



NSERC CREATE Training Program in Arctic Atmospheric Science



Summer School Posters:

Some Thoughts & Suggestions



Comments from the judges



- Posters were excellent! It was very interesting and informative viewing all of them
- Have a clear flow of thought through the poster guided by boxes and sub-titles (Background -Objective-Method-Results)
- Have a descriptive “tense appropriate” title (if it is work not yet completed, that’s o.k. but make it throughout (i.e. “A plan for investigating bird distributions on the Nottasuwaga golf course”))
- Have your main point front and center....don’t have conclusions or results as a tiny box at the bottom – especially not on the left side
- Don’t have too many words...don’t cut and paste text from a paper onto the poster.....read the poster out loud as a test. It should not take more than 5 min or so.....
- Be careful background graphics don’t obscure text
- Instrument engineering/test posters should be “allowed” to be more complex
- Think about using your poster as a hallway display after a meeting
- There are excellent poster templates and suggestions and examples on the web



Keep these points in mind



- What is the take-away message?
 - This should be simple and very clear, either from the title or in a bold statement in your Conclusions/Summary
 - Think about adding a one-sentence statement at the start or the end of your poster
- What did you find out?
- Why should the reader care?
- Who is your audience?
- Titles should be informative
 - i.e., give information on key results – what you found out
 - Not just “labels”
- Start with an Introduction rather than an Abstract



Poster design – don'ts



- Don't give too much text
 - Would you read it all if it were someone else's poster?
- Don't use large background images if they interfere with text
- Don't crowd the text against the figures
- Don't run text across the whole 3-4 feet width of your poster
 - It's too hard for the eye to follow
- Don't put lots of text near the bottom, making the reader bend down to read it, or just walk away



Poster design – do's



- Think about the “entry point(s)”
- Make it readable
 - ... in ~5 minutes
 - Could you read your whole poster in ~5 minutes?
- Use large, clear fonts for your text
- Make sure you have good contrast between your text and background
 - What looks good on your computer screen may not look good on paper
 - Print a draft copy if you can and look at it carefully



More do's



- Break up big blocks of text with figures
- Have clear breaks between sections
- Bullet form is okay, particularly for summary points and future work
- Provide large maps with sufficiently large inset locator maps
- Be consistent in your use of upper and lower case
- Avoid sentences running into a single word on a line
- Read your text out loud to make sure you have commas in the right place



And a few more do's



- Sometimes schematic diagrams work better than photos
- Use large font for all labels on figures
- Make your figures large and clear
- Put the “cabbage” (logos, etc.) at the bottom!
- Include your contact email address

Remember: “Less is more”