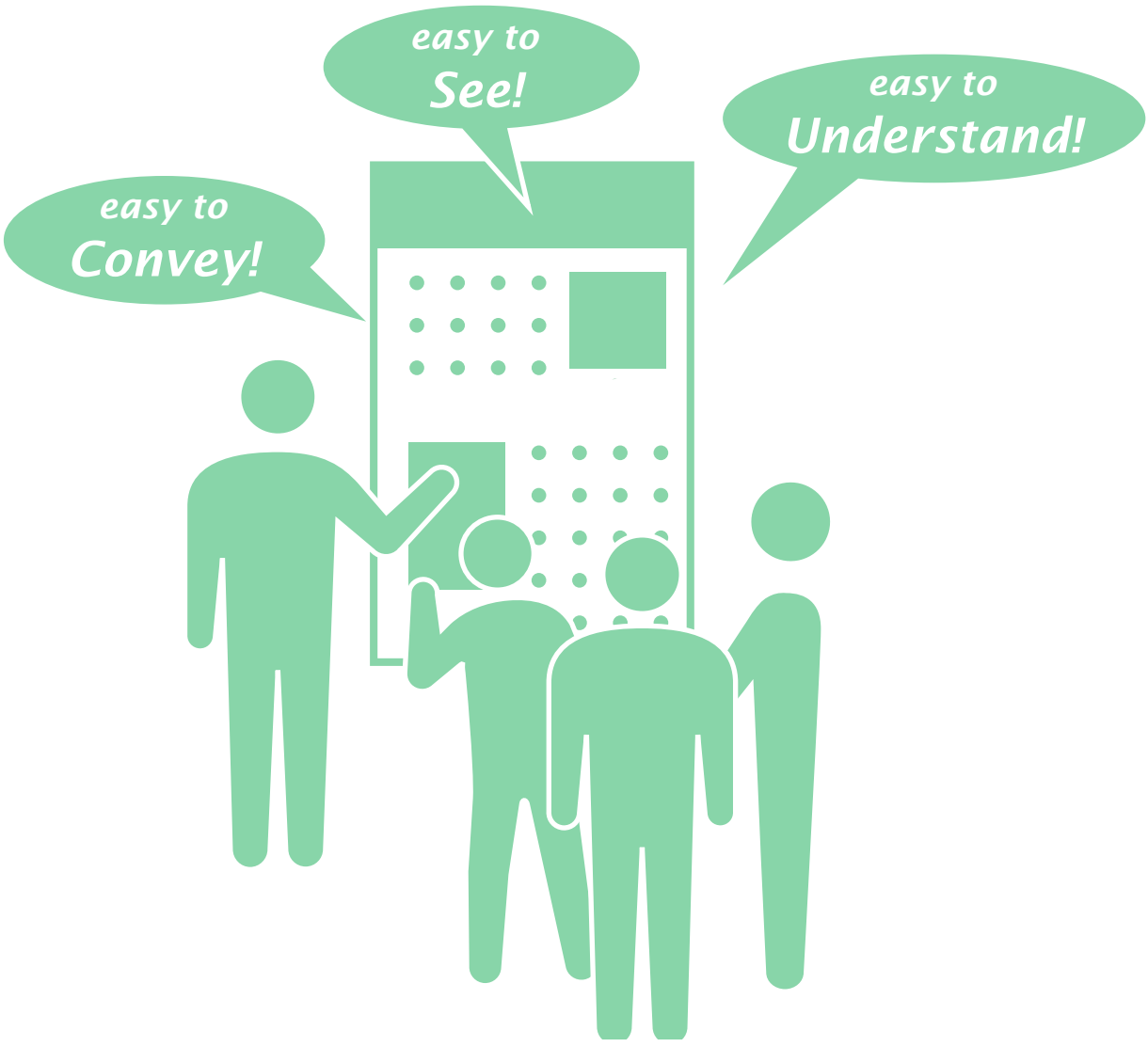
Preparing Information Design-Oriented Posters



Introduction

What is the purpose of a presentation?

It is to convey accurately what you want to convey to people with whom you want to communicate.

To fulfill this purpose, you need to prepare posters that are easy to read and understand. What kinds of posters are easy to read?

Well-organized information

You may have a lot of information you want to share but, if the information is poorly organized, it is difficult to read and understand it. You need to select key information and convey it in a simple way.

Clear and conspicuous information

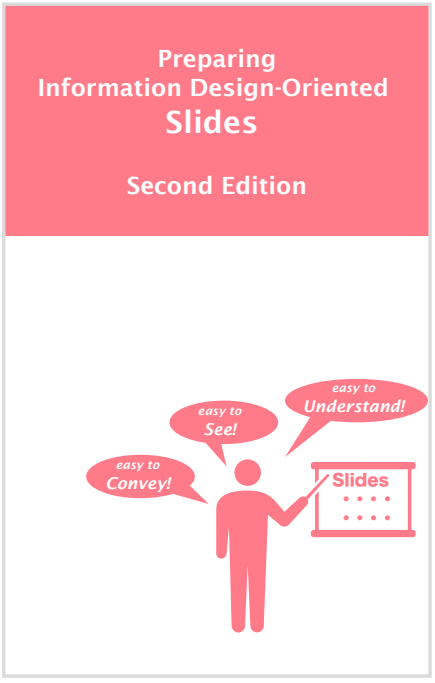
The most important factor is to convey key information in an easy-to-understand manner.

Easy-to-follow flow of information

The entire story from beginning to end must be included in one poster. It must be clear where it starts. You should not make viewers feel confused about where to look next. It is important to make it easy to follow.

Information design is a method of conveying the information you want to share with your audience in an easy-to-understand manner. Learn how to prepare information design-oriented posters.

For layouts, color schemes, charts and other relevant information, please refer to “Introduction to the Preparation of Information Design-Oriented Slides.”



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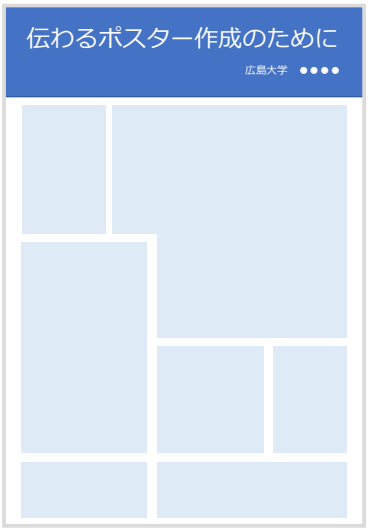
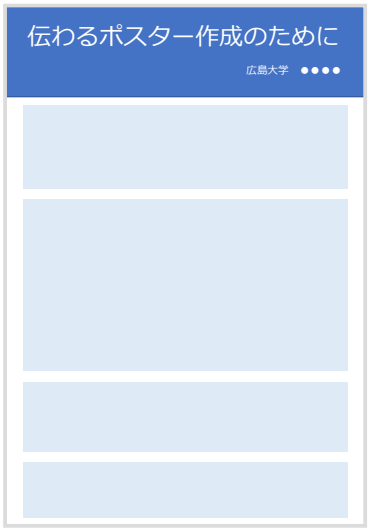
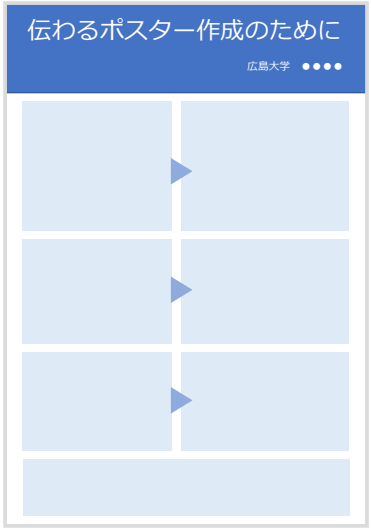
1. Easy-to-follow layouts

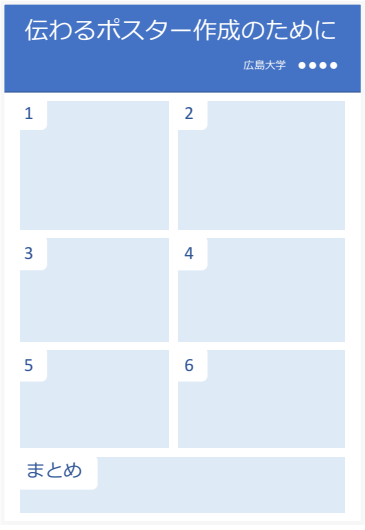
A story must be completed in one poster, from the introduction through the body to the conclusion. This means that one poster needs to contain a large amount of information. It is therefore important to make the flow easy to follow. The natural eye movements in humans are from top to bottom, and from left to right. The layout of a poster should be designed in an orderly manner so that viewers can follow it easily.







In the poster on the left, the order to follow is not clear. In the poster in the middle, it can easily be assumed that the story starts at the top and goes down sequentially. In the poster on the right, arrows lead you from the upper left to the right, then to the lower left and to the right.

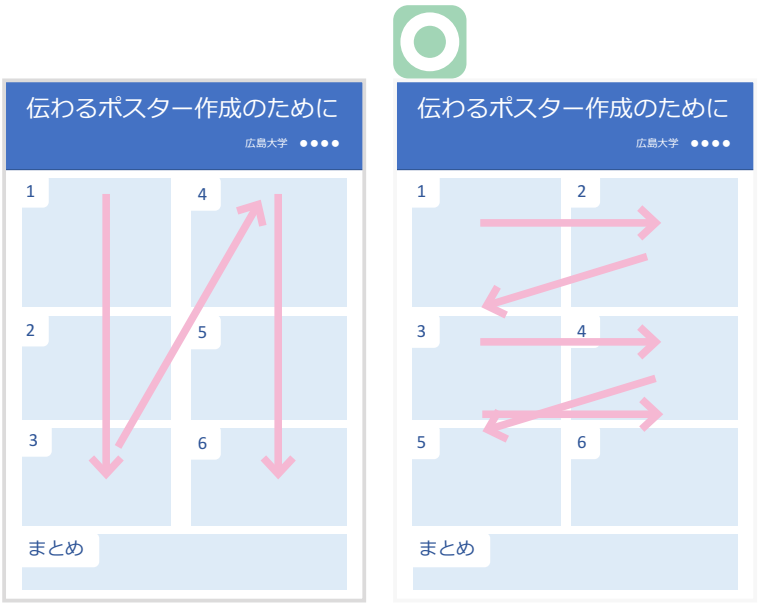


In this poster, the order of the story line is numbered, making it easier for viewers to read the contents.

Design the layout of your poster in such a way that viewers can grasp the story's flow at a glance.

In the example on the left, you have to move your eyes from top to bottom and then to the top again, causing unnecessary eye movements. In the example on the right, after moving your eyes from left to right, you just need to move your eyes from top to bottom, one line at a time, reducing unnecessary eye movements. The reverse of the above applies in the case of horizontally long posters. Less unnecessary eye movements make the layout easier to read. Choose a layout that is best suited to the format you use.

As explained above, it is important to design easy-to-follow layouts.



2. Easy-to-read texts

■ Fonts

Poster Presentation

Poster Presentation

It is recommended that you use a sans-serif font for posters.

Serif font is suitable for long articles read from a close distance. However, because there are thick and thin parts of each letter, it is not suitable for letters read from a distance.

While you can get relatively close to a poster to read the information on it, there is still some distance between you and the poster. Therefore, sans-serif font is suitable for posters.

■ Appropriate length of single line

読むのが大変

4．資料のデザイン
（1）視力検査禁止
スライドやポスターのように，読む人と資料の間に距離がある場合には，読む人が目をこらしてみなければならないような小さいフォントや図表を使用しない。スライドの場合は，本文のフォントは28pt以上を基本とする。グラフもできるだけ1枚のスライドに1つを掲載すべきである。グラフ内の数値や文字はどうしてもフォントサイズが小さくなるため，スライドタイトルを省略する等して，グラフを大きく表示する。
（2）余白は十分にとる
隙間なく書かれている資料は読み難い。余白や改行スペースを十分にとり，伝えたい情報に関係ないテキスト，イラストは入れないようにする。

You can read a poster from a close distance, but still there is at least one meter between you and the poster.

If there are too many letters on one line, it is difficult to read them from a distance.

段組みする

（3）シンプルレイアウト
- 一見してわからないような資料では多くの人に伝わらない。
- 説明の流れがわかりやすいレイアウトになるようにすべき。

（4）とにかく揃える
- 図，文章，画像，表などの配置位置が揃っていないと，不要な視線の動きが必要になる。
- 伝えたい情報がシンプルに伝わるように，各コンテンツは整列して配置する。

In designing a layout, the number of letters on a single line should be small enough to ensure readability. In this example, in addition to the appropriate number of letters, the itemization is used to achieve better readability.

さらに見やすく

とにかく揃える	色は３色まで
• 図，文章，画像，表などの配置位置が揃っていないと，不要な視線の動きが必要になる。 • 伝えたい情報がシンプルに伝わるように，各コンテンツは整列して配置する。	• 多くの色を用いると，統一感のない印象になり，情報が伝わりにくくなる。 • 使う色は，ベースカラー，メインカラー，アクセントカラーの３色程度にする。

You should also divide the information contained in a poster into several groups so that each group contains an appropriate amount of information for viewers to read at a time. The subtitles here are easier to understand than in the example above.

In this example, double spacing between itemized lines is applied. This helps viewers identify the amount of information they are expected to read at a time.

■ “Jump Ratio”

The “Jump Ratio” is the ratio of the font size of the headlines to the font size of the text.

- High jump ratio

Dynamic and highly attractive

- Low jump ratio

Less dynamic, suitable for information that you want readers to read carefully and thoroughly

The one on the left has a low jump ratio:

Text: 14 pt., Subtitle: 18 pt., Headline: 24 pt.

Jump ratio: 1:1.28:1.71

The one on the right has a high jump ratio:

Text: 14 pt., Subtitle: 24 pt., Headline: 38 pt.

Jump ratio: 1:1.71:2.71

You can tell the difference easily.

The ratio should be high enough to attract viewers from a distance.

Low jump rate　1：1.28：1.71	High jump rate　1：1.71：2.71
プレゼンの資料 （1）スライド ・スクリーンに資料を投影 ・多人数を対象 ・視聴者との距離に配慮する必要がある ・スライド 1 枚に伝えたい情報は 1 つ	プレゼンの資料 （1）スライド ・スクリーンに資料を投影 ・多人数を対象 ・視聴者との距離に配慮する必要がある ・スライド 1 枚に伝えたい情報は 1 つ

Font sizes for posters depend on the size of the paper you use. It is generally recommended that you use a size a little larger than the one above.

The font size of poster titles can be over four times as large as that of the body text.

3. Effective use of frames

■ Grouping of information

A poster is a large piece of paper that contains a large amount of information. It is necessary to divide the information into groups in such a way that viewers can grasp how much information they need to read at a time. Grouping is a technique to gather relevant information in one place and keep irrelevant information at a distance.

On the left is a bad example. The relationship between the explanation and the photograph is not clear. In the good example on the right, a space is used to separate relevant information from irrelevant information. In addition, the relevant information is framed, which makes the information better organized.

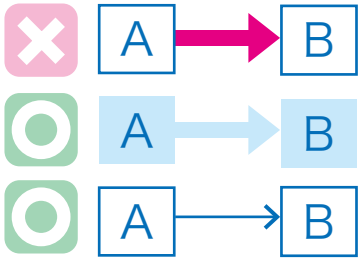
■ Use of either framing or color filling

Don’t use “color filling” and “framing” simultaneously. If you use both, that gives too much emphasis and you cannot convey the information in a simple manner.

今まで一度も話したことのない事柄を，いきなりうまく話せるわけがない。
プレゼンも練習をしっかりと行っておけば，心の余裕も生まれ，本番で落ち着いて話すことができる。

今まで一度も話したことのない事柄を，いきなりうまく話せるわけがない。
プレゼンも練習をしっかりと行っておけば，心の余裕も生まれ，本番で落ち着いて話すことができる。

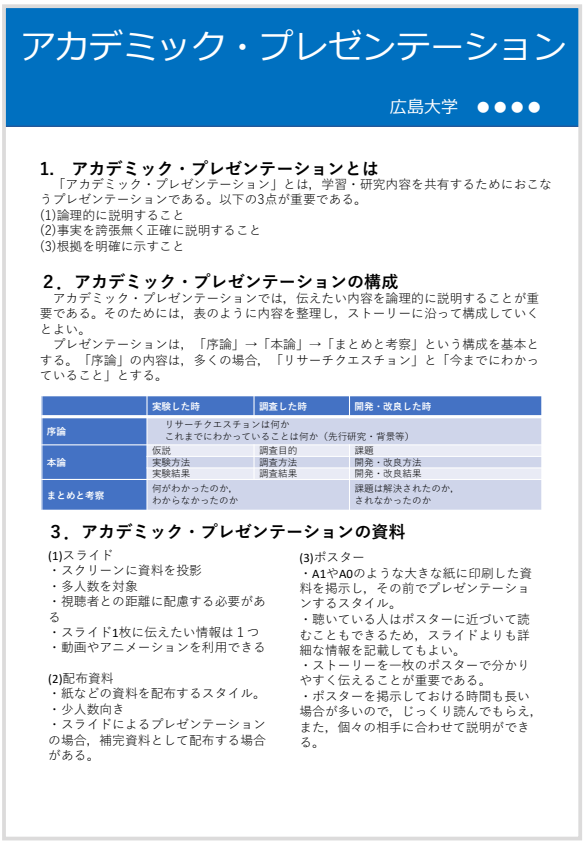
■ Don’t accentuate arrows.

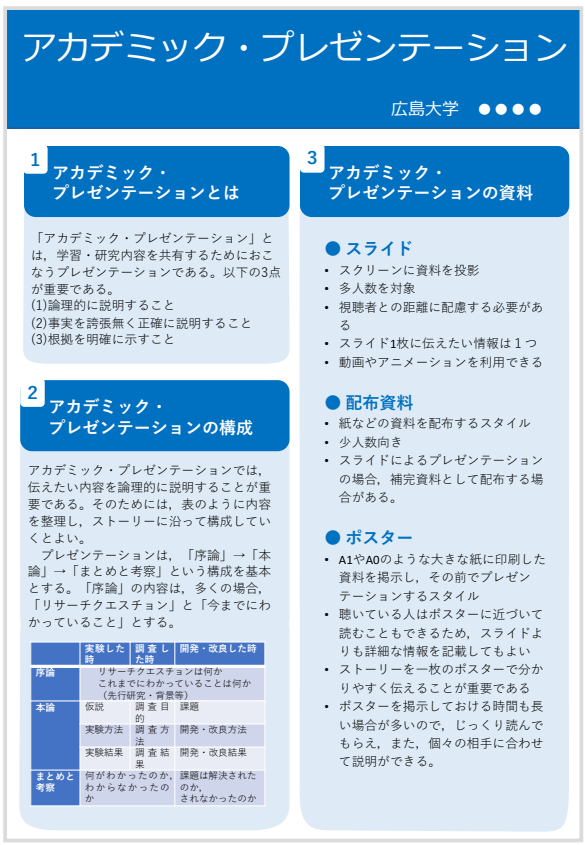


If you paint arrows, do not use a color that is too different from the one used for the frame. A conspicuous color will draw viewers’ attention to the arrows rather than to the information you want to convey.

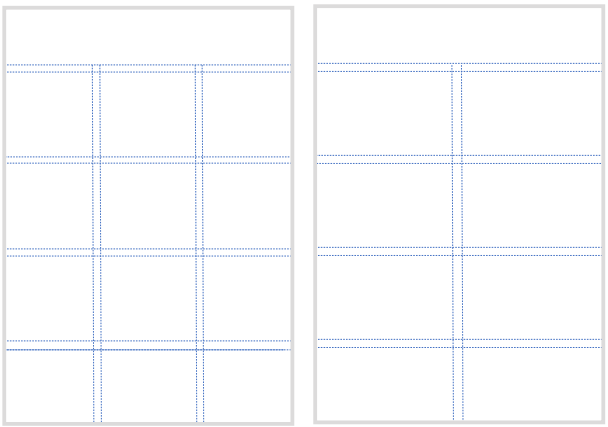
Use a color similar to the one used for the frame. Arrows should be designed to be as simple as possible.

■ Effective use of frames in the overall layout





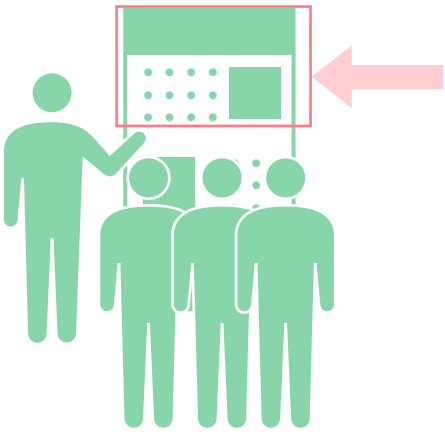
The layout of the example on the left is designed in a similar form to documents that are distributed. You cannot tell at a glance whether the table in the middle belongs to the text above or below. In the example on the right, frames are effectively used to improve readability. The frames help organize the information in such a way that viewers can identify the amount of information they need to read at a time.



In designing the layout, as shown in this example, you may use guide lines to form a grid in which each section is placed. This method helps organize the information and improve readability.

4. Incorporation of elements that attract people's attention

At most scientific conferences, many posters are displayed at the same venue, although this depends on the form of the poster presentations. Visitors to the venue stop at posters that attract their interest to read the poster and listen to the presenter's explanation. This means that, unless there is something that attracts visitors, they won't stop at your booth to listen to your presentation.



This is the part that visitors to your booth see at first.

In poster presentations, the venue is often crowded with visitors. That means that those at the back of the crowd cannot see the lower part of your poster. You need to place attractive information in the upper part of your poster.

Factors necessary to attract visitors to stop at your booth include the following:

(1) Big, conspicuous title

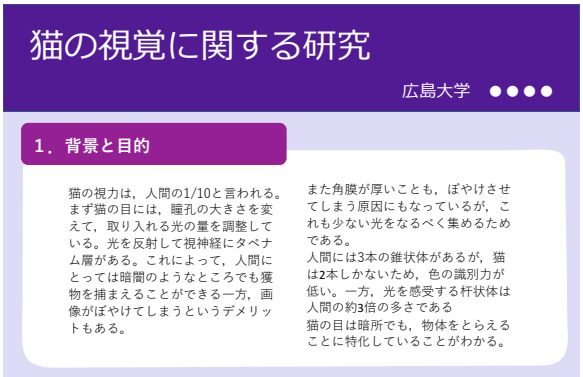
Use a large font for the title. Colors should be coordinated in such a way as to add contrast and make the title conspicuous.

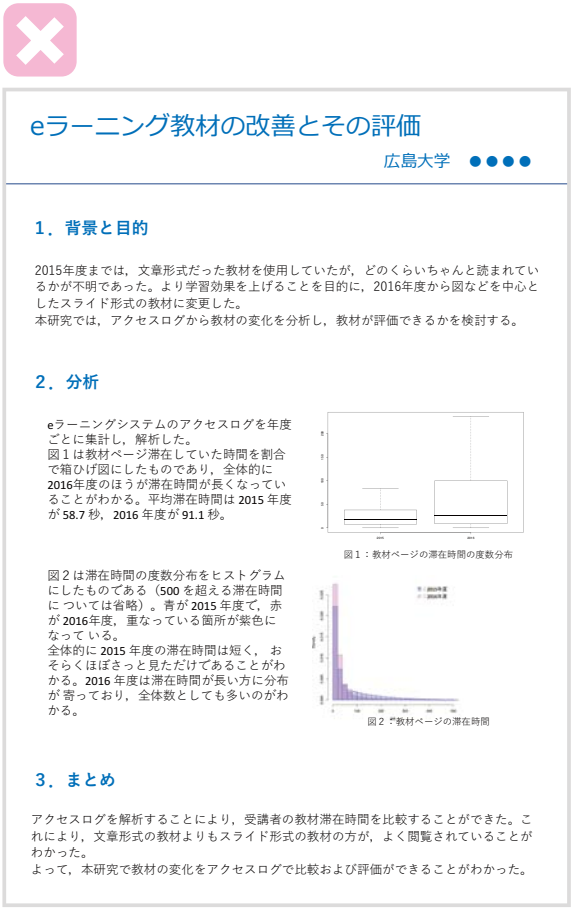
(2) Easy-to-understand title

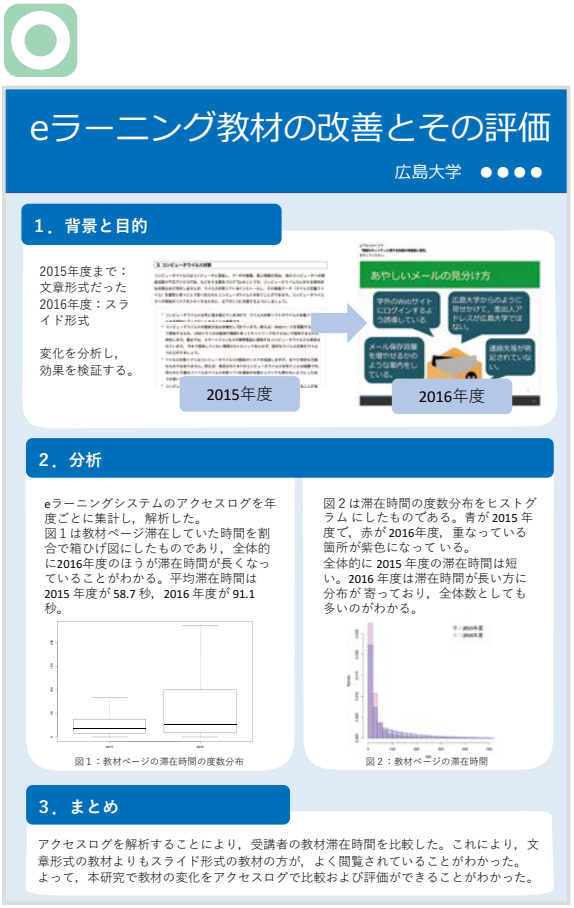
Select a title that makes it easy to grasp the content of your presentation at a glance. If the title does not convey the content clearly, visitors may leave your booth before reading the poster.

(3) Key visual images

Place large figures that attract visitors to the venue. It is recommended that you place a large image and/or figure that represent key information of your presentation, rather than merely enlarged graphs.







In the example on the left, the title is too small and the objective of the study cannot be easily grasped at a glance. In the example on the right, a figure is used to illustrate the change in teaching materials, which helps viewers easily understand at a glance the change in teaching materials from those described using sentences alone to those using pictures.

Colored backgrounds and frames are used to clearly divide sections. A large font is used for the title.

5. Delivering a poster presentation

■ Change the way you deliver your presentation, as needed

In poster presentations, the number of listeners differs depending on the situation. If your audience is large, explain according to the story. Point to the part you are explaining to help your audience follow your presentation. If there are only one or two listeners, adopt an interactive style so that you can answer their questions on an as-needed basis.

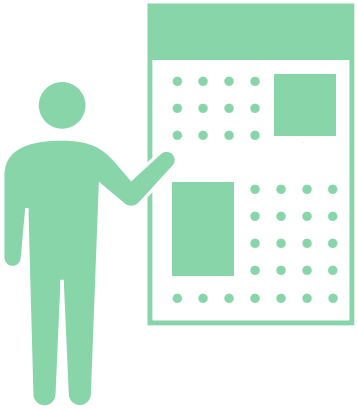
■ Prepare materials to be distributed, if necessary

The amount of information that can be contained in a single poster is limited. If you want to present more detailed data, you should prepare printed materials for handouts. In the case of a poster presentation at a scientific conference, you may prepare a printed preliminary draft. You can use printed handouts as supplementary materials to be distributed to your audience if you want to provide them with more detailed information and/or data sources.

Conclusion

Do you now understand how to prepare posters that can convey what you want to convey to people with whom you want to communicate in an easy-to-understand manner?

Easy-to-read posters help you convey the information that you want to share in an easy-to-understand manner.



References

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Endo J., Saito Y., Center for the Studies of Higher Education, Nagoya University, 2013

Tsutawaru Design no Kihon
Takahashi Y., Katayama N., Gijyutsu Hyoronsha, 2014

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Endo J., Okumura K., Terada K., Naito M., Motoyama K., Yunite, 2008

All references listed here are in Japanese.

Materials used here

Pictograms on the cover, pages 9 and 11
Human Pictogram 2.0: http://pictogram2.com/

Font on the cover
FG Library
http://fontgraphic.jp/blog/item/107-fglovelydownload.html

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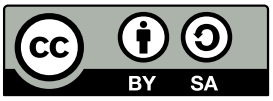
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