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Interactive Session: Preparing Winning Poster and Oral Presentations

Pre-Symposium Workshop
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Plans for This Morning

- Welcome
- Responses to questions on presentations in general and on poster presentations
- Group work: preparing and using checklists for poster presentations
- Tea
- Responses to questions on oral presentations
- Group work: preparing and using checklists for oral presentations
- Wrap-up

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Welcome

22/10/2016   3

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Responses: Questions Participants Asked in the Assignment

- General questions
- Questions on poster presentations

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General Questions

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## Can you include data that weren't in the abstract submitted earlier?

- Yes, generally acceptable to update your findings

22/10/2016   6

Is there any information that is not disclosable in a presentation?

- Patient information (unless permission obtained)
- Proprietary information
- Other?

Should a reference list be included?

- Generally optional for presentations
- Often just a list of key references

Is it OK to use a diagram obtained online?

- Generally OK
- Be sure to cite source (below or next to diagram)

What types of maps can be used?

Some characteristics of suitable maps:
- Not too cluttered
- With large enough lettering
- With source cited (if not original work)

What colors should be used?

Items to consider:
- Providing enough contrast between content and background
- Avoiding combinations of colors that some people have trouble distinguishing (red, green)
- Perhaps using colors representative of the content
- Avoiding use of too many colors (distracting)

What typefaces (fonts) should be used?

- For slides:
  - For text, sans serif (for example, Arial or Calibri)
  - For headings, perhaps serif (for example, Georgia, Palatino, or Times New Roman)
- For posters—Colin Purrington's advice:
  - Sans serif for headings
  - Serif for body type

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How can one reach more than one target group simultaneously?

- Perhaps "layer" information—general information first in each section, then technical details

22/10/2016   13

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How can one measure impact?

- Good question . . .

22/10/2016   14

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Is there an online service where one can submit a poster or PowerPoint and get feedback?

- Not aware of any such service
- Consider, though, getting an AuthorAID mentor (see www.authoraid.info)

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What criteria are there for best presentation?

In general:
- High-quality research
- Skillful design of poster or slides
- Skillful presentation

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Questions: Poster Presentations

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Are images a must?

- At least highly desirable
- Some possibilities if the research topic isn't very visual
  - Institutional logos
  - Photos of the researcher or research team
  - Photos of the research setting
  - Images symbolic of the topic
  - Other

22/10/2016   18

Should one present background rather than objectives?

- Generally should include the objectives, hypotheses, or research questions (at least implicitly)
- Background can also be useful

Should one include acknowledgments?

- Optional, but brief acknowledgments may be nice
- (In oral presentations, showing a photo of the research team can work well)

If logos must be included, where should they be put?

- Generally suitable to place them close to the top (near the author names and affiliations)
- Another option: near contact information at the end of the poster

Should sections be numbered?

- Generally not necessary
- However, do so if the order might not be clear

What's the ideal size of a poster?

- Usually must follow the instructions regarding size
- Otherwise, what might be some considerations?

What font size should be used in e-posters?

- Of course, check the instructions
- If the poster will be the same size as a conventional poster, the guidelines probably remain the same.
- Other?

Slide 25

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If a poster has little text and IMRAD structure, won't it be little more than an abstract?

- Yes, a good poster is basically an extended, illustrated abstract.
- See AuthorAID blog post on this topic.

22/10/2016   25

Slide 26

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Group Work: Preparing and Using Checklists for Poster Presentations

Using the presentation that was emailed and your own experience and observations, prepare a checklist for evaluating poster presentations. If time permits, use the checklist to start evaluating posters by group members. Be ready to report some points from your group.

22/10/2016   26

Slide 27

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Tea

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Slide 28

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Questions: Oral Presentations

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Slide 29

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Do you agree that slides should be attractive and error-free?

- Yes!

22/10/2016   29

Slide 30

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Why should slides generally not include published graphs and tables?

- Published graphs and tables often include details that are too small to see in slides.

22/10/2016   30

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Is it sometimes OK to show more than one slide per minute?

- Yes, it can be fine in some circumstances.
- "An average of one slide per minute" is just a general guideline.

22/10/2016   31

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Can animations and videos be used?

- Yes, if appropriate
- Should be used only to support what is being said
- Should not distract from what is being said

22/10/2016   32

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How long should animations be?

- Generally should be short
- Should be only long enough to make their point
- Like other visuals, should support—not distract from—what is being said

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How informative should handouts be?

- Depends in part on the handout's purpose— for example:
  – Serve as an outline
  – Provide freestanding information
- A related issue: when to provide the handouts—again, depends in part on the purpose—for example:
  – Outline-type handouts: distribute beforehand
  – Supplementary reading: distribute afterward

22/10/2016   34

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How should one use the notes setting in PowerPoint?

- (Search for guidance using the information feature in PowerPoint)
- (Perhaps obtain guidance during or after today's workshop_

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How can one get rid of nervousness?

- (See slides on coping with stage fright)
- Other suggestions?

22/10/2016   36

How can one handle stress during a presentation?

- (Often, stress decreases shortly after a presentation begins)
- Perhaps find friendly, expressive faces in the audience
- Other?

Do you agree that it's very important to keep to the time?

- Yes!

Do you agree that modulating one's voice is important?

- Yes!

How can one avoid problems regarding, for example, use of later versions of PowerPoint?

- If feasible, use one's own computer.
- If there's a speaker ready room, practice there.
- Arrive early and try out the technology.
- Try to have someone available who can help if necessary.

What can you do if there are technical failures?

- Have a backup plan available. (For example, have a printout of your presentation along.)
- Stay calm.
- Be flexible.
- Know that audience members will be sympathetic.


Any advice on answering questions during and after presentations?

- When presenting research, keep most or all questions until the end.
- See advice on previously distributed PowerPoint.
- Other?

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Is it better to read the slide content or present it in one's own words?

- Generally it's better to use one's own words.
- If, however, there's a language barrier, reading the slide content might be advisable.

22/10/2016   43

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Group Work: Preparing and Using Checklists for Oral Presentations

Using the presentation that was emailed and your own experience and observations, prepare a checklist for evaluating oral presentations. If time permits, use the checklist to start evaluating oral presentations by group members. Be ready to report some points from your group.

22/10/2016   44

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Wrap-Up

22/10/2016   45

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Thank You!

22/10/2016   46

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22/10/2016   47