Use Creative Commons pictures to avoid copyright infringements if you don't take the pictures yourself

Font Central

Title:86

Authors:56

Headings:50 Body Text: 44 Captions: 36

Title/Headings	Body Text
Tahoma	Helvetica
Trebuchet	Arial
Verdana	Avenir

Background and Size

Most science research posters are **48 inches wide and 36 inches tall**. Any larger than this is ill-advised. Make sure to check whether there are specific size requirements for your conference

Good Background

Bad Background

Colors

Avoid using harsh or neon colors, similar colors that are hard to differentiate, and colors that may be difficult for some to see. Use simple color schemes! (Also see institutional colors)

Made by Greg Heinonen for the Office of Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and the Arts at Oregon State University

Oregon State University