

## EFFECTIVE POSTER PRESENTATIONS

### General Comments

In planning a poster presentation it is useful to keep in mind the advantages of a poster over oral presentation. Posters are available for viewing for approximately two hours, not ten minutes. Authors and interested viewers have one hour for discussion, not five minutes. More posters can be presented in the same time and space than oral presentations, and the number of simultaneous sessions can be reduced by 40% or more. Finally, there is no first or last presentation on the program. Planning and experience will make your poster presentation clear, effective and rewarding.

### Guidelines

Posters should be readable by viewers five feet away. The message should be clear and understandable without oral explanation. 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. **Layout** Enlarge your best initial sketch, keeping the dimensions in proportion to the final poster. The rough layout should be full size which is generally 48" x 36". A blackboard is a convenient place to work. 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 the artist the poster layout. Ask associates for comment. This is still in the 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 a balance between words and illustrations? Is there spatial balance? Is the pathway through the poster clear? Your poster materials may be attached to the poster mounts by push pins. Many participants attach their printed materials, graphs or photographs to pieces of colored poster board beforehand and then attach these pieces to the mount. You may select any color of poster board you find suitable. Don't forget to include a large heading which gives the title of your poster, your name, the names of all of your collaborators and the appropriate departmental affiliations.

4. **Balance**            The figures and table should slightly cover more than 50% of the poster area. If you have only a few illustrations, make them large. Do not omit the text, but keep it brief. The poster should be understandable without oral explanation.
5. **Typography**        Avoid abbreviations, acronyms and jargon. Use a consistent type style throughout. Use large type. An 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper photo statically enlarged 50% makes the text readable from five feet.
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**            The temptation to overload the poster should be resisted. More material may mean less communication.