Scientific Posters: Part II Making it Pretty

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Planning

- What are the size specifications of the poster?
  - This varies conference to conference
    - If you are told you have a 4x8 space to put your poster that does not mean you should print your poster out to fill ALL the space.
      - Be sensible.

- What kind of surface will you have to display your poster?

- Where are you getting your poster printed?
  - How much does it cost and how is it being paid?
  - Check ahead and be sure that the printers will be able to meet your schedule.
  - Procrastination = Heavy taxation (you will pay MORE for last minute printing)
How much is too much?

- Less is more.
- Avoid putting your entire manuscript into your poster, it can be overwhelming for your audience. Posters with 1,000 words are ideal. Sometimes it can be hard to know what to include and what not include. If you find run into this problem ask for someone else’s input.

Count words in PowerPoint 2010
Click the File tab, and then in the leftmost pane, click Info. At the bottom of the rightmost pane, click Show All Properties. The Words property counts all the text on slides and notes pages.
Readability is key!

- Keep your blocks of at least 10 sentences...again, less is more.
- AUMAYWYPAWANOIFYFS=Avoid using too many acronyms; you want your poster to be accessible to a wide audience and not only individuals who are familiar with your field of study.
Let’s Get Organized

- A poster is NOT a document. It should not read like a document.
- Break up your content by using lists, text boxes – OR try SmartArt – it is neat
  - Insert SmartArt

content + style = WINNING!

UAB NURSING
The UAB School of Nursing
Size DOES Matter

• Make sure your font and your figures are not too small for your poster
• The text should be readable from 6-10 feet away
• “White space” is important – visually it give your readers a place to rest
• Making your poster visually appealing – you want to attract people to your poster so you can WOW them with your content

An existential question to ponder – If a poster is unseen at a conference has scholarly knowledge been disseminated?
• **Do not** cutesy or extraneous pictures or clip art UNLESS there is a purpose directly related to your content

• When using an image pay attention to the image size (dpi/ppi).

• Images pulled off the web have a very low resolution (72 ppi) and will look fuzzy and unprofessional on your poster – Plus you should not use content unless it is yours or copyright free.
Ask yourself - Is it retina-threatening?

- Pick a color scheme and stick with it - remember READABILITY is the KEY!
- Avoid ugly colors and wild color schemes. Overly bright/harsh colors can drive your audience away.
- When using patterns, textures, images, backgrounds, etc. make sure that they do not overpower your content.
When in Doubt - Google It Out

Google has such a head for knowing – it knows everything
Compare and Contrast

• Look at other poster to see what works and what does not work

• Keep your perspective!
  – This is a poster – not your magnum opus

• Yours does not have the be the BEST looking poster at the conference
  – Aim for the middle in design and the top in content
Adding in simple elements

Use of Joint Commission International Standards to Evaluate and Improve Pediatric Oncology Nursing in Guatemala

Sara Day, PhD, RN, Leslie McKeon, PhD, RN, Jose Garcia, RN, Judith Williams, MD, Rita Carty, PhD, RN, Pedro de Alarcon, MD, Federico Antillon, P M, Scott Howard, MD, MS

Background
Survival Gap in Childhood Cancer
- 100,000 deaths per year worldwide
- 80% live in low-income countries

Nurses
- Largest group of healthcare providers globally
- Essential to closing the survival gap

Meeting the Need
- The International Outreach Nursing Program was developed to provide the lack of quality in nursing care to pediatric oncology centers in developing countries.

Guatemala Partner Site
- Jose Garcia, RN, Nurse Educator, coordinated implementation of the International Outreach Nursing Program in Guatemala

Methods
- Quality Assessment using JCI Standards
- Direct observation of care
- Review of medical records, HR document, policies
- Nursing rounds
- Interviews with nursing, medical administrative staff

Instrument Validity
- Gold standard for international evaluation
- Validated through quality and safety workshops
- Developed by international task force

Results
Joint Commission International (JCI) Standards 2006 & 2009 Findings
- Met × Partially Met × Not Met

Conclusion
The Nursing Program improved quality of nursing care as evidenced by significant increase in number of standards met post program implementation.

Contributing factors
- Assessment provided objective and credible findings and an organized framework for change
- Focused approach to implementing change was critical when working in countries with overwhelming needs
- Medical, administrative, and nursing staff worked together to improve nursing care.
Using a reference to dictate color elements – e.g. This chart comes from the CDC and these were the colors they used.

Bright, yes – but in lieu of recreating the CDC charts it made sense to continue the color theme.

Do yourself a favor and do not make it harder than it has to be. Be sensible.
SmartArt – Use it.

SmartArt is a neat little tool that PowerPoint provides to visually enhance your presentation.

Insert → SmartArt

It makes lists look pretty, helps illustrate relationships, processes, etc.

Don’t go crazy and use it wildly. Use it if it can simplify the presentation of your content.
Using multiple visually elements WISELY can really amp up the attractiveness of your poster so that people will be drawn to it.

Staying on the message of your content- take some time to think creatively about how it could be graphically represented. A mix of traditional (graphs, charts, etc.) and iconic representations is nice.
The BIG Picture

- Think about your venue/audience- what is appropriate for one group of people is not always kosher for another group
- Your CONTENT is KING
- Always- **ALWAYS** have several people review your poster- for readability, typos, and overall look
Work Smart – Think Smart

• Be MINDFUL about your time – don’t sweat the small stuff on a poster
  • At the MINIMUM make it neat, with no typos
• Adopt the mindset of Poster → Manuscript → Publication
• YOU are the expert!
• I already mentioned it, but it is such a good resource - Google it. Or I can Google it for you. Click me.

• Ask help from your colleagues

• Look at other people’s posters