

Individual Posters (*One per student*)
Due on Tuesday, December 2, 2008 (start of class)
(100 points)

Note: Your group will need to select one of the individual posters to print up as a **DISPLAY** poster (approx. 48"width x 36" height) that ***will also be due on Tuesday, December 2 at the start of class***. Thus, you will have to make your decision and print out your display poster no later than Monday. Your decision does not affect your group oral presentation grade except that you should pick a poster that illustrates the major points you want to talk about (refer to poster as you talk).

How to Design a Poster Presentation

Parts of a poster (each section in bold should be a separate block of text in your presentation):

Title

You make up an appropriate title and list all of the names of your group members as authors, with your name as the first author. Your affiliation is the "University of Washington".

Objectives or Hypotheses

Brief list of objectives (number them or use bullets) or if your study does not have a list of objectives, then provide a sentence stating your hypothesis

Introduction

Presents the specific problem under study and describes the research strategy. Before writing your introduction consider the following questions:

What is the point of the study? OR What are the theoretical implications of this study, and how does the study relate to the previous work in the area?

Methods

Describes BASICALLY how you conducted the study. Should include the strain and sex of rats. Should include details of the procedures that you carried out, including randomization, etc. You will not include many of the details required in a full-length APA manuscript (i.e. room temperature, light/dark cycle, etc. unless it is essential to your unique experimental design).

Results

Typically results are reported in a poster presentation differently than in a paper. You should use tables and/or figures to report your results depending on what best represents the findings of your study. Use error bars when reporting graphs of means. You can make your figures in any software package you like, but make sure you include error bars based on the standard error around your sample means. Include the actual statistical test and values (t, df, and p) in a short figure legend below your figures or tables. You can get these numbers from your Excel printouts if you do parametric tests in Excel. If you perform non-parametric tests by hand you can look up critical values in the tables in a statistics text. There is a statistics textbook in the lab that you can look at.

Discussion

Tell the reader what you found (summarize) and how your findings relate to the literature. You might cite the relevant literature here. Were your hypotheses confirmed? If your results were not significant, try and explain why you think that you obtained your findings. We can STILL learn much about rats and their behavior by failed experiments!! In fact, sometimes these lead to very interesting follow-up experiments. This is also a place to discuss confounds in your design or procedures and the direction for future studies.

Conclusions

Conclusions help the reader understand your major points and are absolutely essential in a poster presentation. They are typically 1-2 sentences per conclusion and you might have 2-4 conclusions depending on the complexity of your study.

References

Alphabetical list of the sources you CITE in your poster. Use APA format. No minimum requirement for posters, but you should have at least one paper that you modeled your study after somewhat.

Some General Guidelines

Ask for help! You have probably never done this before and I expect questions!

Use a large font and be succinct. Posters are not supposed to be long-winded explanations of your study, but should be brief yet informative. Use the “active” voice. Give the important details, particularly in the procedures, but you can skip many of the details necessary for papers (i.e. food, temperature of the room, etc). However, if you food-deprived the rats, this IS an important aspect of your procedures that is likely to have influenced the results.

Use color to create a pleasing, but not distracting, presentation. Use a boldface type for your OBJECTIVES/HYPOTHESIS and CONCLUSIONS sections so these important sections stand out when an interested reader approaches your poster.

Use diagrams or images to spice up the look of the presentation and to demonstrate your procedures rather than try and describe a complicated apparatus, etc. (Usually saving scanned images as .jpg files makes them easy to use in Powerpoint and keeps the file sizes manageable). REMEMBER that your file may become quite large.

Be creative! This can really improve the overall presentation. One of the most important jobs of researchers is to communicate their results effectively, otherwise all of that work will not become part of the body of knowledge or will not be as readily incorporated into their field. Posters that are clear, neat and eye pleasing are more likely to be read!

Where to go for help: Use your APA manual for how to cite and reference other authors. For content questions, come to see me during office hours (Tuesdays 12:30-1:20 PM in Guthrie 330) or make an appointment. Go to the Psychology Writing Center. You can make an appointment on-line. Trade sections with your group members and ask for feedback.