



Presenting your Capstone Poster

This assignment is an interactive experience that gives you the opportunity to receive feedback on your research. It is less structured than a typical research presentation, and there is a greater chance of interruptions and cross-questioning, which can be exciting and intimidating at the same time. The following tips will help you better prepare:

Be Welcoming

Smile, say hello to people who walk past your poster, and encourage them to read it. If possible, engage them in a conversation, tell them about your research, and invite questions.

Tip! *Position yourself in a way that you are not obscuring your poster, and stay by your poster for the entire session.*

Dress for the Occasion

It is important to dress professionally and comfortably. Wear a blazer, or traditional shirt or blouse with trousers or a skirt. Additionally, it is advisable to wear comfortable shoes, as you may be standing for some time.

Tip! *Avoid wearing jewelry, jeans, casual clothing, or items that need constant adjusting. This will help you relax and stay focused.*

The Elevator Pitch

Gaining the attention of people walking by—with various presentations going on simultaneously—can be a challenge. To pique their interest, have a very short outline (maximum two minutes) of your research prepared that answers the following questions:

- *What is your research topic?*
- *What have you found?*
- *Why is it important?*

Your passion and dedication will be key in presenting a pitch. Remember, you are the best person to show the value of the work you are presenting.

Check for Understanding

Ensure that your audience is following your explanation by looking for verbal and non-verbal signs. When checking for understanding, phrasing is very important. For example, asking “Do you understand what I am talking about?” can make a person feel embarrassed. Instead, ask questions like “Have I been clear enough?” or “Should I go into more detail about...?”



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Dealing with Newcomers

If you are talking to someone, and other people approach your poster, acknowledge them by making eye contact and smiling. Once you have finished, ask the newcomer(s) if there was anything they would like a further explanation of, or if they have any questions.

Supplemental Material

Your poster is only an outline of your research work, and it is likely that there is more that you would like to share with your audience. Print handouts of supplemental material including an overview of your research and/or journal articles that can provide in-depth information to interested audience members.

Tip! *This is an opportunity to network and create connections with people who have similar research interests, so include your contact information on the handouts or provide a business card.*

Feedback

It is important to be open-minded and prepared for discussion, praise, and constructive criticism. If you think a comment or a question is irrelevant, ask for clarification. People may give you a fresh perspective on a topic. Be empathetic, understanding, and interested in different opinions, and remember that you are in charge of how you respond. Maintain a warm and welcoming demeanor throughout.

Practice Makes Perfect

Be sure to practice your elevator pitch, and anticipate any probable questions and how you will answer them. Memorize all key points and findings without referring to your written notes.

Tip! *Present your poster to your peers, and ask for their feedback.*

Adapted from: tips for presenting your scientific poster at a conference. Scientifica. (2015).
<https://www.scientifica.uk.com/neurowire/tips-for-presenting-your-scientific-poster-at-a-conference>