

Creating your Poster

Title: A poster is more of an advertisement for your work than a definitive account. There are some things you can't get away with when you're writing a paper, but you can be on the cheeky side of accurate in posters to capture the attention of a busy passerby.

Bad: "Mural architecture of planula larvae of a cniderian suggestive of the central nervous system"

Good: "The first brain"

Text: While justifying text on both the right and left (i.e., full justification) makes for very neat-looking columns, designers are beginning to move away from the practice. It can cause distracting vertical "rivers" of spaces down the page. Left justifying text makes for an easier read.

Shorten your text lines. Long lines of text are more difficult to read, which is why magazines and newspapers always break up their text into narrower columns. If your poster has a landscape orientation, consider breaking your text into three to four columns.'

Data: Always title your graphs. Titles are the best way to quickly tell readers what they are supposed to take away from your data. Be sure all axes have labels.

Make your findings obvious. Highlight the peak, trough, or other comparison of interest with an arrow containing the value of that data point. It's better than making a reader work out the value from the axes.

Other Things to Consider:

Check your message. Once you've made your poster look its best, read it one more time to make sure it presents the point of your research in the most convincing light.

Check your color. Make sure the colors you've chosen are readable in low light. It's hard to predict where your poster will be placed, so make sure your choices work in different settings.

(Source: <http://www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/31071/title/Poster-Perfect/>)