

HOW TO DO A POSTER

1. **Choose a topic**
2. **Decide on a format. For example:**
 - clinical trial
 - basic science research
 - case report
 - educational intervention
3. **Decide on an appropriate audience and conference**
4. **Do a literature search**
 - Build your foundation of knowledge on the subject
 - Discover what research has been done and how it has been done
 - Determine how your study will benefit the field
5. **Justify your topic but answering the following questions:**
 - Is the topic novel?
 - How does your topic add to the current field of knowledge?
 - Will there be interest in the topic?
 - What is the current opinion on your topic?
6. **Resource planning**
 - How much time will be necessary to complete the project?
 - What funding is available to help accomplish your research and poster?
 - What resources are available for printing your poster?
7. **Write an abstract**
 - Read the abstract submission details provided by your conference.
 - Look up abstracts from previous years for appropriate examples.
 - Most follow the Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion format
8. **Poster planning**
 - Decide how you are going to present your information
 - Effective posters use more illustrations than words
 - Review instructions provided by the meeting organizers
 - Ask mentors or professionals in the medical illustrations dept for guidance
9. **Write your text**
 - **Introduction:** Brief overview of your objectives, hypothesis, and findings
 - **Methods:** Illustrate your study design and process
 - **Results:** Use illustrations and brief statements to present your findings
 - **Discussion or List of Conclusions**

10. Create your poster with the following in mind:

- What have you liked or dislike about other posters?
- Have you included informative headings that make the poster easy to read?
- Is the flow of information logical (L to R, top to bottom)?
- Is the poster made busy by unnecessary data or information?
- Is the poster self-explanatory?
- Have you used a font size and type that is easy to read from 6 ft. away?
- Glare from a laminated or glossy poster may make it difficult to read.

Helpful Resources:

1. Coffin C. Planning and preparing an effective scientific poster. In: Writing, speaking & communication skills for health professionals. Yale University Press, 2001.
2. Day RA. How to prepare a poster. In: How to write and publish a scientific paper. Oryx Press, 1994.
3. Briscoe MH. Posters. In: Preparing scientific illustrations: A guide to better posters. Springer-Verlag, 1996.
4. Huth EJ. The first draft: Titles and abstracts. In: Writing and publishing in medicine. Williams & Wilkins, 1999.
5. Krueger MV. Building a winning poster. Presented at the USAFP Scientific Assembly, Orlando, FL, 2002.