

Making Posters Stand Out... in a Good Way

The Do's and Do Not's of Poster Design

Caleb W. Lack, M.S.
Department of Psychology
Oklahoma State University



A Poster's Purpose

- To visually convey the results of a study in an easily accessible format, in a short amount of time
- As with all design, poster design should follow the KISS rule
- Keep It Simple, Stupid!

Colors

- Colors can be very useful....and very dangerous
- Choose your colors carefully...don't just put them together because they are "pretty"

**Good use of
contrasting
colors
Easy to read**

**Bad use of
colors
Hard to read**

More Color Suggestions

- Dark text with light backgrounds = best
 - Good for majority of text
- Light text with dark backgrounds = tiring to read for extended periods
 - Good for headings, titles
- Do not use bright, neon colors; they distract and make it difficult to read text
- Stick with a 2 or 3 color plan

Layout & Flow

- People read from left to right and from up to down
- Columns are a poster's best friends
- Graphics (graphs, flowcharts, etc.) should be kept simple and placed for maximum impact

Text and Readability

- All text should be readable from 4-6 feet (1-2 meters) away
- Use an easy-to-read font such as...
 - Times New Roman
 - Tahoma
 - Arial

Building a Poster

- DO NOT just print your poster on pieces of paper and then pin it up
 - Regardless of the actual quality of your information, this is a sure way to get passed by
- DO use a program such as PowerPoint, Adobe PageMaker, or Adobe Photoshop to build your poster
 - Makes it look more professional and allows for easy of transportation