Developing a Poster: Showcasing a Community Organization or Research Project

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Building on Partnership Strengths to Improve Community Health

Our Poster Session Goal

To help people meet each other, learn about each other's work and interests, and make connections for future collaborative work.

This poster session is unique in that it is geared to spark conversation about shared interests and future collaborative projects, and not necessarily to share the results of past scientific research projects.

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Objectives

1. Review goals for posters, think of your own

2. Discuss possible components of a community organization poster

3. Review components of a research poster

4. Set up a poster 'page'

5. Use options to insert text boxes and graphics and design poster

6. Share websites where you can review sample posters and poster design options

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Goals of a Poster

- A poster is a **large display** that **quickly and effectively communicates information**.

- Need to **efficiently convey your information and stimulate interest and discussion**.

- Viewers should be able to **walk by and quickly scan your poster**, returning to those that pique an interest.

- Viewers should be able to **fully read your poster in 10 minutes** or less.

- Intention is not only to **share information about your work** but also to **draw viewers into a conversation**.

Guiding Questions
for Creating a Poster

- What is the purpose of your poster?
- What is your main message?
- Who is your audience?
- Will you use the poster after the Symposium?
  - How? Where?

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Potential Parts of a Community Organization Poster

- Logo
- Pictures!
- Mission
- Vision
- Program descriptions
- Locations
- Web address
- Maps
- Contact information
- Other?

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Potential Parts of a Community Organization Poster

- Research Interests, Topic Areas
  - Opiate use, HIV, Obesity...
- Questions you would like to explore/answer
  - Why are there so many children coming to the ER with concussions?
  - Why is infant mortality higher here than X?
- Examples of past research

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Components of a Research Poster

Research posters typically include:

- Title, Author, Affiliation (with or without a logo)
- Introduction, Background, Problem Statement or Aim, Current Conditions
- Materials and Methods, Measures, Procedures,
- Results (both text and graphics)
- Discussion (including Limitations)
- Conclusion or Summary
- References, Team, Acknowledgements, Funding Source
- Pictures!

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Setting up a Poster

▫ <u>Step One</u>: Gather all of your text and graphics into one place.

▫ <u>Step Two</u>: Review the list of components (i.e., the "building blocks" for your poster) and determine which headers will best apply to your materials and your project.

▫ <u>Step Three</u>: Roughly sketch out a design <u>on paper</u> (e.g., story board) to get a sense of what kind of layout will work best.

- How many "building blocks" will you have?
- Which of these are graphic? Which are text?
- Where on the poster do you want the graphics to appear?
- Typically, you will want your most important and eye-catching block to cover a relatively large space towards the upper right-hand corner.

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Setting up a Poster

▫ <u>Step Four</u>: Select one or two of the websites that have downloadable poster templates and scroll through to get a sense of options that are available (see references at end).

- Consider first whether a 3 column, 4 column, or 5 column format will work best with number and type of building blocks you will have.
- Then focus on color, background, font, and other poster characteristics.
- <u>If this is your first poster, our best advice is to **find a template that you like and start there**</u>!!

▫ <u>Step Five</u>: Once you have identified your starting template, download it to your computer.

Setting up a Poster

- Step Six: Fill in the blocks on the template.
  - You can copy and paste text that you have already composed or you can type directly into a block.
  - You can insert pictures, graphs, etc.
  - Insert new text boxes, as needed.
  - Delete existing blocks if your template has more than you need.
  - Remember to put your content in correct order to tell your story.
  - Save your work frequently!!
- Step Seven: Review the list of do's and don'ts (on subsequent slide) and then tinker with your formatting by adjusting font type, font size, picture size, etc.
- Step Eight: Have a friend or colleague take a look and provide feedback. (Then repeat Step Seven, if needed.)

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Setting up a Poster

- Your poster is designed as <u>ONE PAGE</u> in PowerPoint.
  - **Design** tab in 2007/2010
    - **Page Setup**
      - **Custom**
      - Set **Width** and **Height**
      - Set Orientation to **Landscape**
      - **Some versions of PowerPoint require you to set the page 'size' to ½ the expected print size!!!!**
- **For this Symposium, the maximum size is 42" x 42"**

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Setting up a Poster

- Insert text boxes for titles, subheadings and general text for all sections.
  - **Insert** tab in 2007/2010
    - **Text Box**
      - Use ~ **72 font size for titles**
      - Use **at least 36-40 font size for subheadings**
      - Use **at least 22-24 font size for general text**
      - <u>Type of font is your choice</u> (Arial reads more easily than New Times Roman)
- **There are LOTS of options for font type and size, colors, layout, etc. - <u>maximize readability</u>!**

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Setting up a Poster

- Insert graphics by copying these from other sources (Word, PowerPoint individual slides, Excel, the Internet, logo's, pictures).

- Basic **copy** and **paste** commands work for inserting charts, graphs, logos, etc. onto your poster.

- **There are LOTS of ways to graphically display your data! It's easier to design your graphics before copying these to your poster!**

- **Play with re-sizing graphics once copied to your poster.**

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Setting up a Poster

- There are many options under the Design tab (in 2007/ 2010) for changing colors, fonts, effects, backgrounds (options also available under the Drawing ribbon of the Home tab in 2007/2010).

- If this is your first poster, our best advice is to **<u>find a template you like and use it</u>**!

- <u>Goal is readability</u>: light font/dark background, dark font/light background (i.e., high contrasts), minimize special effects and color changes (i.e., it's less distracting).

Use Pictures to Tell your Story!

- Take lots of pictures throughout your organization o
  project
- Complete permission forms before posting
- Formatting:
  - Word/PowerPoint - Shape Effects: Preset, Reflection, Bevel, etc
  - www.picmonkey.com – online editing, collages
  - To move pictures on a document: Put your cursor on the picture, right click, select "Wrap Text" and then "Square."

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Setting up a Poster

<u>A few helpful hints</u>:

- Display poster text in columns rather than rows.

- Allow 'some' empty space for readability; readers need a 'visual pause' to think.

- Omit extraneous text or visual distractions.

- Use plain language.

- Use short lists and bulleted points rather than full sentences wherever possible.

- Use graphics to increase audience interest.

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Setting up a Poster

A few helpful hints:

- If using number graphs (e.g., line charts, bar charts), don't forget to include titles, legends, axis labels, etc – whenever necessary.

- Use 'Title Case' or 'Sentence case' rather than FULL CAPS.

- Avoid acronyms unless they're widely recognized among your expected audience.

- Have a friend/colleague review your poster for flow, figures, font size, spelling/grammar, etc. **before** printing.

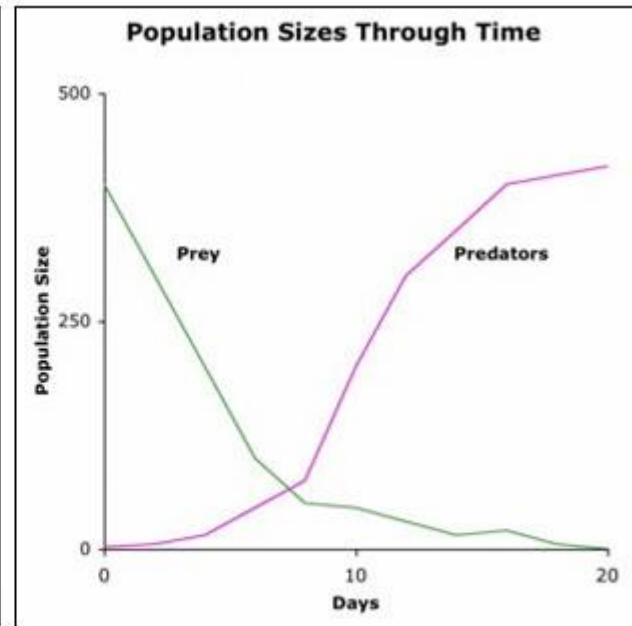- **Don't forget to SAVE your file frequently as you're creating your poster.**

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Setting up a Poster

Example of graphic pluses and minuses:
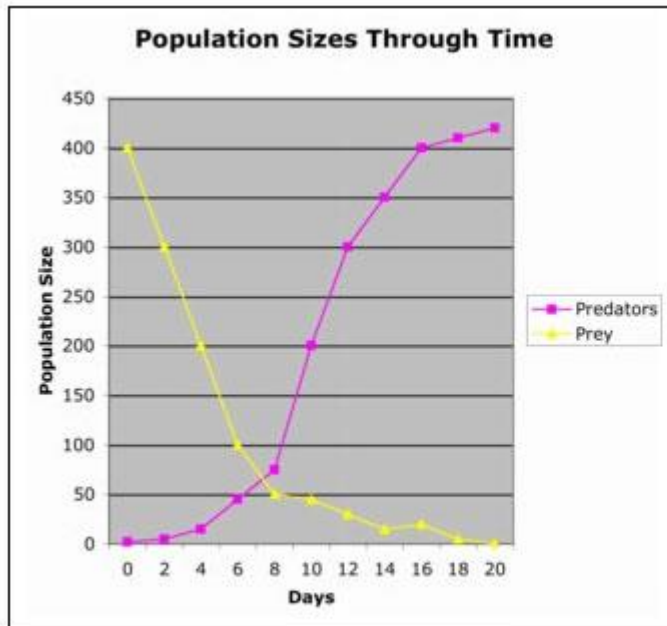
Poster "Don't" Reminders

Many ineffective posters suffer from easy-to-fix problems including:

- Objectives and main points are hard to find

- Text is too small

- Poor graphics that don't visually display a quick take-home message and, generally, distract the viewer

- Poor organization that makes the poster's 'story' hard to follow

- Others??

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Sample Templates and Design Help

Posters from our Past Symposia can be found at:
https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/chr_symposium/2018/posters/

Lots of web sites have existing templates easily adaptable:

- **Makesigns.com**
  - https://www.makesigns.com/products/scientific-posters - This site contains a broad range of free poster templates with instructions on how to download to your own computer.
  - https://www.makesigns.com/tutorials/ - An excellent and detailed tutorial on creating posters.
- **Posterpresentations.com**
  - https://www.posterpresentations.com/free-poster-templates.html - More free templates in basic white, gray, and blue colors. These templates are a very user friendly and include "Quick Design Guide" tips.
  - http://www.posterpresentations.com/html/helpdesk.html - A complete set of YouTube tutorials on each of the steps in poster creation.
  - http://posters4research.com/design-help.php - Quick Start general guidelines for poster creation.

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