

# **Read My Poster:**

## ***Tips and Tricks to Creating Effective Scientific Posters***

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**Children's National**  
*Medical Center®*

# Purpose of Poster Sessions

- Exposure
- Feedback
- Collaboration
- Network
- Advocate for Your Work



# Successful Poster Design

- **Focused**      Single, clear message
- **Structured**    Use headings, steer viewer
- **Visual**        Abstracts TELL, posters SHOW
- **KISS**            Avoid saturation  
                        Avoid making viewer work



# Content

- Title, Authors, Affiliations, Logos
- *Abstract*
- Introduction
  - Background
  - Significance
  - Objective
  - Hypothesis
- Materials & Methods
- Results
- *Limitations*
- *Discussion*
- Conclusion
- *Future Directions*
- *References*
- Acknowledgements

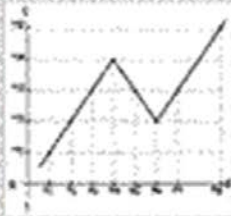
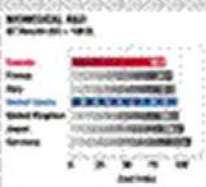
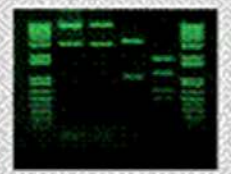
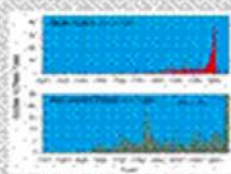


# Layout

- **Title Banner**
- **Columns** Moves reader left
- **Text** 20%, marginalize
- **Graphics** 40%, centralize
- **White Space** 40%, rest eyes
- **Colors** Use set color & template scheme



# Sample Layout

Title Your name(s) here Department of _____, Institution, City, State		
Introduction	<div>Results</div> <div> Figure 1 CAPTION</div> <div> Figure 2 CAPTION</div>	<div>Conclusions</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conclusion 1</li><li>• Conclusion 2</li><li>• Conclusion 3</li></ul></div>
Materials & Methods	<div> Figure 3 CAPTION</div> <div> Figure 4 CAPTION</div>	References
Acknowledgments		



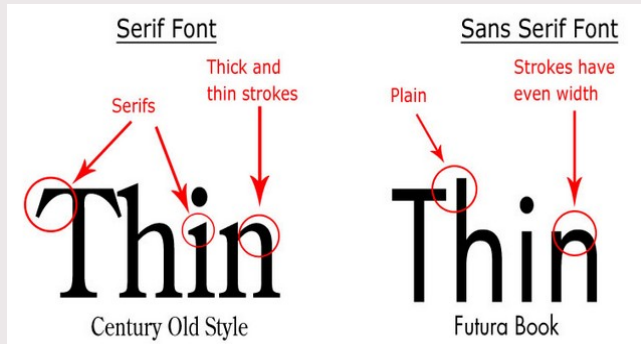
# Font Size

- Readability
  - 3ft to 6ft
  - Font Size
    - ≈ 5 x distance (feet)
- Large titles (**64-96pt**)
- Author/affiliation (**32-48pt**)
- Header (**32-48pt**)
- Text (**32pt**)
  - Bullets
  - Few lines/block
- Caption (**18pt**)



# Fonts & Formatting

- Font types



BONDI  
Century  
Garamond  
Georga  
Times New Roman

Arial  
Futura  
**Impact**  
Myriad  
Tahoma

- Serif: moves reader left to right, text
- Sans serif: attention-grabbing, headers
- Use common fonts



# Fonts & Formatting

- Limit **bold**, *italics*, ALL CAPS
- Capitalization
- Consistency is key!!
- Left justify
  - Justifying text adds space between words to align text to both margins. While it may make your columns look cleaner, you actually make it harder for your audience to read.
  - Left justification, however, aligns all text to the left. While the right margin may not be aligned, you've made it much easier for your audience to read your text.

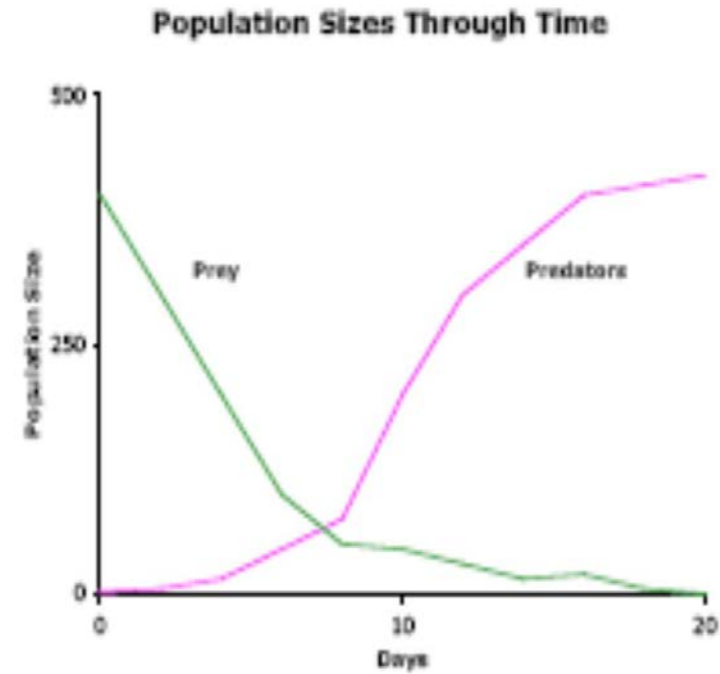
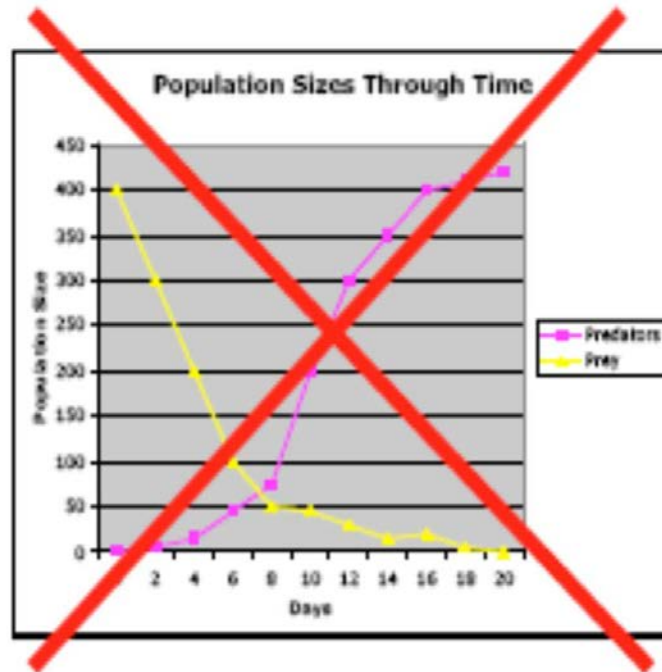


# Figures, Graphs & Tables

- Centralize
  - Emphasize
    - ~40% of space
    - Position & size
  - Interpret
- Caption
  - Relationship, not value
  - Eliminate “Chart Junk”
  - Avoid tables
  - QR Codes

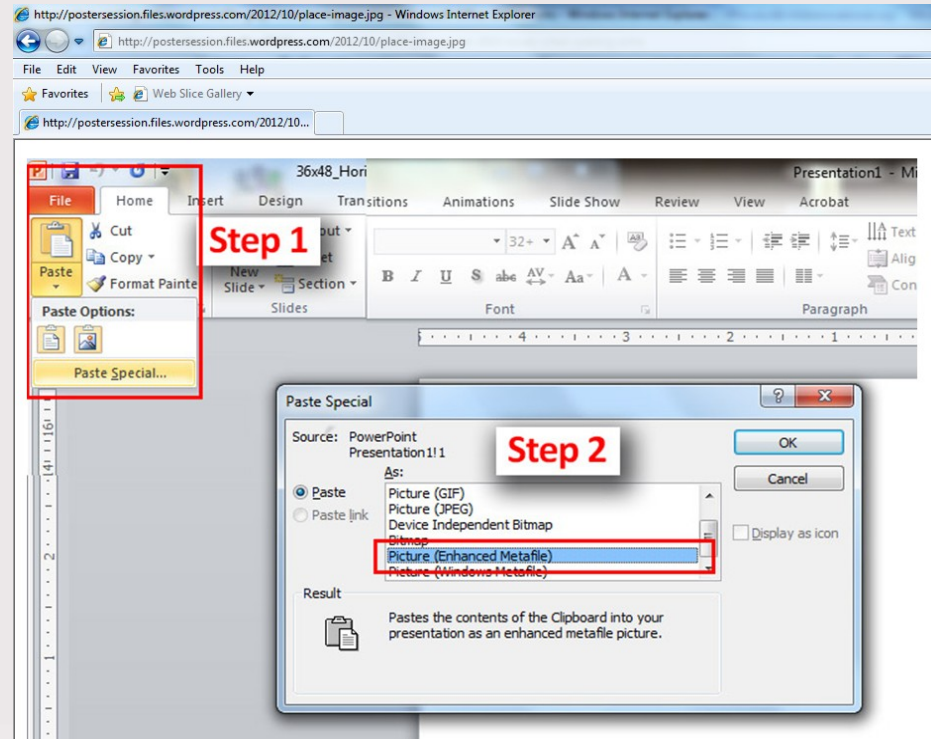


# Eliminate Chart Junk



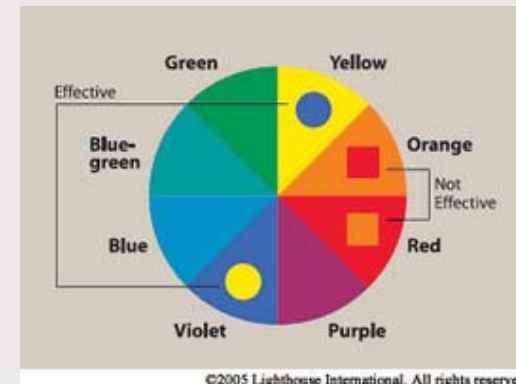
# Inserting Graphics

- Cut & Paste
  - Allows editing
  - Formatting issues
  - Resolution issues
- Paste Special
  - MS Graph Chart Object
  - Picture
  - Enhanced Metafile



# Color Scheme

- Visually accessible
- Lightness, hue, saturation
- Exaggerate contrast b/w foreground vs. background
  - Black & white is best!
- Inspiration: logo, graphic



# Troubleshooting

- Main points hard to find
  - Use headings
- Too much text
  - Use bullets
  - Print handout
- Text too small
  - Print line in MS Word & hang on wall to assess readability from 3'-6'
  - Use LCD projector to visualize at 100%



# Know your Venue and Audience

- Different Poster Venues
  - Poster Symposia
  - Poster Platform
  - Large Exhibit hall
- Know Audience Demographics
  - Generalists vs Specialists
  - Trainee vs Junior Faculty vs Senior Faculty
  - Pediatricians vs Non-Pediatricians
  - Lay population, Media representation



# Communications

- Avoid “junk” language
- Listen to questions
- Practice managing Q&A
- Practice with colleagues



## References

- Goodhand JR et al. Poster presentations at medical conferences: an *effective way of disseminating research?* 2011 Apr;11(2):138-41.
- Miller J. Preparing and Presenting Effective Research Posters.
- Health Services Research. 2007 February; 42(1 Pt 1):311–328.
- Rowe N & Ilic D. What impact do posters have on academic *knowledge transfer? A pilot survey on author attitudes and experiences.* BMC Med Educ. 2009; 9:71.

