TOP TIPS

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Preparing a Scientific Poster

Why a poster? Posters have become valuable tools for professional meetings, teaching and assessment.

Posters are **effective visual communication tools**, able to engage people in a conversation, convey main points to large crowds and advertise one's work (research/clinical project). Posters can be less stressful than oral presentations and can be displayed in your department. This leaflet provides a handy top ten tips to developing an effective scientific poster.

Tip 1 - How many sections?

These are the most common sections of a scientific poster: title, introduction, methods and materials, results, conclusions, literature cited and acknowledgments. The next tips guide you through these sections.

Tip 2 - Poster title

Should be brief, interesting, catchy, 1-2 lines, not very long. Develop a short, large, results-oriented title. Avoid clever titles.

Tip 3 - Introduction

Get your viewer interested. Avoid a lengthy literature review! It should be sharp and succinct with a few sentences. Use the most relevant references…. not too many, you should be brief. Introduce your hypotheses, aim(s) or questions at the end of this section.

Tip 4 - Methods and materials

Outline your design, procedures, group/participant characteristics, equipment/material or outcome measures used. Outline any statistical analysis used. Be brief, use bullet points, tables and figures.

Tip 5 - Results

Start with your hypothesis or question (s). Give an overview of the findings, include figures where possible, e.g. '95% of the students completed the survey,' and then add more details, e.g. '75% of them reported that...'. Illustrate findings with detailed and

well-designed graphs, figures. Keep paragraphs brief and short, avoiding too much text. Do not forget to refer to the numbered figure/graph within your text.

Tip 6 - Discussion/conclusions

Remind the reader of your hypothesis/hypotheses or question(s). Address these questions: Why are your findings important? What is the relevance of your findings with previous work? How is it applicable to clinical practice or other areas? What should happen next? Be concise, use bullet points.

Tip 7 - Citations and acknowledgments

Follow the guidelines of the organisers for citing published work. Avoid grey literature. Cite relevant papers and those you have read. In the acknowledgements thank those that helped you and funded your project and mention any conflicts of interest.

Tip 8 – Appearance and text

Poster should be bright, colourful and uncluttered. Use large, easy-to-read font throughout and minimize text. Use appropriate headings to organize your poster and guide viewers. Check grammar and any other errors. Make sure you follow the guidelines of the organisers for size and presentation.

Tip 9 – Presenting your poster

Prepare a summary hand-out to give to those viewing your poster. Know when the poster viewing sessions will be and make sure you are with your poster during your assigned time. Be prepared to speak about your poster and answer any questions.

Tip 10 - Author's information

Make sure you include your contact details on the poster so that other people interested in your work are able to contact you. Include also your name, job title and place of work.

For contact details about your local hub and for further information about **cahpr** please visit our website cahpr.csp.org.uk

Acknowledgments

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