

## PRESENTATION TIPS

### Preparing Effective Presentations

**Clear Purpose** - An effective slide should have a main point and not be just a collection of available data. If the central theme of the slide isn't identified readily, improve the presentation by revising or deleting the slide.

**Readily Understood** - The main point should catch the attention of the audience immediately. When trying to figure out the slide, audience members aren't fully paying attention to the speaker - try to minimize this.

**Simple Format** - With a simple, uncluttered format, the slide is easy to design and directs audience attention to the main point.

**Free of Nonessential Information** - If information doesn't directly support the main point of the slide, reserve this content for questions.

**Digestible** - Excess information can confuse the audience. With an average of seven slides in a 10-minute presentation, roughly one minute is available per slide. Restrict information to what is immediately explicable to the uninitiated in the allowed length of time - reading prepared text quickly is a poor substitute for editing.

**Unified** - A slide is most effective when information is organized around a single central theme and tells a unified story.

**Graphic Format** - In graphs, qualitative relationships are emphasized at the expense of precise numerical values, while in tables, the reverse is true. If a qualitative statement, such as "Flow rate increased markedly immediately after stimulation," is the main point of the slide, the purpose is better served with a graphic format. A good place for detailed, tabular data is in a slide or two held in reserve in case of questions.

**Designed for the Current Oral Presentation** - Avoid complex data tables irrelevant to the current presentation. The audience cares about evidence and conclusions directly related to the subject of the presentation - not how much work was done.

**Experimental** - There is no time in a 15-minute presentation to teach standard technology. Unless the presentation directly examines this technology, only mention what is necessary to develop the theme.

**Visual Contrast** - Contrasts in brightness and tone between illustrations and backgrounds improves legibility. The best color combinations include white letters on medium blue, or black on yellow. Never use black letters on a dark background. Many people are red/green color blind - avoid using red and green next to each other.

**Integrated with Verbal Text** - Slides should support the verbal text and not merely display numbers. Conversely, verbal text should lay a proper foundation for each slide. As each slide is shown, give the audience a brief opportunity to become oriented before proceeding. If you will refer to the same slide several times during your presentation, duplicate the slides.

**Clear Train of Thought** - Ideas developed in the presentation and supported by the slides should flow smoothly in a logical sequence, without wandering to irrelevant asides or bogging down in detail. Everything presented verbally or visually should have a clear role supporting the presentation's central thesis.

**Rights to Use Material** - Before using any text, image, or other material, make sure that you have the rights to use it. Complex laws and social rules govern how much of someone's work you can reproduce in a presentation. Ignorance is no defense. Check that you are not infringing on copyright or other laws or on the customs of academic discourse when using material.

## **Computer Projection Presentation Tips**

Review the following tips for creating an effective computer projection presentation:

### **Preparing Powerpoint Presentations:**

Use the following tips when creating your Powerpoint presentation:

When creating your presentation, use Helvetica and New Times Roman fonts. An unusual font may not translate to the computer used for presenting.

For tables, note that PowerPoint's default settings allow only nine rows and columns, set at 32-point type. Avoid overriding these defaults by adding rows or columns and decreasing font size.

In "Page Setup," size slides for "On-Screen Show" or "35 mm Slides." Select horizontal (landscape) layout.

Use standard fonts, such as Times, Helvetica, or Arial and Symbol. Space is lost and the amount of information per slide is reduced by repeating graphics (including logos), busy backgrounds, and decorative typefaces.

Enhance the legibility of text and diagrams by maintaining color and intensity contrast. Use white or light yellow text and lines on black or dark blue backgrounds, and use darker colors on white or clear backgrounds. LCD projectors used in session rooms have a limited range of colors - avoid red or dark green on blue, and avoid yellow on white.

Test your completed presentation on a separate PC-compatible computer to ensure that fonts are standard and components such as movies have been *included* rather than merely *linked*.

### **Technical Tips and Resources**

Each session rooms contain the following:

- One LCD projector
- One PC computer with a Windows-readable USB flash drive and CD-ROM drive.  
*Note: Macs can write a PC-formatted readable USB flash drive disk or CD-ROM*
- Software: PowerPoint 2007 and Adobe Acrobat
- One screen and one projectionist/operator

To avoid setup delays, authors giving computer projection presentations should load media on a Windows-readable USB flash drive or a CD-ROM. Authors can use their own laptops, but should recognize that the additional setup cuts into presentation time.

### **Preparing Effective Posters**

An effective poster is self-contained and self-explanatory. Viewers can proceed on their own while leaving the author free to discuss points raised in inquiry.

The poster session offers a more intimate forum for discussion than the slide presentation, but discussion becomes difficult if the author must explain the poster to a succession of viewers. Unlike slide presentations, time spent at a poster presentation is determined by the viewer, not the author.

An effective poster balances figures and texts and is **not** a page-by-page printout of a journal paper or a slide show.

### **Before the Meeting**

Review and make the following poster preparations before the meeting:

- **Planning and Layout - Poster boards are 95 cm wide and 1m 65cm high.** Consider organizing illustrations and text using a grid plan. Arrange materials in columns rather than rows - this format is easier for viewers to read. Place the most significant findings at eye level immediately below the title bar; place supporting data and/or text in the lower panels.

For conventional multi-panel posters, form three columns using poster elements printed on 11"-wide paper (or 29 to 30-cm wide A4 or B5 paper) with suitable spacing or borders. Mount materials on colored poster board. You may want to group logically consistent sections or columns of the poster on backgrounds of the same color. Use muted background colors - shades of gray are also effective.

The increasing availability of 36" (91 cm) - and 54" (137 cm) -wide inkjet printers and page-layout software permits economical production of effective and attractive posters on a single sheet that is easily transported to the meeting either in a poster tube or carefully folded (accordion-style in the long dimension, then once in the short dimension) to fit in a carry-on suitcase. Use line borders to separate areas. Avoid reflective, plastic-coated paper.

- **Title** - Prepare a banner for the top of the poster indicating the abstract title, author(s), affiliation(s), and the session number. Use lettering at least one-inch high.
- **Illustrations** - Design figures for viewing from a distance and use clear, visible graphics and large type. Colors are effective if used sparingly; use dark colors on white or pale backgrounds and light colors on dark backgrounds. Figures should illustrate no more than one or two major points. However, simple figures are unnecessary. Make clear main points, but include detail for the aficionado. Indicate illustration sequences with numbers or letters at least one inch high. (Omit "Fig." or "Figure" - this is unnecessary and occupies excess space).
- **Text** - Each figure or table should have a heading of one or two lines in very large type stating the "take-home" message. Provide additional essential information below in a legend set in 16 point or larger type.

Minimize narrative. Integrate text that would normally appear in the body (Results and Discussion) of a manuscript in figure legends. Concisely describe not only the content of the figure, but also the derived conclusions. Place brief details of methodology at the end of each legend.

Use large type in short, separated paragraphs with unjustified (ragged right) margins. Numbered or bulleted lists are effective ways to convey a series of points. Do not set entire paragraphs in uppercase (all capitals) or boldface type.

Place an introduction at the upper left and a conclusion at the lower right, both in large type. It is rarely necessary to post a copy of the abstract.

### At the Meeting

Tips and instructions for presenting your poster at the meeting:

- Fifteen minutes before your session, Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup> post materials on the board and leave them in place for the full conference. Materials for mounting your poster will be provided.
- Do not write or paint on the poster boards. *Note: Projection equipment is **not** provided in the poster session area.*
- Presenting authors are required at the board during the assigned session - authors can also elect to stay longer. Presenters should post a message on their board if they are absent for an extended period of time during assigned sessions.
- Remove posters by 6pm Thursday, June 17 or they will be discarded.