



**For Poster Presentations:** The Poster Boards to be utilized at the Research Day have a 34.5” X 46” useable cork surface.

**Recommend:** Use Push pins to attach Poster Presentation graphics to the cork surface.

**Presentation Time and Placement** will be identified *on line* and in the Research Day Syllabus.

USE THIS Link to view the examples below: <http://www.writing.eng.vt.edu/posters.html>.

## Design of Scientific Posters

---

### Poster Samples:

[Sample Poster 1](#)  
[Sample Poster 2](#)  
[Sample Poster 3](#)  
[Sample Poster 4](#)

### Poster Links:

[Eastern Kentucky](#)  
[North Carolina State](#)  
[Swarthmore](#)

### Poster Templates:

[PowerPoint \(44 x 36 in.\)](#)  
[PowerPoint \(40 x 32 in.\)](#)  
[PowerPoint \(32 x 40 in.\)](#)

Posters are a special type of presentation. When well designed, they are not simply journal papers pasted onto boards. Nor are they mounted sets of presentation visuals. Rather, posters, when effectively designed, are something in between. This web page discusses the special situation that a scientist or engineer faces when designing a poster and then suggests some guidelines to address that situation.

The purpose of scientific posters is to present work to an audience who is walking through a hallway or exhibit. In poster presentations at conferences, the presenter usually stands next to the poster, thus allowing for passers-by to engage in one-on-one discussions with the presenter. In other situations such as the hallways of laboratories, universities, and corporations, posters are stand-alone presentations for passers-by. For a poster to communicate the work, the poster first has to orient an audience that is not seated, but that is standing. Often the audience has distractions of noise and movement from other people. Given those distractions, a journal article tacked onto a board fails as an effective poster because the audience cannot concentrate for a time long enough to read through the paper. In fact, given the distractions that the audience faces, many in the audience will not even bother trying to read a journal article tacked onto a board.

---

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. Nonetheless, this web-page tries to present some general guidelines that would apply to most situations in science and engineering.

**First, the title of an effective poster should quickly orient the audience.** Here are some guidelines for poster titles:

1. Make the title the most prominent block of text on the poster (either center or left justify at the top).
2. Do *not* typeset the title in all capital letters



Figure 1. Learning Factory Showcase at Penn State [Lamancusa et al., 2006].



## References

Alley, Michael, *[The Craft of Scientific Presentations](#)* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 2003), pp. 211-217.

Alley, Michael, Jenny Lo, and Whitney Edmister, "In this study, we promoted and fostered undergraduate research through a special option in a required technical communication course," *2006 National ASEE Conference* (Chicago: ASEE, June 2006).

Bakker, Vickie, "Movement Behavior of Red Squirrels (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) in Fragmented Forests," *EPA STAR Conference* (Washington, D.C.: EPA, July 16, 2001).

Cho, Daniel, "Particles in Microdischarge Plasma: Coulombic Interactions and Optical Effects" (Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Tech, October 2005).

Couch, Eric, Jesse Christophel, Eric Hohlfeld, and Karen Thole, "Cooling Effects of Dirst Purge Holes on the Tips of Gas Turbine Blades" (Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Tech, April 2003).

Kaeli, Jeffrey W., Hanumant Singh, and Roy Armstrong, "Morphological Image Recognition of Deep Water Reef Corals" (Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Tech, October 2005).

Lamancusa, John, Jens E. Jorgensen, Lueny Morell, Allen L. Soyster, and Jose Zayas-Castro, "The Learning Factory: Industry-Partnered Active Learning since 1994," 2006 Bernard M. Gordon Prize for Innovation in Engineering and Technology (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Engineering, November 2006).

Thole, Karen, "Improving the Cooling of Turbine Blades and Vanes in a Gas Turbine Engine" (Blacksburg, VA: Virginia Tech, November 2004).

Wynn, Tess, "Proposal to Study the Effects of Woody and Herbaceous Vegetation on Streambank Erosion," *EPA STAR Conference* (Washington, D.C.: EPA, July 16, 2001).



