

# Creating an effective scientific poster presentation: A guide to preparing and presenting your data

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## 1. Poster creation starts with the abstract

### a. My abstract...

- highlights the problem
- states an objective
- mentions my approach
- includes how I analyzed the data
- describes our results in an organized manner
- has a single, cohesive conclusion
- features potential implications
- meets submission requirements
- has the correct list of authors?

## 2. Read (and memorize) the poster guidelines

- I read the guidelines
- I know the correct dimensions
- What other requirements exist?

## 3. Start early and plan your approach

- I have created a rough sketch for my poster
- I have established a timeline

## 4. Focus your layout design

- My content is well-balanced
- My objectives and conclusion are placed on the top left and right, respectively
- My references and acknowledgements are placed in the bottom right
- I have enough white space
- My segments are properly aligned
- I don't have too many small sections
- I have confirmed that printing will not cut off sections from my poster
- I have included a personal professional photo

## 5. Choose an appropriate color theme

- I have used no more than three coordinated colors
- I minimally or have not used intense, bright colors
- I chose a light colored background and dark letters for contrast
- I have avoided using green with red

**6. Create effective titles and sub-titles**

- I made bold, strong statements
- I avoided “Effect of...”
- I was concise as possible
- I minimized extensive use of scientific jargon
- I avoided using acronyms in main title
- I avoided discussing methods in titles (unless this is subject matter)

**7. Incorporate useful graphics**

- My graphics are simple and polished
- My photos have borders that match my color theme
- I generated publication quality graphics to save time in the future
- I used 2-dimensional line graphs, bar charts, and pie charts
- The text on my graphs matches has the same format as my main text
- I avoided within graph backgrounds and gridlines
- I minimized number values within axes
- I avoided cheesy clip art
- I only used 1-sided error bars
- I used tables only when absolutely necessary
- I used flow charts to simplify methods (if needed)

**8. Scrutinize your text font, size, and usage**

- I used a Serif or Sans Serif font (e.g. Arial, Helvetica, Verdana, or Tahoma)
- I used the same font throughout (maintains flow)
- I didn't use UPPERCASE
- I used **bold** or *italics* to sparingly emphasize key points
- I didn't use full justify (leaves gaps), I rather left-aligned my text
- All text can be read 6 feet away
- I didn't use a font less than 18 pt
- I avoided excessive text usage
- I left empty space around my text
- I avoided using drop shadow
- I aligned my text boxes
- I avoided never ending paragraphs and used bulleted statements

**9. Edit, Review, Re-edit, Practice**

- I edited and re-edited my presentation
- My presentation was reviewed by faculty and graduate students
- I practiced my presentation alone and with others
- I am awesome!

**10. The big conference**

- My poster is printed and in a poster tube ready for travel
- I have thumb tacks, copies of my poster, business cards, and breath mints ready