

Five Characteristics of a Good Poster

1. Make the Poster Easy to Understand

A poster's job is to share information with many people quickly. For it to work well, it must be easy to understand. People will only pay attention if they can quickly get the main idea. So, the content should be clear and to the point.

2. Attractive Layout and Typography

A good poster should catch people's attention, and be readable from a short distance. Use a neat layout that doesn't look too busy. The FONT and size of the text matters too. Big fonts highlight important points. Choose colors that work well together and don't clash. Include images that fit nicely with the text and don't overcrowd the design. Keep the content short and to the point.

3. Well-Organized and Neat

A great poster is more than just a few pictures. It should look neat and organized, with clear and concise text. Use easy-to-read fonts and keep the language simple. The colours should be attractive but not overwhelming. Select a colour-scheme, and don't use too many different colours.

4. Clear and Simple Message

Make sure your poster's message is clear and easy to understand. Keep the headline short, with no more than eight words, and focus on the main points. Use simple visuals and avoid clutter. You can include creative design elements such as "open-and-reveal flaps", "fold-downs", pockets containing objects or information, and information cards on strings.

5. Balanced Text and Graphics

A good poster needs a balance of TEXT and IMAGES. Use text to share the key messages and information. Add graphics like images or pictures to draw attention. Make sure the graphics support the text and fit the overall design theme.

What to Avoid

To make a good poster, keep the layout simple and organized. Avoid complex designs that can confuse people. Don't use too many words or graphics; find a good balance. Avoid using clichéd visuals like stock photos or low-quality images. Instead, focus on an appealing layout, clear message, and balanced text and graphics. Following these tips will help your poster stand out.

Judging Criteria

Posters will be judged on three main points:

1. Creative in Approach: The poster is eye-catching, engaging and interesting.
2. Content: Clear and accurate information about the topic.
3. Effective Communication: The information is communicated in an interesting and engaging way.

POSTER CHECKLIST

Once you've developed the first draft of your poster, consider these questions:

1. Your Message

- ☐ Does your poster reflect the KEY POINTS that you want to convey to your audience?
- ☐ Is your message reflected in your poster title and is it in a large, easy to read font?
- ☐ Is your title declarative, active and/or engaging?

2. Graphics

- ☐ Do your images, photos or other graphic elements only include the data or images that truly support or enhance your message?
- ☐ Are the graphics straightforward and easy to understand?
- ☐ Are the graphics and pictures properly labeled and/or credited?
- ☐ Have you included the logos of your department or university?

3. Readability

- ☐ Does the poster have good contrast between background and text?
- ☐ Is the title large enough (at least 72 pt)?
- ☐ Are the headlines at least 48 pt?
- ☐ Is the text at least 24 pt?
- ☐ Is the text bulleted and short, rather than in long sentences?

4. Alignment

- ☐ Are the columns of the same or complementary widths (that is, do they follow an invisible grid that helps to organize the information)?
- ☐ Are the columns lined up along the top?
- ☐ Are the text boxes, charts, graphs, photos, etc. aligned according to the invisible grid?

Remember, a nice looking poster is a great first step. But, if your message isn't coming across loud and clear, you risk missing the opportunity to connect with your audience in a meaningful way.