

Guidelines for Display Material

Definitions

Poster: Designed to emphasise one key idea and clearly demonstrate it; visual presentation, little detail.

Reference Chart: Designed for work areas to provide an easy reference guide; detailed/specific information or procedures.

Research Summary: One page outlining research; background, materials, methods, results, conclusions and recommendations.

Style

- The main aim of display material is simplicity.
- Use visual aids rather than text to convey ideas.
- Use graphs charts and/or tables to show results.
- Keep visual materials simple and clear to allow readability from a distance.
- Ensure information is set out in an easy to follow sequence.

Content

- DO NOT use a technical paper for content in display material.
- Rely sparingly on printed text; graphs, charts, tables and pictures should be used to communicate information where possible.
- Focus selectively on major findings.
- Conclude with a concise statement of central findings.
- Consider providing a handout sheet for additional take home information.
- Headings should be short, catchy, one line and as few words as possible.
- Text should be clear, short, and written for a varied audience.
- Use the KISS principle, 'Keep It Simple Stupid'.
- Dates, figures and statistics will age display material quickly.
- Ensure contact details are included.

Colour

- Simple use of colour adds effective emphasis; a large or bright spot will draw the eye to important information.
- Restrict colours to two or three.
- Choose a muted background colour as bold or bright colours make text harder to read.
- Be aware of colour combinations that clash.

Text

- 18 point font size minimum for body text.
- The bigger the better sized font for titles.
- Use no more than two different fonts.
- Avoid italics and elaborate script fonts.
- Use bold or a larger size of lettering to achieve emphasis.
- Print large blocks of text in black only; colours may be used for titles and headings, but choose ones that are easy to read.
- Capitals and lower-case letters in combination are much easier to read than all capitals.
- Use bullet points
- Use a sans serif font, for example Helvetica or Arial, as these are easier for the audience to read. Do not use Serif fonts (with flourishes), such as Times New Roman.

Spacing

- Recommended usage of space: 20% text, 40% graphics and 40% white space.
- Use white space to break up text for a visually appealing format; use blank space to divide elements of the display.

Images, diagrams and tables

- Wherever possible, use visual aids rather than text to communicate ideas: photographs, drawings, tables, charts, and graphs.
- Well chosen images, diagrams and tables can attract attention, provide impact and effectively deliver the message.
- Images should be clear and sharp. Place them high on the display board for maximum impact.
- Enlarge all photos enough for pertinent details to be clearly evident.
- Make all illustrations simple and bold.
- Diagrams and tables should be of a size that can be read three feet away.
- Convert tabular material to a graphic display if possible. Try scatter plots, bar graphs, or triangular diagrams.

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