

ABCT **POSTER GUIDELINES**

The vast majority of papers presented at the Convention will be presented in poster format. Poster sessions allow a researcher to discuss his or her research with interested persons for an extended period and in more depth than is possible in a ten-minute paper presentation. It also allows attendees to select the papers they are most interested in and concentrate on them. The distinguishing features of the poster presentations have been warmly received by both attendees and presenters for this reason.

A successful poster requires care and planning. An extra hour or three spent preparing your materials and organizing your display will contribute heavily towards making a success of the session.

Setting and Materials

Each poster will be presented along with other posters dealing with similar problems or issues. All posters will be presented in the Exhibit Hall. **Each poster will be allocated a poster board, measuring approximately 8 feet x 4 feet (width x height), which is approximately 3 feet off the ground.** It is on this board that the poster materials should be displayed. Tags identifying you and your co-authors as poster presenters will be issued to you at the beginning of the session.

Pushpins for mounting your poster materials will also be provided; if your poster requires any special materials that cannot be mounted via pushpins, you should bring your own mounting supplies. **No electrical outlets or audio-visual equipment** will be provided in the poster area even if you requested it in your submission. You must be prepared to deliver your presentation based solely on the materials that can be directly affixed to the poster board.

Setting Up and Tearing Down

Each poster board will carry a number in the upper corner corresponding to the poster's listed number found in the program book. Poster presenters should arrive at the poster display area 15 minutes before the scheduled beginning of their poster session to set up their display materials. At the end of the session, display materials and all other materials must be taken down and removed from the areas.

Display Materials

It is critically important that your display materials be both clear and visible. Most people will be viewing your poster from a distance. It should be easy to identify the poster and the presenter(s) by including a complete heading on the poster. This is desirable for two reasons.

First, many posters will be going on simultaneously in the display area. Persons interested in a particular paper may have difficulty locating the poster, perhaps missing it completely, if it is not clearly identified.

Second, many people will be wandering through the display area out of general interest and curiosity. Your paper may well be of considerable interest to them (and their comments to you). Clear title/presenter headings will greatly increase the likelihood that such contacts will be made.

As a general rule, it is recommended that the title be in 1-inch print or larger. Headings of 3/4-inch or 1 inch can easily be done with press-on or computer generated lettering. The authors and the affiliations can probably be done in 1/2-inch or 3/4-inch size. It is not a good idea to include any display materials done in regular size type. Instead, you may wish to include an abstract typed in a large, clear type and several large, clearly labeled graphs and other visual aids.

Figures that take up a full 8 1/2" by 11" page are probably adequately large, but even larger materials would be desirable. If tables are included, they should probably be larger than an 8 1/2" by 11" sheet. Pictures, diagrams, and other materials of adequate size are often helpful. (See section below on Poster Content.)

A useful rule here is that your material should be easily read from a distance of 4 to 6 feet. As mentioned earlier, the poster's overall appearance is a critical factor affecting its success. For this reason, the poster should be as neat and visually pleasing as possible. Hand lettering of materials is generally not satisfactory. The creative use of colors in lettering background and figures can add considerably to poster appeal.

You must be able to quickly assemble and tear down your poster materials. One successful method has been to premount the material on several large boards, which can be quickly mounted on the display board. Another innovative method would be to buy or cover a folding fabric cutting board and then permanently attach the display materials to it. Examples of good poster board presentation style are shown below. Two general styles are shown: the placement of materials on several large boards; and the use of smaller boards, which are then arranged on site.

No matter which method you use, you should take care that parts of the display are not damaged or misplaced in transit. Before leaving for the convention, check your materials to see if they are too bulky or awkward to be easily carried; if so, it is wise to secure a better carrying case or to revise your layout to reduce the chances of damaging your materials (see the example on the last panel).

All materials you wish to display should be related to your presentation and the materials described in the abstract you submitted to the Convention Program Committee. A poster session is not an appropriate place to identify items that are for sale (such as special equipment or programming materials). If you wish to advertise materials that can be purchased, please email the ABCT office in New York regarding the rental of exhibit space at the convention or advertising possibilities.

Poster Content

Giving a poster is not just a matter of preparing visually attractive materials. The format also requires a different approach to the presentations of research.

The basic rule is this: provide a short, clear, non-technical description of what you did, why you did it, and what you found. Generally, you should not highlight such things as subjects, apparatus, or details

of procedure. Attendees will assume that these details were completely handled—those who need to know can request a full copy of the paper (see Presentation section). For example, you should keep references and reviews of the literature to a minimum. Just say why you did it and what you think it means. This should only take a few sentences. The format, in other words, requires you to be a bit bolder in your style and to condense complicated events into a few short sentences. Above all, a poster is not just a regular paper in large type stuck on a board. It is a discussion-oriented format.

The poster should communicate the issue and conclusion. The actual in vivo discussion should fill in the details.

The Presentation

Your materials should be on display and you and your co-authors should be available to discuss the materials and answer questions. At least one author must be present at the board at all times.

Many presenters wish to provide handouts about their project. These may include an abstract of the paper or perhaps a copy of the complete paper itself. Other authors prefer to send reprints of their paper after the convention is over and provide “reprint-request” sheets. (Even if you plan to provide handouts, a reprint-request sheet is advisable since it is difficult to accurately gauge demand for handouts and you may quickly run out.) One suggestion: Providing adhesive mailing labels for people to fill out will save time and effort later on when you send out the reprints, as all you will need to do is stuff the envelopes and affix the label.

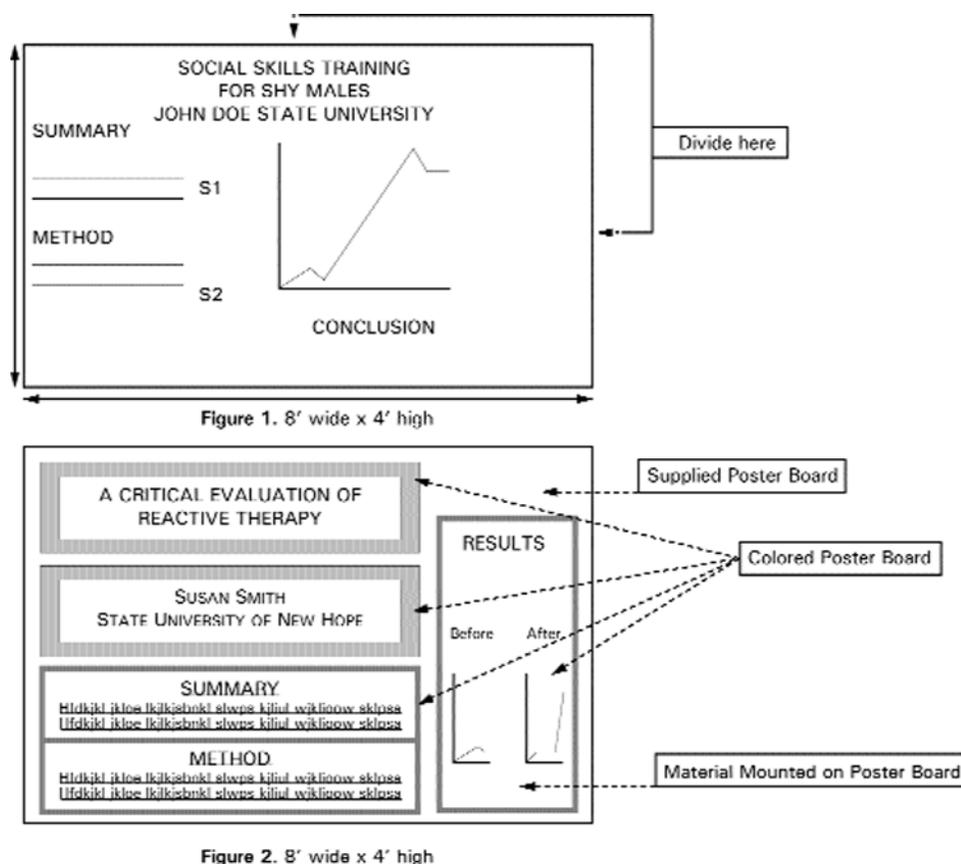


Figure 1. Example of prior mounting on several large boards. Travel to the Convention can be facilitated by constructing a cardboard travel case (like those available from the airlines). These are also available at large stationery supply stores.

Figure 2. Use of contrasting colored paper to mount materials. Several boards can be used, so that they each can fit into a large suitcase for travel to the Convention. Each small piece can then be mounted on the poster board made available at the Convention.