

Creating a poster presentation is different from a conventional presentation and power point, as the poster is the focus and the auditory aspect provides description of the poster's details. Think of a poster as a snapshot of your research, where the poster is providing the highlights and vital information to the viewer. A poster should provide enough information for a discussion, and that a scan of the poster allows the reader an understanding your research.

Start With Your Paper or Research

Focus on the key points

- The poster will not have a great deal of text, so choosing what text to provide is key.
- What are the points that are important for a viewer of your poster to know?
- Be sure to focus on the element that are required of you for your assignment.

Use a catchy title

- The title of your essay or paper may not be the best title for your poster.
- Create a title that will draw the audience to your poster.

Who Is Your Audience?

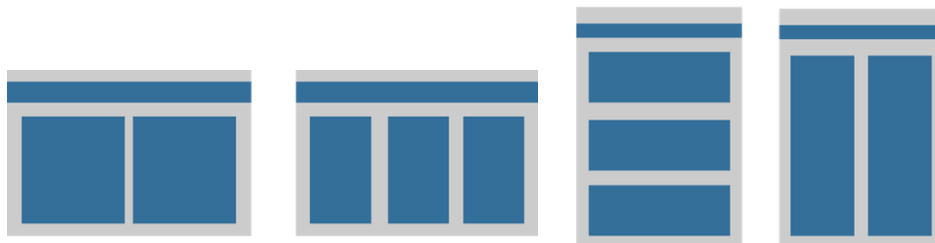
Experts or non-experts?

- Will the audience be experts, researchers, classmates, conference attendees, or general public?
- Knowing who you will be presenting to can help you focus on the poster you create, as well as what you will want to say.
- If it is an expert audience, then you may consider using jargon from your discipline. If not, find another means to describe discipline-specific terms and concepts, such as images or figures.

Think About Design

Visual elements of a poster

- These element are as important as the text. They provide context and support both the text and your verbal description.
- What kind of layout—portrait or landscape—work best for your subject?
- Sketch out your design on a piece of paper as a rough draft. Where will the images and text be placed? Do you want to use columns?



Text—sans serif or serif?

- Generally, a sans serif font works well on a poster, as these are the most readable fonts. This is a sans serif font; notice there are not 'ticks' (called serifs) at the top and bottom of these letters like there are in this serif font.



(Creative Commons)

- Do not use script fonts or other novelty font, as these are difficult to read.



Good Title
Good body text

Bad Title
Bad body text

Good Title
Good body text

Bad Title
Bad body text

Good Title
Good body text

BAD TITLE
BAD BODY TEXT

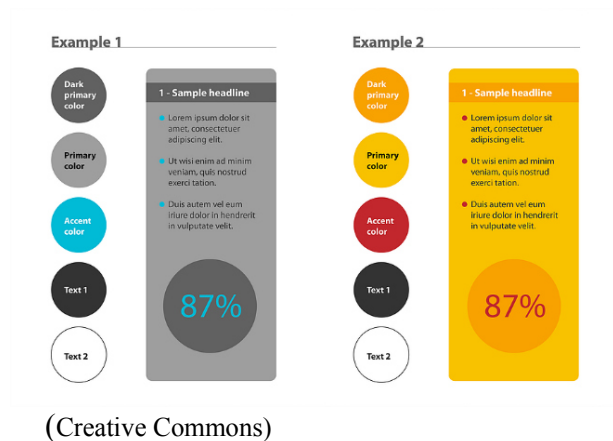
(Creative Commons)

- A single font-type is best. Otherwise, use no more than two different font—for example, one for the title and headings, and another for the body text.
- Avoid using coloured font in the body text; colours fonts can be used in the titles, figures, and heads.
- Use similar font sizes for each element of the poster: title, headings, and body text.



Colour scheme is key

- To make your poster readable, be sure to use complementary colours on your poster.



Organize Your Poster Like a Paper

Think about the flow of your ideas

- Like an academic paper, a poster needs an introduction/abstract, body, conclusion, and bibliography/reference section.
- Aim for a short introduction/abstract and conclusion of 3-5 sentences.
- The body text of the poster should be the focus, and will require more text.

The Gutenberg diagram

- Primary *optical area* where the viewer begins is located in the top-left
- Strong *fallow area* located in the top/right
- Weak *fallow area* located in the bottom/left
- Terminal area* located in the bottom/right (Bradley, 2011)



(Bradley, 2011)

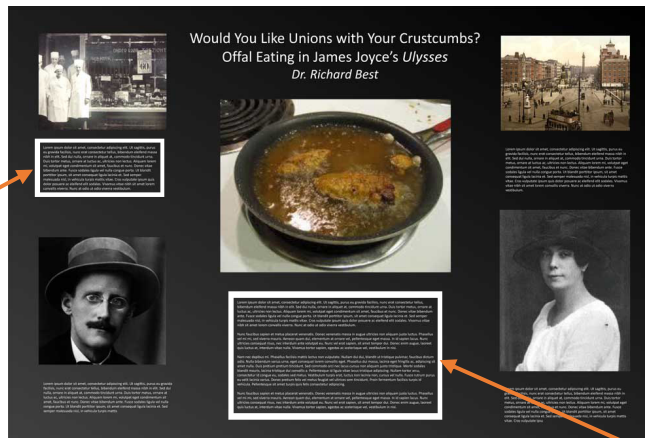
Breathing space

- Leave room around images and text boxes for the eye to rest.



(McDayter, 2013)

- Highlight areas with outlines and coloured text boxes.



(McDayter, 2013)

Use Images and Figures that Enhance your Poster

Use a limited number

- Two to four images or figures will enhance and not overwhelm the text.
- Following the flow of the poster, use images to draw the viewer's eye to different parts of your poster.
- Use images large enough that they will not pixelate when enlarged on your poster.

Images should tell a story

- Use images that are not ‘on the nose’; these will attract an audience. For example, this images could be used to speak to deforestation:



References and resources

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