

CREATING THE PERFECT POSTER: CATCHY, CLEAR, AND CONCISE. Christy L. Sprague, Associate Professor, Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1325.

Catchy, Clear, and Concise are three words that can describe the development of a perfect poster. Focusing on a single message, utilizing images and graphs to tell the story, and keeping the sequence of the poster well-ordered are all key points that need to be followed when creating the perfect poster. The development of a poster should start with a carefully crafted concise message. The main points and conclusions of the research should be clearly stated and the only visuals and text included in the poster should relate to those main points and conclusions. The poster should include a bold-explicit title that contains the full contact information of the authors. An introduction that explains why the research is important, research objectives, a brief methodology section, results including graphics, and clear conclusions and recommendations are the most important aspects of a poster. When a reader approaches a poster the first thing that catches his/her eye is the overall appearance. An effective poster should be pleasing to the reader's eye. Posters should be neat and uncluttered, using white space to help organize sections. Color choices, graphics, and text amounts and sizes are all important elements in "Catching" the reader's eye. Colors should be chosen carefully. Dark colors on light backgrounds are the easiest to read. Consider using no more than two to three colors in the overall theme of the poster. Whenever possible use graphics and/or images to help describe your research. Too much text on a poster is distracting to a reader. Text should be limited to no more than 50 to 75 words per section and the fonts should be large enough to read from one to two meters away. Text size should be a minimum of 24 point font with headings a minimum of 36 point font. Organizing the poster in a columnar format helps the reader follow the logical flow from top to bottom first and then from left to right. A poster presentation does not end with the printing of a poster, this is just the beginning. Readers will often ask "walk me through your poster". It is important to be able to provide a three to five minute verbal explanation of your poster to make it an award winning poster. For more information on creating an effective poster presentation, refer to <http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters>. This cite authored by Hess et al. provides several helpful points in crafting the perfect poster.