Tips for Designing Your Poster

Poster Template Guidelines

The following guidelines have been prepared to help you create your poster.

1. **Poster Board & Poster Size**
   The poster board area is roughly 4' high by 8' wide. **Posters must fit within the space of 42"x42"**. Posters can be smaller, but NO larger than this size. Posters should be readable by viewers five feet away. The message should be clear and understandable without oral explanation.

2. **Abstract Title & Institution and/or Logo**
   Include the abstract title and your institution name and or logo.

3. **Conclusion Headline**
   This should be a one-line, news headline-style sentence less than 140 characters, which summarizes the main findings and takeaways of the study.

4. **Significance Statement**
   Posters should include a brief statement of significance explaining why the study question was worth addressing. This may be formatted similar to a problem statement or research question. Background information should not be included here, but rather expounded upon by poster presenters during the presentation.

5. **Data Source / Population and Results**
   Lead with a statement regarding the data source and study population. For example, "We identified 20,000 patients who underwent a colectomy from the 2011–2012 ACS NSQIP Participant Use Data File (PUF)." Methods should not be directly included on the poster; however, the data source and study population should briefly be described in the Results section. Individuals interested in more detail from the Methods section can access the full abstract on the ABA mobile app.

6. **Image / Figure**
   We encourage the use of pictures, graphs, infographics, etc.

7. **Lessons Learned**
   Summarize in two to three bullet point-style statements. These should be takeaway points that your team learned from conducting the study. Also, include valuable points, tips, and feedback for others on how to similarly implement such a project.

8. **Co-Author and Affiliations**
   Include all co-authors, their affiliations, and their <u>disclosures</u>. If authors do not have anything to disclose, **you must include a statement, "Nothing to Disclose"**

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Poster Communication Guidelines

The following guidelines have been prepared to help improve the effectiveness of poster communication:

1. **Initial Sketch**
   Plan your poster early. Focus your attention on a few key points. Try various styles of data presentation to achieve clarity and simplicity. Does the use of color help? What needs to be expressed in words? Suggest headlines and text topics.
2. **Rough Layout**
   Enlarge your best initial sketch, keeping the dimensions in proportion to the final poster. Ideally, the rough layout should be full size. Print the title and headlines. Indicate text by horizontal lines. Draw rough graphs and tables. This will give you a good idea of proportions and balance. If you are working with an artist, show him/her the poster layout. Ask associates for comments. This is still an experimental stage.
3. **Final Layout**
   The artwork is complete. The text and tables are typed but not necessarily enlarged to full size. Now ask, is the message clear? Do the important points stand out? Is there balance between words and illustrations? Is there spatial balance? Is the pathway through the poster clear?
4. **Balance**
   The figures and tables should cover slightly more than 50% of the poster area. If you have only a few illustrations, make them large. Keep text concise and relevant. The poster should be understandable without oral explanation.
5. **Typography/font**
   Avoid abbreviations, acronyms, and jargon. Use a consistent font throughout. All poster fonts should be minimum 40-point. Table font should be a minimum of 32-point. An 8.5" by 11" sheet of paper photo statically enlarged 50% makes the text readable from 5 feet away.
6. **Eye Movement**
   The movement (pathway) of the eye over the poster should be natural – down the columns or along the rows. Size attracts attention. Arrows, pointing hands, numbers and letters can help clarify the sequence.
7. **Simplicity**
   Resist the temptation to overload the poster. More content may mean less vital information is communicated.