Tips & Tricks for Poster Design & Presentation

A poster is a **networking** and **communication** tool – a **visual abstract**

Goal of poster presentation: To stimulate interest & discussion; to receive feedback on research, quality or PI projects; to generate contacts

1. *Allow yourself lots of time*
   - Start early and allow time for mistakes
   - Decide how much time you can spend on the creation and design of your poster and do your best to stick to your timeframe
   - Remember to allow time and money for printing
2. *Begin with the end in mind*
   - Poster is not a mini-dissertation
   - Goal is to engage colleagues in dialogue about your work
   - Are you looking for feedback, a new research question, a collaborator for current or future work
3. *Know your audience*
   - What is their level of understanding?
   - Think about what would interest them as you plan the design of the poster
4. *What do you want to communicate*
   - What are three take-away messages about your work
   - Why is your work important
   - What do you want the audience to remember about your work and your poster
5. *Poster design & layout*
   - There are templates available for poster creation; check with your librarians and hospital Nursing Research & EBP Committee
   - Typically 3 columns
   - Arrange materials vertically from top left corner to bottom right corner; this design makes it easier for people to read
   - **Poster title:**
     - Make it interesting
     - You want to reel people in from a distance
     - Title should be easy to read from 15 feet away
   - Use headings that flow from your abstract submission
6. *Poster text*
   - Remove all non-essential information
   - Attract visual attention; use graphics and try for
     - 20% text (less is more; try to avoid too much text)
     - 40% graphics
     - 40% white space
   - Left align text
   - Double space
   - Pick one font and stick to it
   - Avoid italics
   - Use larger/colored font for emphasis
   - Use bullets to convey ideas; easier to read then paragraphs
7. *Color & graphics*
   - Be consistent
   - Use white as your background
   - Use color to highlight headings
   - Stick to muted colors/don't overuse color
   - Choose a graphic or visual to display results:
     - Table, chart, photo, where is the best place for the visual
   - Make large enough for viewing from at least 3 feet away
   - Text should support graphics

- Use heavier lines in tables & graphs to make viewing easier
8. ***Authors or researchers***
    - Include last name and first name of all researchers
    - Include academic affiliation
    - Include name of advisor, mentors, supporters of the work in an acknowledgement
9. ***Poster editing***
    - Proofread
    - Spell check
    - Get feedback before printing
    - Get feedback in time to make changes
10. ***Getting your poster ready for display***
    - Know the specifics at the display location
        - Will there be a board for you to affix your poster or an easel for display
        - Will pins, clips, display boards be provided or are you expected to bring those materials
        - What size poster will the location support
            - ✓ 36x48 most common size
            - ✓ 42x60 is a size recommended by several organizations
            - ✓ Fabric posters are becoming popular
        - Include your contact information on the poster on bring Business Cards
        - Consider bringing copies of your poster if copy not provided to attendees
11. ***Poster sessions***
    - Very popular
    - On average individuals spend 11 minutes/poster
    - Be prepared to engage with audience in a meaningful way
    - You are the expert
    - Be yourself
    - Be a weatherman
    - Practice what you will share with your audience
12. ***Look/Hook/Teach/Reach: Keep these words in mind when standing at your poster***

LOOK	HOOK
- Viewers stand back, they are not quite ready to engage with the presenter - They ask themselves: - Does the title of the poster seem interesting - Is it a topic I am interested in - Do I want to learn more about this topic - Give viewers space, smile and watch them	- If the viewer seems interested try to reel them in - Have a good opening that explains the main focus of your poster - Give them a few tidbits -what you did - Ask- would you like to learn more about the work
TEACH	**REACH**
- Give a short synopsis of your work in 3 minutes (elevator speech): - What are the three take-away messages about your work - What do you want the audience to remember about your work and your poster - Consider the following: - Objective - Key methods/elements - Key results/findings - Conclusions and their importance - Stories that can help convey key points - Don't assume that people are experts in your field - Make eye contact, speak slowly and clearly, avoid jargon and don't overload on detail	- Engage audience in conversation - Anticipate questions and rehearse answers - Respond to questions - Be sure to listen to the question, rephrase if necessary, answer the question then ask if you have answered it