



Southern Arizona Association for
the Education of Young Children

An Affiliate of **naeyc**

Conference Poster Session Tips and Tricks

What is a Research Poster?

Posters are widely used in the academic community, and most conferences include poster presentations in their program. Research posters summarize information or research concisely and attractively to help publicize it and generate discussion.

The poster is usually a mixture of a brief text mixed with tables, graphs, pictures, and other presentation formats. At a conference, the researcher stands by the poster display while other participants can come and view the presentation and interact with the author.

What makes a good poster?

- Important information should be readable from about 10 feet away
- Title is short and draws interest
- Word count of about 300 to 800 words
- Text is clear and to the point
- Use of bullets, numbering, and headlines make it easy to read
- Effective use of graphics, color and fonts
- Consistent and clean layout

Formatting Tips

- Less is more. Be clear and concise with poster design and content. Overcrowding a poster makes it difficult to read.
- Use fonts that are large enough to read at a distance.
- Include the title and name(s) of the presenter(s) in a larger, bolder font than the rest of the poster.
- Provide clear labels or headings for each section of your presentation.
- Remember contrast. Put light-colored fonts on dark backgrounds and dark-colored fonts on light backgrounds so viewers can see your text clearly.
- Imbed high-quality graphics and videos.

- Avoid hyperlinks. Instead, incorporate a QR code into your presentation that will direct attendees to a website that contains more information about your poster and research.
- Sound is not permitted due to the open area in which posters are presented.
- To aid in networking, provide cards with your contact information that viewers can take away with them.

For single-slide e-posters:

- Set the page size to 36.5"W and 20.5"H.
- Use a minimum font size of 32 points.
- Don't overcrowd the slide.
- Single-slide presentation template, blank
- Single-slide presentation template with sample layout
- Single-slide presentation template with sample layout, including formatting tip text

For multiple-slide e-posters:

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- Set the page setup or slide size to "On-screen show (16:9)" or 36.5"W x 20.5"H.
- Use bullet points.
- Use a minimum font size of 14 points if page setup is "On-screen show (16:9)." If slide size is set to 36.5"W x 20.5"H, use a minimum font size of 32 points.
- Use the slideshow mode to automatically change the display during the day, and then switch to the manual mode to move through the slides for your presentation.
- Avoid using too many slides. Past presenters have found that six slides are about right.
- Put a footer on each slide such as "Slide 1 of 6" to let viewers walking by mid-cycle know where they are in the presentation and how long they'll wait until it begins again.
- Multiple-slide presentation template, blank
- Multiple-slide presentation template with sample layout
- Multiple-slide presentation template with sample layout, including formatting tip text

Content Tips

- Coverage: In addition to title/author and abstract, most successful posters provide brief statements of introduction, method, subjects, procedure, results, and conclusions. Ask yourself the following:
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 - Have I provided all the obvious information?
 - Will a casual observer walk away understanding my major findings after a quick perusal of my material?

- Will a more careful reader learn enough to ask informed questions?
- What would I need to know if I were viewing this material for the first time?
- Clarity: People attending a poster session are free to move about from poster to poster and often must view a poster from a distance, making it difficult to read excessive text and small fonts. With this in mind, we recommend you do the following:
 - Use large fonts and limit text to essential information. Place your major points in the poster and have the nonessential, but interesting, sidelights for informal discussion.
 - Keep content simple and communicate clearly.
 - Consider whether the sequence of information is evident. Indicate the ordering of your material with numbers, letters, or arrows when necessary.
 - "A picture's worth a thousand words." Imaginative use of captioned illustrations, photographs, graphs, video (without sound), or other types of visually appealing material are extremely effective at communicating during a poster presentation.
 - Make your final conclusions or summary a concise statement of your most important findings.

Online Resources

- The following sites may provide other useful templates and tips for preparing your e-poster. Be sure to adjust any template by using the formatting tips provided above for the best display on the ASA's monitors.
 - <http://www.siam.org/meetings/guidelines/poster.php>
 - <http://gradschool.unc.edu/student/postertips.html>
 - <http://gradschool.unc.edu/student/postertips.html#powerpoint>
 - <http://viget.com/flourish/14-tips-for-better-presentation-slides>
- Includes acknowledgments, your name and institutional affiliation

A Sample of a Well Designed Poster



Image credit: Poster Session Tips by mousejockey@psu.edu, [via Penn State](#)

Where do I begin?

Answer these three questions:

1. What is the most important/interesting/astounding finding from my research project?
2. How can I visually share my research with conference attendees? Should I use charts, graphs, photos, images?
3. What kind of information can I convey during my talk that will complement my poster?

What software can I use to make a poster?

PowerPoint

A popular, easy-to-use option. It is part of Microsoft Office package and is available on the library computers in rooms LC337 and LC336. ([Advice for creating a poster with PowerPoint](#)).

Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop and InDesign

Feature-rich professional software that is good for posters including lots of high-resolution images, but they are more complex and expensive.

Open Source Alternatives

OpenOffice is the free alternative to MS Office (Impress is its PowerPoint alternative). [Inkscape](#) and [Gimp](#) are alternatives to Adobe products. For charts and diagrams try [Gliffy](#) or [Lovely Charts](#). A complete list of [free graphics software](#).

A Sample of a Poorly Designed Poster

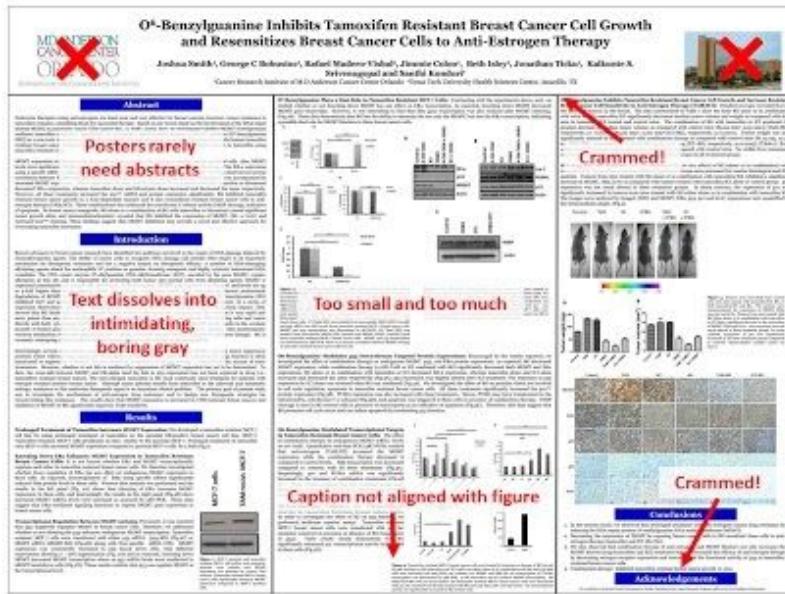


Image Credit: Critique by [Better Posters](#)