

# AIDS 2006 Toronto - Youth Programme

## HELPFUL HINTS:

### Presenting a poster, abstract session, or on a panel



This hints page provides some information that can be helpful for you to prepare for presenting a poster, presenting in an abstract or non-abstract session.

#### **POSTER PRESENTATIONS**

If you were selected as a poster presenter, *congratulations!* Selection for the poster exhibition means that your poster can be up in an exhibition space for the day.

You will be assigned a space and a 10 – 15 minutes slot during which you will have a chance to talk about the topic of your poster to the people in the room. You are not expected to stand beside your poster the whole day. The Conference Programme will list all the poster and abstract presentations.

This is an opportunity to tell others what your abstract is about. Since there is limited time for your presentation, take some time beforehand to think of what would be most interesting for others to know about your project. Remember this is an AIDS Conference, and many of the delegates will be professionals.

#### **Designing Your Poster**

There are many ways to design a poster, but here are some helpful hints for making your poster as clear as can be.

- **Clear title** Make sure that your poster has a concise heading that describes the topic of your poster
- **Be concise** Do not clutter your poster with too much information
- **Be informative** People will stop by to look at the poster when you are not there, so make sure your poster is clear and informative on its own
- **Outline the key points of your work** Make sure the poster answers the what, why, when, where and how
- **Use a visual image** Pictures really grab people's attention. Photos work very well although they might be more expensive to print. Making your poster visually interesting will make it more attractive to your audience.

*Creating an engaging presentation takes time. Make sure you plan accordingly.*

#### **Supplementary Materials**

It's a good idea to leave handouts next to your poster with more information about the work. The handout can have more details about the work and information on how to contact you for more information.

#### **Resources**

Take a look at these wonderful resources for more specific guidance:

**"From Concept to Critical Discussion: A Toolkit for Preparing the Best Conference Abstracts, Presentations & Posters"** by John Miller is an *extremely* helpful tool. Definitely take the time to **read this**. This toolkit is endorsed by the conference and covers writing your abstract, designing your poster presentation, and preparing an oral presentation. Take a look for great advice! It's available online on the AIDS 2006 Abstract Mentoring page in four languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French). <http://www.aids2006.org/subpage.aspx?pageId=289>

#### **Also helpful is:**

A poster preparation guide posted by the University of Newcastle upon Tyne school of Chemical Engineering

<http://lorien.ncl.ac.uk/ming/Dept/Tips/present/posters.htm>

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### TIPS FOR PRESENTATIONS IN AN ABSTRACT, NON-ABSTRACT SESSION OR PANEL

If you will be presenting in an abstract or non-abstract session or panel, read on for helpful tips and answers to your questions.

#### **What Kind of Presentation Should I Prepare?**

There are different kinds of presentation styles, if you want you could make a PowerPoint presentation, you could prepare notes, or you could memorize your speech. It's up to you! Many people use PowerPoint at the International AIDS Conference. More information is included below on PowerPoint.

#### **Nervousness**

Most people are nervous when they speak in front of large audiences. Practice as much as you can in front of anyone who will listen in order to gain confidence. Once you master your presentation, you'll feel less nervous and more excited about this great opportunity.

#### **General Preparation Tips**

- **Structure your presentation in a logical way.** Some people like to use an outline. Think about the most logical way in which to present your points and build your argument.
- **Make note cards or an outline** to keep you on track during your presentation.
- **Practice in front of the mirror**
- **Present your speech to anyone who'll listen.** Run it by those familiar with your topic, if possible. Encourage your friends to ask you questions. This will help you get used to answering questions from an audience.
- **Practice varying the tone of your voice.** This will make you a more engaging speaker
- **Think about your audience.** What are they most interested in? How your presentation informs the field, not the small details. Keep your audience in mind throughout your preparation.
- **Try to speak slowly and clearly.**
- **Plan ahead of time** Preparing well in advance will ensure that you're relaxed and ready to give your presentation.
- At the conference, **get familiar with the room you'll be speaking in ahead of time.** Make sure that you know how to use the overhead projector and laptop. Go to the last row of chairs and see how well you can see the speaker and screen from there. Change the font size of your PowerPoint presentation if necessary.
- **Practice, practice, practice.**

#### **What should I wear when presenting?**

Wear clothes that you are comfortable in but are professional. Men often wear sports jacket and slacks or a button-up shirt and nice slacks. Women often wear dresses, or a blouse with a skirt or slacks. If you would prefer to wear business or business-casual attire commonly worn in your country (salwar kameez, long tunic and trousers, sari, etc.) that is also fine.

#### **How should I stand on the podium?**

Adjust the microphone to your height, so that you don't need to bend down. Stand up straight and look around the room in order to engage your audience.

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It's important to make **eye contact with your audience** in order to keep them interested. It's also more fun for you to see reactions on the faces of your audience.

#### Answering Questions from the Audience

Many, but not all sessions, will have a question/answer (Q&A) section. During Q&A:

- **Write down people's questions** so you can be sure to address them thoroughly
- **If you don't know the answer**, don't make something up! Say something like, "I'd have to look that up. Does anyone here know the answer?" Or, "I'm not sure, but based on my experience..."
- **If you disagree with someone's comments**, always make sure you are respectful of their views.
- **Stay in control!** Don't let the discussion veer off topic. If a question threatens to take the group in a new direction, simply say, "I'd be happy to discuss that with you after the session, but let's limit the questions and comments to the subject at hand."

#### Personal Stories

Sometimes sharing a personal story can add some humor or seriousness to your presentation. If the story involves other people, keep their names private unless they have agreed to let you mention them at the conference.

#### Jargon and acronyms

It's best to limit the acronyms and specialized language in your presentation. Speak precisely and define your terms as you go along. Be sure you understand and can explain all the terms used in your talk. Don't use slang and certainly don't use profanity.

#### Preparing at the Conference

It's a good idea to listen to other presentations that relate to your topic. This will help you understand what else is happening in the field and make your presentation more useful for your audience.

#### Guidance for PowerPoint

PowerPoint is a great way to communicate information, but don't let the technology overshadow you! Over-reliance on this tool can lead to "death by PowerPoint," a bored, sleepy audience that can't wait to escape. Keep your presentation interesting by following these tips.

- **Let the content guide your presentation.** Visuals are nice, but only when they serve the overall point of your presentation.
- **Outline your presentation before using PowerPoint.** Make sure the presentation flows logically.
- **Let the audience know where you are going** by giving a brief overview at the beginning of the presentation
- **At the end, provide a concluding slide that wraps up your main points and leads into discussion**
- **Only 4-5 bullet points per slide**
- **Don't overwhelm the audience with text.** Use only a few words per point and make sure the words are large enough for the audience to read.
- **Try not to read off the slide.** The PowerPoint is for guiding the audience, but **you** should be the focus. Keep eye contact with audience members to keep their attention.

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- **Don't use every special effect PowerPoint offers.** Those effects are distracting. The focus should be on you and what you have to say.
- **Use pictures and/or graphs when they support your point.** Avoid clipart and random photos of children.
- **Explain your tables and graphs clearly and concisely.** All figures, tables, and graphs should have titles. Be sure the data source is noted on the slide and be ready to answer question about the underlying data.
- **Coordinate the colours of your text and background** so that the words show up clearly and don't clash.
- **Practice, practice, practice.**

#### PowerPoint Resources:

How to Avoid "Death by PowerPoint"

[http://www.communicateusingtechnology.com/articles/avoid\\_death\\_by\\_ppt.htm](http://www.communicateusingtechnology.com/articles/avoid_death_by_ppt.htm)

Avoiding Death by PowerPoint

<http://www.corbinball.com/articles/art-powerpoint.htm>