

VISUAL SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

A GUIDE TO CRAFTING VISUALLY EFFECTIVE SCIENTIFIC POSTERS AND IMAGERY



University
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KNOWING YOUR AUDIENCE

Specifically defining our audience allows us to tailor our message to that audience.

- Are they specialist or nonspecialist?
- What is their education level?
- What age are they?
- What preconceived notions might they have based on life experience?

The general public is too general! Here, it pays to be specific.

RECONTEXTUALIZATION

We aim not to simplify the science but to recontextualize our message to create meaning for our audience.

We can recontextualize by:

- Using metaphors and analogies
- Using symbolism
- Focusing on main concepts instead of facts
- Considering what motivates our audience
- Adapting how we frame our arguments

THE ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Effective visual communication requires intelligent design choices.

Elements of design to consider:

1. Shape/form
2. Line
3. Space
4. Size
5. Colour
6. Value
7. Texture

Principles of design to consider:

1. Emphasis
2. Balance
3. Contrast
4. Repetition
5. Movement
6. Harmony

** Please visit www.smartuwindsor.com for a more in-depth walkthrough of these concepts

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

I have...

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> defined who my target audience is. | <input type="checkbox"/> developed a colour scheme and know what each of those colours implies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> identified the biases my audience may have about my subject. | <input type="checkbox"/> thought about what my font choices tell my audience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> chosen an image style best suited for conveying information to my target audience. | <input type="checkbox"/> made intentional choices regarding the elements of design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> used appropriate metaphors and analogies | <input type="checkbox"/> used the principles of design to maximize my image's communication efficacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> focused on the main ideas and concepts instead of relaying facts | <input type="checkbox"/> thought about how my image looks as a whole and as its individual component pieces |