How to design and present a poster

By
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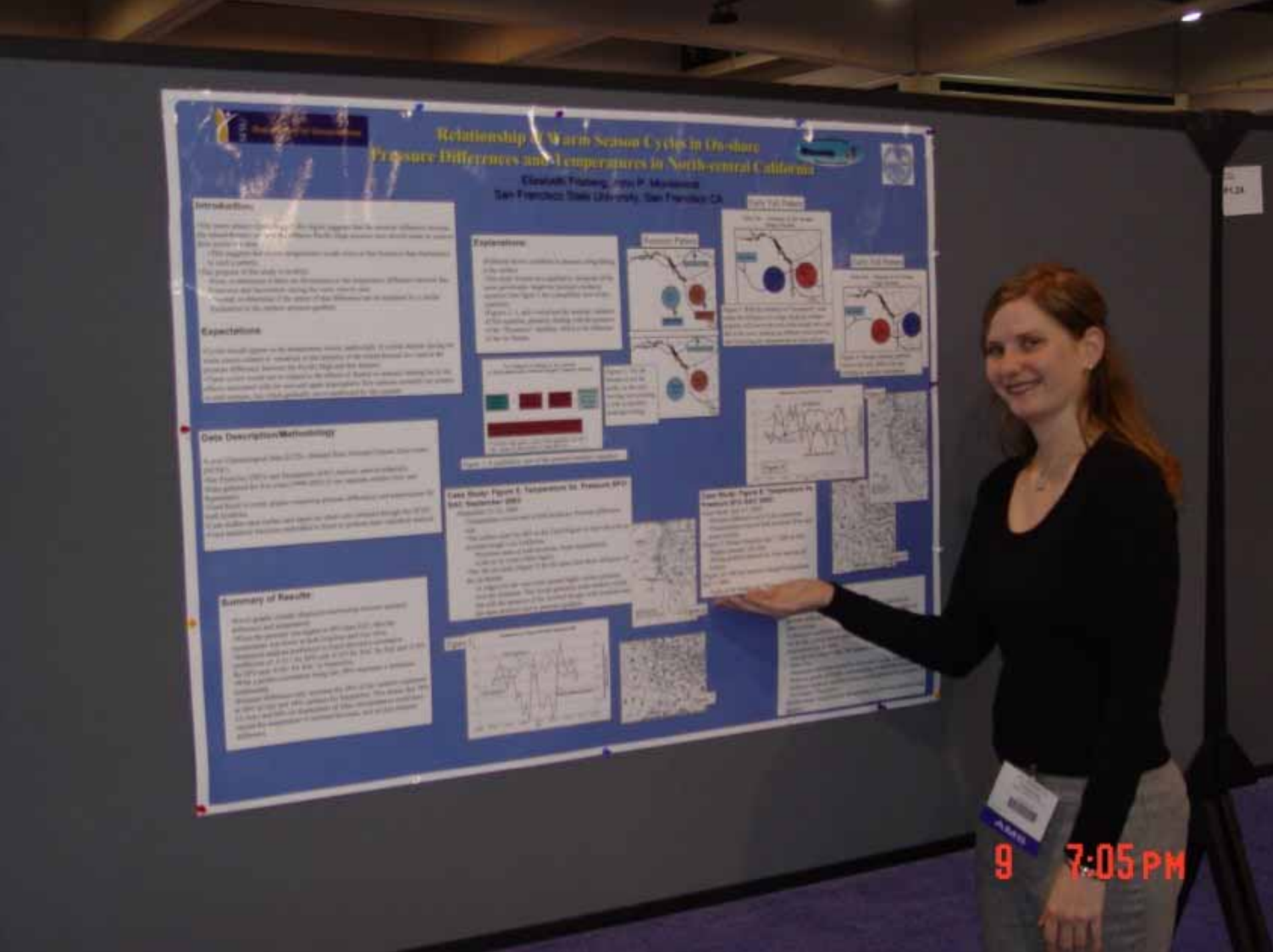
What are posters?

- Posters are a special type of presentation. When well designed, they are not simply journal papers pasted onto boards.
- The purpose of scientific posters is to present work to an audience who is walking through a hallway or exhibit.


Relationship of Warm Season Cycle in On-shore
Pressure Differences and Temperatures in North-central California
Introduction
Expectations
Explanations
Data Description/Methodology
Summary of Results
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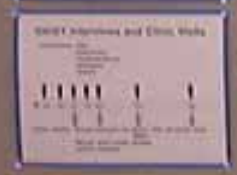
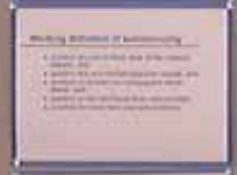
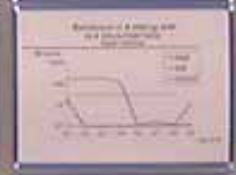
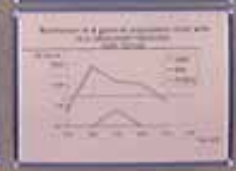
Infantile Anti-Islet Autoimmunity: DAISY Study

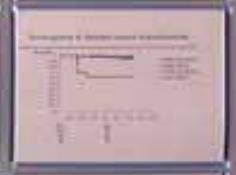
George S. Eisenbarth, Christina Elsey, Liping Yu, Marian Rewers
Denver, CO











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HABITAT PREFERENCES OF HENSLOW'S SPARROW AND GRASSHOPPER SPARROW

THE STUDY:

- First both sparrow species were identified.
  - Then, the points where they were sighted were marked using a GPS.
- Later, the vegetation was measured at these points.
  - Then, a random number generator chose ten random grassland sites to serve as a control.
    - Finally, the same measurements were completed at the random sites.

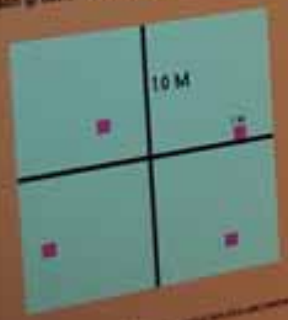
THE MEASURED VARIABLES WERE:

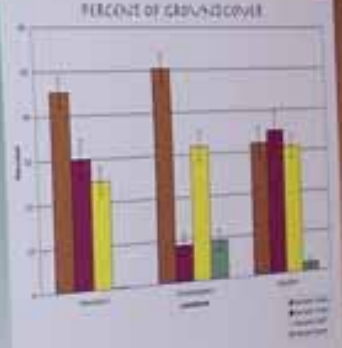
MAXIMUM PLANT HEIGHT: using meter stick

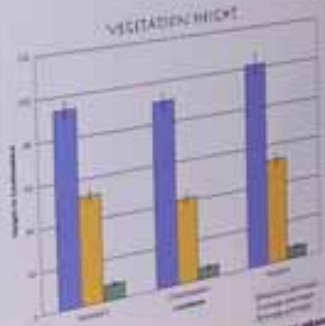
AVERAGE PLANT HEIGHT: using meter stick. The same person stood about 7 meters away and gave an estimate of the height of most of the grasses.

TWO MEASUREMENTS OF PUFF HEIGHT: using meter stick. One in the eastern edge and one in the western edge of the quadrat.

PERCENTS OF GRASSES, FORBS,PUFF AND BARE GROUND: Researchers laid a one meter square quadrat on the ground to form borders. The same person estimated the percents of each groundcover type within the square.







Although we have guesses, the reasons for the differences between the NRE sites and random sites are unknown, and will be a topic for

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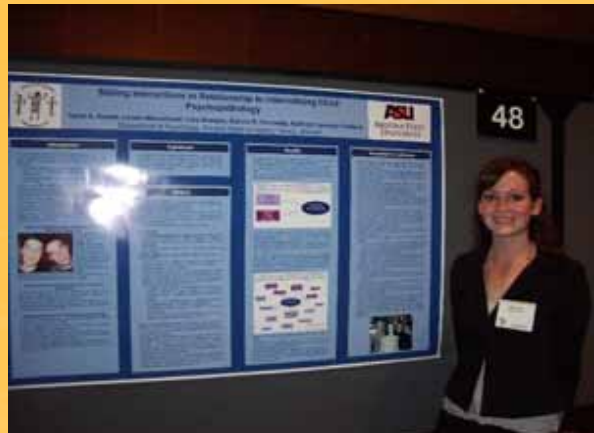
- **The specific sections such as the results should be easy to locate on the poster.**
- For instance, many will read only the objectives (or goals) of the work, and then the final results.
- Others, who have a deep interest in the topic, will try to read the poster from beginning to end.
- Given these different approaches to reading posters, another characteristic of an effective poster is that specific sections are easy to locate.



So what then makes for an effective poster?

This question is not easy to address because the expectations by the audience vary significantly from discipline to discipline. For instance, what an audience of a medical poster session expects differs significantly from what the audience of an engineering poster session expects .

How to Design a Great Poster…The BASICS

- **A Great Poster Is…**

- Readable
- Legible
- Well Organized
- Succinct

- **Getting started….**
- Clear design starts with clear thinking. Before you begin writing text and selecting photos, ask yourself this question:

  If the viewer only carries away one idea, what do I want it to be?

  Now write down your answer. This is the theme of your poster, the focal point. Everything you include on your poster should support that theme.

- Posters tell stories: provide clear flow of information from introduction to conclusion.

- Your poster tells viewers what you did, why you did it and what you found out from doing it. Focus on your **major findings** - a common fault is to try to cover too much. Few delegates are going to read everything on your poster, so get to the point.

- The poster should include a statement of the project description, how you conducted the project, results or findings of the project, and a summary tying in your reflection component.

An effective poster operates on ... multiple levels

- source of information
- conversation starter
- advertisement of your work
- summary of your work

The Title

- **Use a brief title**
- **a sub-title can help describe what the poster is about.**
- **The title needs to accurately reflect the content of the poster.**
- **Be creative and capture viewer's imaginations!**

The title-2

- A TITLE ALL IN CAPITAL CASE IS DIFFICULT TO READ.

- **Compulsory content:**

- Author's name/s

- Author's organisation/s

- Organisation's logo/s 

- Contact details (website, email, phone, postal address.

A great poster catches your eye, and is:

- Clear and simple
- Easy to read
- Organised with a logical flow
- Relevant to viewers in its content
- Taking advantage of the visual medium
- Providing viewers with 1 or 2 main messages

- Focus on 1 or 2 main messages and do NOT overcrowd the poster.
- Keep it simple.
- What are the main messages you want to convey?

- **Graphics convey your message quickly**
  Posters are a visual medium and should include graphics.
- Graphics not only catch people's eye and draw viewers in for a closer look…
- they are understood more quickly than text so are valuable tools for communication of your main messages.
- Use photos, cartoons, figures, tables, diagrams. Label them if necessary.

- A poster is not the medium to convey everything about your project or program.

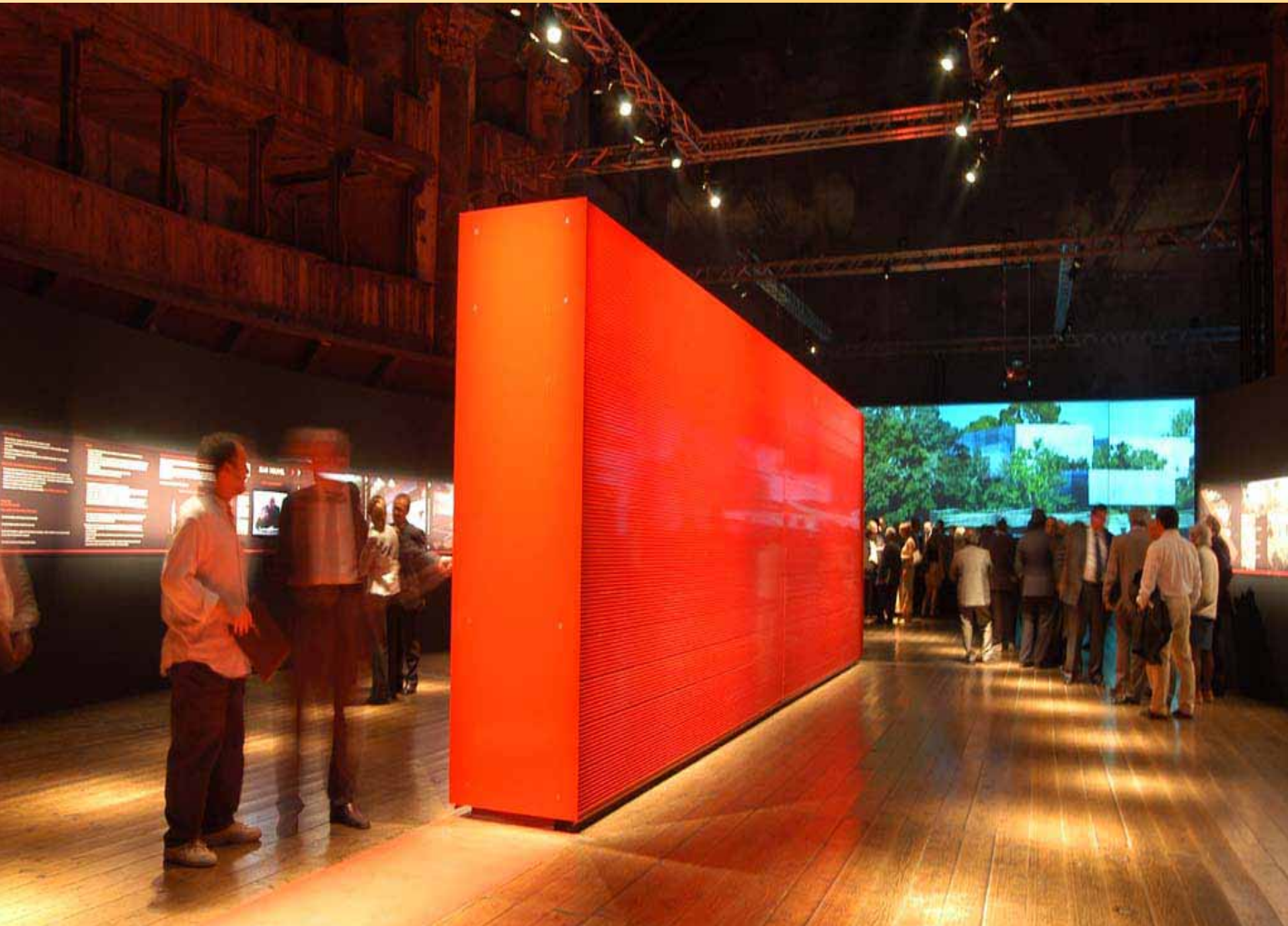
- Prepare handouts to accompany the poster that can include more information .

- **Font size ? Bigger is best** !
  Ensure fonts are large and easy to read. The words need to be legible from 1.5 metres away.

- Recommended sizes: Title: 72 pt; Headings: 48-60 pt; Body text: 24-48 pt.

Presenting the poster

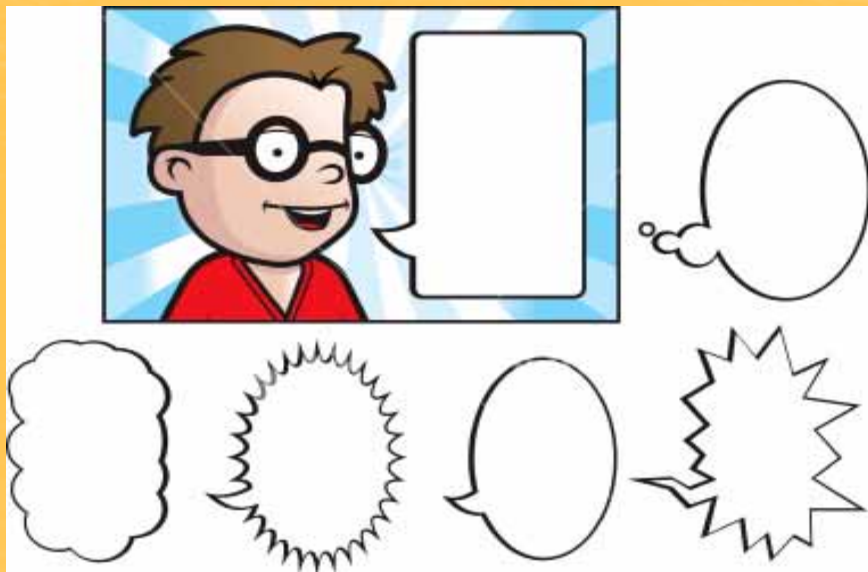
- Some conferences include précis-presentation sessions where poster authors talk about their poster to delegates for 3-5 minutes.



- **Before you get there**

- Find out who the audience will be: what will they already know, what new information will they be interested in?

- Practice: time yourself, record it on tape and listen to yourself.
- Rehearse in front of colleagues and ask for constructive feedback.



Check with conference organisers:

- How/where your poster will be hung/displayed, poster size guidelines and handout guidelines.

- Prepare handouts.

Take with you

- Materials to hang your poster (if required): pins, tape.
- Your handouts
- A plastic sleeve to hang your handouts up with your poster.
- Business cards to hand out.
- An electronic copy of the poster (some conferences display the winning poster on a screen.

During the presentation

- Do not stand in front of the poster and block it from the audience.
- Make eye contact with audience members and speak clearly.
- Use simple language.
- State why the research/project is important and relevant to the audience.
- Don't read directly from the poster: talk about your work and bring it to life.
- You may wish to point to a key point on the poster, for people to peruse later.
- SMILE! Relax (breathe!) and enjoy sharing your knowledge