## GETTING SMART ABOUT POSTERS AND SLIDES

We all want to be able to effectively communicate our research. At a conference or symposium, though, we have to work hard to get our point across in a very short time in a pretty small space. Beyond the things we say, we can use words, data, images and design of our posters and slides to better communicate our chosen message to our specific audience. Here are a few (okay, 32) tips to optimize posters and slides to meet the most important objectives of communication:

|   |            | ELEMENT — |  |     |  |     |   |     |   |
|---|------------|-----------|--|-----|--|-----|---|-----|---|
|   |            | 1         | WORDS  |     | DATA   |     | IMAGES  |     | LAYOUT  |
|   | COHERENCE  | 1.        | Ensure you address all required sections.                                | 9.  | Make sure graphs and figures are readable.                       | 17. | Make sure images are high quality/resolution.   | 25. | Organize content into clear sections.   |
|   |            | 2.        | Proofread all your text!!  | 10. | Double check for needed units of measurement, categories, etc.   | 18. | Pay special attention to research pictures/figures (accuracy, source, explanations, scale, etc.). | 26. | Create intuitive flow with modular layouts.   |
|   | EFFICIENCY | 3.        | Reduce text length and complexity as much as possible.                   | 11. | Utilize the right type of graph for the data.                    | 19. | Choose images that are clearly topical.   | 27. | Get rid of unnecessary<br>elements (abstract, date<br>footer, question slide, etc.) |
|   |            | 4.        | Utilize bullets and diagrams to show relationships.                      | 12. | Simplify by deleting extra info or using progressive disclosure. | 20. | Use and simplify diagrams.  | 28. | Create ample white space and margins!!!   |
|   | INTEREST   | 5.        | Use simple, interesting, and descriptive titles and subheads.            | 13. | Highlight relevant data or important trends in the graph.        | 21. | Enlarge images to serve as focal points   | 29. | Create a clear size/<br>heading hierarchy.  |
|   |            | 6.        | Use first-person voice<br>and active verbs. (Maybe<br>even an anecdote!) | 14. | Explain meaning of data (trends, outliers, etc.)                 | 22. | Provide context/sources with image captions.  | 30. | Add related design elements.  |
|   | STYLE      | 7.        | Carefully select and use 2-3 fonts and 2-3 colors.                       | 15. | Utilize theme colors and fonts for your graphs and figures.      | 23. | Utilize better/alternate image sources.   | 31. | Ditch confusing background images/gradients/watermarks.                             |
|   |            | 8.        | Format text to left justified, ample leading and paragraph spacing.      | 16. | Optimize graphs by remaking in custom template format.           | 24. | Get rid of images with white backgrounds, layering.   | 32. | Place and use logos/<br>wordmarks appropriately.                                    |
| • |            |           |  |     |  |     |   |     | O F F I C E   |

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**Anna McEntire**, Sr. Director of Project Management and Communication, Office of Research and Graduate Studies anna.mcentire@usu.edu (Visit **grts.usu.edu** for additional resources, templates, examples and handouts.)

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