Creating Effective Poster Presentations

Functions of Poster Presentations:

1. Provide information at a quick glance
2. Provide points for conversations
3. Provide advertisement of your work, your company, or your school
4. Provides a well-organized summary of your work

Steps to creating an effective poster board presentation:

1. Carefully read the guidelines. Pay close attention to time, date, and location. Also, determine the space that is provided for your poster board. Determine if it will be mounted for display or if it will sit on a table. Look for any restrictions. Should you provide handouts?
2. Identify the resources available to you.
3. Pick your illustrations first.
4. Determine your layout.
5. Write your texts.

The major components of a poster presentation:

1. Title: The title should be central to the piece and easily identified. The title should be at least 70 point font and in all capital letters.
2. Text: The text serves to introduce, explain, inform, and summarize the purpose of the presentation, the visuals, and contact information.
   a) Type should be legible from 3-6 feet away
   b) Use Block or Roman style font and a minimum of 18 font
   c) Limit bold or italics, reserving bold for headings
   d) Use Headings that are arranged in a larger font and bold typography
   e) Write simple sentences. You can certainly use sentence fragments as long as those fragments make sense
3. Visuals: The visuals are crucial to your presentation. Choose the visuals first and build your text around the illustrations.
   a) Graphs, tables, and charts must be able to stand alone
   b) Integrate text with visuals
   c) Choose the visuals with a rhetorical purpose and not to decorate the board (Remember visuals affect your audience on an emotional level, so you want to pick those images to incite the correct emotions.)
4. Design: Design addresses the layout, organization, schemes, and transition.
   a) Layout refers to positioning of your visuals and text. Where you place the title and how you use headings and subheadings. Are you using two, three, or four fold?
   b) Organization speaks to the movement in which your reader will follow the movement of your presentation.
1. Typically, you move from top to bottom and left to right.
2. You will provide your audience members with either numbered boxes that provide the chronology of movement or you might use arrows that direct the audience of the direction and order in which they move.

c) Schemes refer to the background color, typography, and product branding. Do not use background colors that clash with your text or your visuals. Avoid loud colors which can distract from your message.

d) Transition refers to the integration of text and visuals and from section to section.
   1. Text and visuals should have both integration and transition that is natural and flows well.
   2. Transitioning from section to section is important for the purpose of both overall appearance and coherence.

Rhetorical Segments: Rhetorically, your presentation should have a purpose, a goal, and an intended audience. The segments of your presentation are as follows:

   a) Introductions are brief and may contain an abstract or a summary of your project. Your purpose, goals, and intended audience should be clear from the introduction.
   b) Content contains the main points that you are making and will rely upon illustrations and minimal text.
   c) Closing should wind up your presentation with this is what I learned or this is what I gained or this is what I found out or recommend and should contain your gracious closing.

The writing process: The writing process for creating a poster board presentation is a little different than writing a paper. Note the following:

   a) Plan your message, know the space and budget, know the format of the board, and know the deadlines.
   b) Choose your illustrations. Remember, if you are creating a poster about your internship, think about those illustrations that best represent the company, the experience that you received, and the ethos of the company.
   c) Play with the layout until you have your illustrations placed in a sequential order.
   d) Outline your work and determine your headings and any subheadings.
   e) Keep your text simple.
   f) Determine your design—colors, fonts, boarders, columns, etc.
   g) Edit your work before doing the final placement.