

Riding the Wave to Powerful Poster Presentations

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Posters are an effective method for communicating with colleagues at professional meetings. With the right tools and an understanding of basic design, creating an attractive, informative, well-balanced, interesting, easy-to-read, and portable poster is simple.

Five things that today's poster designer should consider:

Audience

Determine who will be viewing poster

- Professionals/academics
- General public



Define and distill poster's message to match audience needs and interests

Engage audience with content and design

Attendees have limited time; it is estimated

- 3 seconds to decide whether to stop, look and read
- 30 seconds to gain understanding of content
- 3 minutes to read entire poster

Design Principles

Balance: distribute white space, text, graphics, and color to create visual stability

Contrast: use to create visual interest, impact or emphasis

Create **CONTRAST** by varying size
Create **contrast** by varying color
Create **contrast** by varying value

Proximity: group related elements together

Alignment: align elements to create visual unity

Repetition and variation: repeat elements to create connections; add variation to create visual interest



Unity/consistency: integrate all elements so that they look like they belong together

Images and Text

Images

- Attract attention
- Provide impact
- Illustrate text
- Logos provide identity

Text

- Should flow from left to right and top to bottom
- Readable from a distance
 - Title font ≥ 72 pts
 - Headings ≥ 48 pts
 - Body text ≥ 18 pts
- Avoid all CAPS
- Avoid excessive use of font styles and colors

sans-serif vs. serif
script or DECORATIVE

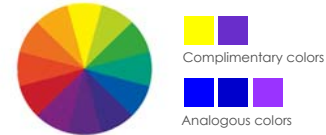
- Black text on light background is most readable

Color

Color: use for emphasis and to attract attention without overwhelming content

Complimentary colors: add visual energy and contrast

Analogous colors: create visual harmony



Color wheel shows color relationships

Warm colors: use for foreground



Cool colors: use for background



Light colors are best for background

Group or isolate elements of poster using color

Tools: Software

Microsoft PowerPoint
Slide presentation

Adobe PageMaker
Adobe InDesign
QuarkXPress
Page layout

Adobe Illustrator
Macromedia Freehand
Illustration, drawing

Adobe Photoshop
Image editing / paint program

