



Biological Imaging Facility • Northwestern University

# BIF Poster Tips

(Updated 01/07/2010)

## Making Your Poster...

- 1) When selecting your poster size, remember that one dimension (either the height or width) must be 42" or smaller (3.5 feet or smaller).
- 2) When creating your poster, leave at least a 0.5" margin – do not place your background, text, or any images flush with the edge of the poster.
- 3) When choosing a background color for any part of your poster, remember while gradients look nice on the screen they rarely print out as nicely. If at all possible, try to avoid gradients or reduced opacity/transparent images.
- 4) Try not to over complicate your poster. Don't use unnecessary background images or distracting fonts. Clean, well-organized posters work the best for showing your research.
- 5) When possible, use higher resolution images and graphics. While you do not want to create a poster that has an extremely large file size, you do want to make sure your images and graphics will look good on a larger scale. When using the Northwestern University logo, be sure that it does not become pixilated when you increase the size of the graphic. Try placing images as .tif image files.
- 6) With PowerPoint, be sure that your text and image boxes fit their content – you don't want a box that is too small or too large because the printer "reads" the outer limits of the box before it "reads" the content inside.
- 7) Check your poster for extraneous boxes and then delete them. Use "Select All" to find these unnecessary boxes.
- 8) REMEMBER: What you see on screen is not always what will print. First, a computer monitor is in a color scheme called RGB, printers use CMYK. Your colors will not be identical to what you see on screen, but they will be close. The printer only prints the files according to how it "reads" them; i.e. your poster file consists of data codes that the computer and printer interprets and constructs your file with. Some times, these files are interpreted differently between various computers, software programs, versions of software, and printers.
- 9) Do not use templates that do not print well. It is much simpler and quicker to create a new poster or template than to continually troubleshoot printing errors. If a template works well and satisfies your presentation, then keep using it! If you know that your poster template won't print correctly, use a new template to make your poster.
- 10) If you have questions, ask. BIF staff is available to help you with your poster.

Contact Jamie Bufkin (847-467-0374; j-bufkin@northwestern.edu) if you need assistance.