Presentation Poster Good Practices

Any type of document can have certain characteristics that can make it good or bad. This document will provide you with good practice suggestions to help you create the most effective poster possible.

Preparation

- Check the requirements of the venue. Will you have space on a table or will you have an easel for your poster? Are there size restrictions?
- Know your audience. Does your audience have any previous exposure to the content in your poster?
- Edit your content for clarity and remove any long ‘wordy’ sections. If you have more information than you can fit onto the poster, consider a handout that viewers can take away.
- Organize your content into logical concept groups.
- Have graphs and charts ready to begin construction.

Design

- Make several small sketches on paper that reflect the scale and proportions of the final poster.
  - If the poster will be a folded poster, consider how the audience will approach and view the poster. Don't include critical information on folded panels that may not be viewable when approached from the side. (Image 1)
- Leave a distinct margin around the edge of the poster. Top and side margins should be between 1-2 inches. If your poster will rest on a table or an easel and the bottom of the poster will fall well below eye-level, leave a larger margin at the bottom.
- Create “blocks” of information that show the positions of your concept groups. Structure your poster so the viewer can absorb the information within 5-7 minutes.
- Control the flow of information through the document. Don't crowd your groupings. Use empty space to separate your ideas and guide the eye of the viewer. (Images 2 and 3)
- Don't create visual “clutter.” Use only graphs, charts and photographs that communicate your information in a consistant manner. (Image 4)
- Use color as a control element. Bright colors attract the eye first, but don't use too many colors or you may lose control of the document flow.
- Make sure that the use of color does not distract from the content. A carefully chosen color can create emphasis for headlines and text groupings, but an intense background combined with a poor font choice can make it difficult to read the text. (Image 5)

Fonts

- Do not choose decorative fonts. Choose fonts with recognizable letter forms. (Image 6)
- Limit the number of fonts you use on the poster to no more than 3.
- Don't use all caps for headlines. It is harder to read.
- Never underline. Use bold, italic or color for emphasis.
- Avoid fonts below 24 pt for text areas.
- Use 90-100 pt font sizes for headlines.
Text Groups

- Group headlines close to the associated paragraph to maintain the clarity of the logical groupings. Don't use returns to separate paragraphs and headlines. (Image 7)
- Use care when justifying text. Justified text can provide a distinct rectangular container for content. Watch for ugly gaps between words and 'rivers' of white space that can run through a paragraph. (Image 8)
- Control the ragged contour of the outside edge when placing text flush to the left. (Image 8)
- Manipulate the text so that very long lines aren't followed by extremely short lines.
- Limit the use of flush right text. Text set flush right can be hard to read and punctuation can make even the right edge ragged. Never use bullets when setting text flush right.
- Center text to direct the eye to well ordered content.
- Don't put text inside of shaped containers unless it is absolutely critical to communicating your idea. (Image 9)
- Indent text when using bullets to communicate hierarchy. Make sure your bullet structure is clear and separated from the mass of body text. (Image 10)
- Use color to group areas of text but don't overwhelm your text be creating areas of weak or overwhelming contrast. (Images 11 and 12)

Images

- Communicate complex ideas with clear images, charts or graphs.
- Don't use images as decoration or to fill empty space!
- Avoid using recognizable clip art! (Image 13)
- Decide how your images fit into your visual hierarchy. Consider using an image as the initial focal point of your poster. Bright contrasting photos of people’s faces will draw attention more quickly than monochromatic charts. (Image 14)
- Edit your images for clarity just like you edit your text. Crop images to focus attention on the image content and eliminate unnecessary information. (Image 15)
- Use captions and credit your images.
- Use image files with proper resolution. The resolution of an original unmodified image should be between 300 and 150 pixels per inch. If you intend to enlarge your image on the poster, the resolution of the original should be significantly higher.
- Don't use web images! Web images have a resolution of between 72 and 95 pixels per inch and are very small. Once enlarged on a poster, they will appear fuzzy and indistinct. (Image 16)
- Make sure your image is in the proper format to import into you design program. Recommended formats include JPG, TIFF and PNG. If you need areas of transparency consider using TIFF or PNG.

Production

- Be flexible. Your final product does not need to look exactly like your sketch.
- Proofread your text. Have another person proofread the text.
- Check your poster for flow and the effective use of content groups. Have another person review the poster for flow
- Plan ahead! Don’t wait until the last minute. Leave time to produce a good quality poster.
Make sure your focal point is visible from all approach angles.
Establish a sense of “flow” or an order of elements.

Little Red Riding Hood

The Journey Begins
- Red’s mother sends her to Grandma’s house.
- She wasn’t the red cap that Grandma made.

On the Road
- She meets the wolf.
- He asks where she is headed where Red Riding Hood is going.

Revealing Too Much
- Red Riding Hood tells the wolf she is taking care and \_\_\_\_ to her sick Grandma.

Picking flowers
- The wolf suggests that Red Riding Hood pick some of the beautiful flowers along the way to Grandma’s house.

Deception
- The wolf heads to Grandma’s house.
- At Grandma’s House the wolf pretend to be Red Riding Hood.

At Grandma’s House
- The wolf gobbles up Grandma and hides beneath the covers.
- Red Riding Hood arrives and questions Grandma about her appearance.

Eaten!
- The wolf jumps out from behind the covers.
- Red Riding Hood is eaten by the wolf.

The Huntsman
- A passing huntsman hears the wolf howling and investigations.

Rescue
- Red and her Grandmother are cut from the mouth of the wolf.

Rocks
- Red Riding Hood fills the wolf with rocks.

The Death of the Wolf
- The wolf is dead.
- The huntsman skins the wolf.

The End
- Red Riding Hood and Grandma live happily ever after.
Meet Chef Linguini

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Secrets of Salad Dressings

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Produce</th>
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<th>Cost/Item</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bananas</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$0.50</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes (bunch)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries (box)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$3.25</td>
<td>$13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$0.75</td>
<td>$2.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Garlic cloves</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$0.50</td>
<td>$0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celery</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$1.25</td>
<td>$6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce heads</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$1.60</td>
<td>$4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peppers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$2.10</td>
<td>$12.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lemons</td>
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Once upon a time there was a sweet little maiden. Whoever laid eyes upon her could not help but love her. But it was her grandmother who loved her most. She could never give the child enough. One time she made her a present, a small, red velvet cap, and since it was so becoming and the maiden insisted on always wearing it, she was called Little Red Cap.

One day her mother said to her, “C'mon, Little Red Cap, take this piece of cake and bottle of wine and bring them to your grandmother. She’s sick and weak, and this will strengthen her. Get an early start, before it becomes hot, and when you're out in the woods, be nice and good and don't stray from the path, otherwise you'll fall and break the glass, and your grandmother will get nothing. And when you enter her room, don't forget to say good morning, and don't go primping in all the corners.”

“I'll do just as you say,” Little Red Cap promised her mother.

Well, the grandmother lived out in the forest, half an hour from the village, and as soon as Little Red Cap entered the forest, she encountered the wolf. However, Little Red Cap did not know what a wicked sort of an animal he was and was not afraid of him.

“Good day, Little Red Cap,” he said.

“Thank you kindly, wolf.”

“What are you carrying so early, Little Red Cap?”

“What are you carrying under your apron?”

“Cake and wine. My grandmother's sick and weak, and this will strengthen her.”

“Where are you going so early, Little Red Cap?”

“Toward Grandmother's.”

“What are you carrying under your apron?”

“Cake and wine. My grandmother's sick and weak, and this will strengthen her.”

“Where does your grandmother live, Little Red Cap?”

“Grandmother's sick and weak, so I'm going to take this piece of cake and bottle of wine and bring them to her. She lives out in the forest, half an hour from the village.”

“Good day, Little Red Cap.”

“Thank you kindly, wolf.”

“Where are you going so early, Little Red Cap?”

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Alternate Ending:
There is also another tale about how Little Red Cap returned to her grandmother one day to bring some baked goods. Another wolf spoke to her and tried to entice her to leave the path, but this time Little Red Cap was on her guard. She went straight ahead and told her grandmother that she had seen the wolf, that he had washed her good day, but that he had had such a mean look in his eyes that he would have eaten me up if we hadn't been on the open road.

“Come,” said the grandmother. “We'll lock the door so he can't get in.”

Soon after, the wolf knocked and cried out, “Open up, Grandmother. It's Little Red Cap, and I've brought you some baked goods.”

But they kept quiet and did not open the door. So Graybeard circled the house several times and finally jumped on the roof. He wanted to wait till evening when Little Red Cap would go home. He intended to sneak after her and eat her up in the darkness.

But the grandmother realized what he had in mind. In front of the house was a big stone trough, and she said to the child, “Fetch the bucket, Little Red Cap. I cooked sausages yesterday. Get the water they were boiled in and pour it into the trough.”

Little Red Cap kept carrying the water until she had filled the big, big trough. Then she poured the water out of the trough. But the grandmother was just as crafty. She said, “Little Red Cap, what big hands you have!”

“The better to hold you with.”

The huntsman happened to be passing by the house and thought to himself: “The way the old woman's singing, you'll better see if anything's wrong.” He went into the room, and when he came to the bed, he saw the wolf lying in it.

“So I've found you at last, you old sinner,” said the huntsman. “I've been looking for you for a long time.”

He took aim with his gun, and then it occurred to him that the wolf could have eaten the grandmother and that she could still be saved. So he did not shoot but took some sausages and started cutting open the sleeping wolf's belly.

After he made a couple of cuts, he saw the little red cap shining forth, and after he made a few more cuts, the girl jumped out and exclaimed, “Oh, how frightened I was! It was so dark in the wolf's body.”

Soon the grandmother came out. She was alive but could hardly breathe. Little Red Cap quickly fetched some large stones, and they filled the wolf's body with them. When he awoke and tried to turn away, the stones were so heavy and heavy that he fell down at once and died. All these were quite delighted. The huntsman skimmed the fur from the wolf and went home with it. The grandmother ate the cake and drank the wine that Little Red Cap had brought, and soon she regained her health. Meanwhile, Little Red Cap thought to herself, Never again will you stray from the path by yourself and go into the forest when your mother has forbidden it.
Make careful font choices. A poor font choice creates too many equal size areas of light and dark in the text making the text difficult to read. Choose light backgrounds with darker text.


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Choose a font with recognizable letter forms.


Main headline


Headline

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Watch for common problems with justification.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. – That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, – That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

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Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party.

Only the top 15% of the American population eats a healthy breakfast.
Don’t use bullets without indentation.

**Topic level**
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Indent bullets to communicate hierarchy.

**Topic level**
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Don’t use bullets when aligning text to the right!

**Topic level**
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Meet Chef Linguini

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Avoid using clipart!
Different types of images attract attention more quickly.
Edit your pictures the way you would edit your text.
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