SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Do's and Don'ts for Presenting a Poster

A SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT ELEMENTS FOR MAKING A GREAT POSTER.

What to Do

Posters will be underlined according to the list in the program which will be posted on the SCAS meeting website. All posters should be well attached to the board and easel no later than 5:00 pm.

Posters can be no larger than 36" x 48" and will be displayed on easels. One easel and one 36" x 48" poster board backing will be provided for each poster, and clips to attach posters to the boards will be available.

If you do not have a printed poster that can easily be mounted on a poster board and easel, you are strongly urged to make and bring your poster on one large board (no larger than 36" x 48") that can be placed on an easel for display.

Organize your poster in columns starting with the introduction should be placed at the upper left, and the conclusion at the lower right. Use a matte finish which is more easily viewed than a glossy surface.

- All graphs, legends, introductory and concluding material, must be viewable from a distance of 3 feet or more. Title lettering should be at least 72 point.
- Text size should be 30 point or larger and lines of text should be limited in length to 35 mm (12").
- Illustration numbers should be 50 point.
- The smallest lettering should be no less than 20 point.
- Figures, tables and a summary should cover about 50% of the poster area.

Each figure or table should have a heading of one or two lines in large type (30 point) that provides a brief descriptive message or conclusion. Provide detailed information in a legend in smaller type (20 point) below the figure. Legends should contain commentary that would ordinarily appear in the body of a manuscript.

Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

AVOID excessive text. Some of your points, such as Methods and Conclusions, may be best conveyed with text rather than photos or graphs, but keep it short and concise. Bullet points are best. Your audience should be able to read the text without your help.

AVOID cluttered tables that are unreadable. If your audience can't read the table, it is not a visual aid. Consider putting the same information into a simple graph.

AVOID using too many colors that distract the audience from your message. If you must have more than one color, make them distinct and clearly readable on the background of your poster.

AVOID minor points that complicate your message. Your poster should be self-explanatory so that you are free to answer questions.

PREPARE A DRAFT of your poster ahead of time to obtain input from colleagues before the meeting to help make a well-organized, informative, and effective poster.

For More Tips on Presentations, Posters, and Preparation

Download the "Scientifically Speaking" guidebook posted the Academy's website: http://scas.nhm.org/annual-meeting/Documents/Scientific_Speaking_Poster_Guide.pdf