



Conference abstracts and Posters

You are in the middle of some good research and want to tell colleagues. Taking a poster to an academic conference is an excellent way of displaying your work and networking.

The first task is to write an abstract that will get you an invitation to the conference, and encourage the organisers to place you in a highly visible slot – be it a poster or a talk.

If invited to bring a poster, your next task is to create and design it, print it, transport it and display it.

This six-hour course enables participants to:

- identify the different readers and decision-makers that you need to consider when planning the abstract and poster,
- determine the key message of your abstract and of your poster,
- write the abstract quickly, but also concisely,
- use PowerPoint to create imaginative posters that communicate without being boring, and
- be prepared to present your work professionally at a conference.

You should come on this course if you:

- have never been to a conference before,
- have had difficulty getting conference abstracts accepted,
- are uncertain what to include in an abstract,
- have no idea how to plan a poster,
- want to break out of the mould of standard posters, or
- need to discover how use standard computer software to create posters,

Posters only

The second section of this course can be delivered as a half-day course that focuses entirely on posters. Alternatively it can run as a one-day workshop where participants spend a considerable amount of time developing a finished poster.

Computer-equipped training facilities

The posters element of this course can be delivered in a normal training room. Alternatively it can be delivered in a computer-equipped facility, in which case participants can start to build a poster with PowerPoint.

To book a course
or ask questions
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Conference Abstracts and Posters

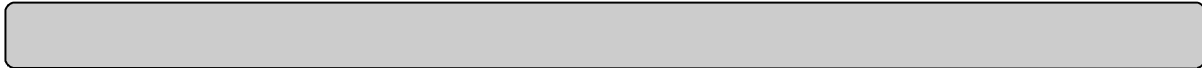
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Abstracts and Posters

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BREAK

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BREAK

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Abstracts

Posters

ThinkWrite™ courses

The ThinkWrite suite of courses enables participants to communicate with greater clarity, certainty and confidence.

Clarity

A key theme in the courses is the need to be sure about what it is that you are trying to convey. The underlying issue being 'what's your message?'. Communication fails when the message is unclear.

Certainty

To communicate well you need to know who you are and who you are addressing. Both of these components will vary from task to task. On some occasions you may be a student, an expert or an examiner. You could be a colleague, a coach or a consultant. You could be addressing an editor, a peer, an examiner. You may need to convince a grant-awarding committee of your competence or a patient of the need to stick to a particular regimen. In each case deciding the identity and role of the players involved in this act of communication can enable you to feel much more certain as you carry out the task.

Confidence

Pushing on with a task if you lack confidence is hard. Runners who are unsure whether they can complete a long-distance race tend to pull out 75% of the way through. Having a process that breaks communication into multiple carefully defined steps can increase your confidence that you can not only deliver, but deliver to a set of deadlines.

Background

The courses have been created by Pete Moore PhD. By academic background, Pete is a fetal physiologist. In terms of communication experience, Pete has plenty. He has written over 14 books and created hundreds of news articles and features in newspapers, magazines and journals. He has also delivered talks to groups ranging in size from less than 30 to greater than 3000, as well as appearing on local, national and international radio and TV.

Earning his keep from communicating ideas has forced Pete into creating processes that are efficient and effective, and these underlying processes form the core of each course in the ThinkWrite suite.





Why am I here?

Current experience

- Number of conference abstracts you have written.....
- Number of posters you have created

Motivation

- Do you have a conference in mind?
- If so, where?
- And when?

What would you like to learn today?

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What is your goal for today (one sentence)?

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Goals

This morning's goals are to:

- Make sense of conference deadlines and politics
- Be able to write an abstract that does justice to your work
- Maximize your chance of getting visibility at the conference

The afternoon's goals will be to:

- Decide who the target audience should be for your poster
- Check that nothing has changed since writing the abstract
- Design a poster that presents you and your institution well



A conference abstract?

So you need to create a conference abstract.. Before we start we need to work out what one is, what it is for, who is likely to be interested in it in any case, and what it can realistically achieve. List your thoughts below:

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Forward planning

Conference		
Main author		
Co-authors		
Target reader		
Title of abstract		
Length		
Measure of success		
Deadlines	Decide message	
	Check or apply for travel funds	
	Check passport	
	Write 1st draft	
	Show co-authors	
	Get sign off	
	Send to conference office	
	Buy air ticket	
	Book accommodation	

Look back

There are various possible overall shapes for your abstract. The overarching aim is to get your message across quickly. You can bear in mind the simple policy that is a standard model for teaching: ie tell them what you are going to say, tell them it, and tell them what you told them—but remember here we only have a few words.

Classical IMRaD

Introduction

Methods

Results

Discussion

News style

Key message

Background

Data

Method

Clear attraction

Keep looking around for examples of good design. You don't have to look far. You can gain inspiration from newspapers, websites, adverts, art galleries and even other people's posters. Ask yourself—what make the page neat? What makes you stop and stare? Where are the important elements of the whole picture?

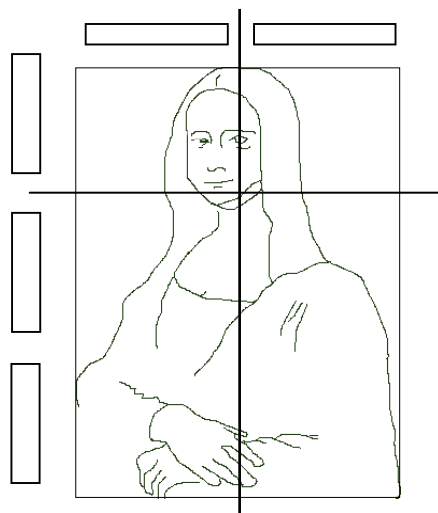
Columns

Newspapers are good inspiration for general page layout. The number of columns vary, but the basic principle is that columns keep things tidy quickly.

Classic thirds

Many adverts and paintings have the critical elements arranged a third of the way in from one of the sides, or a third from the top or bottom. Very often the key element is where a horizontal and a vertical third line cross. This is naturally a position of power.

The exception to this is the face on a two-eyed portrait, where you can expect the central vertical line to pass straight through one of the person's eyes. In the case of the Mona Lisa, the horizontal 'third' line then goes straight through the prominent chin.



Simplicity

Fonts that clarify

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Size matters

Standing 2m away	for main pieces of text	50-150 point
Standing 1.5m away	for detailed data	>30 point (~250 words/sq ft)
Standing 1.0m away	for supporting information	24 point

Eg	Main title	75-120
	Section headings	45-60
	Lower headings	30-40 Italic
	Body text	25-30 normal

Colours

Try using one of the colour-blind checking web-services to check that everyone will be able to see your work. Eg. www.vischeck.com

Photos and Graphics

- Do** aim to have 30-40% of the content delivered as graphics.
- Don't** make any individual graphic smaller than 150x180 mm.
- Do** make sure that images are at least 300 dpi (dots per inch) at the size it will be printed on the final document.
- Don't** import web images—these are normally 72 dpi and will come out fuzzy. You also probably don't have copyright for the image.