

e-mail from Nikolay Semin, participant in the WiR FOM workshop, reproduced with permission.

Hello guys,
maybe you remember me, I am Nikolay from the last year course write-it-right at FOM.
I am writing to share experience about how I used some of your tips for making my poster.

To make it short, some numbers:
Previously, the average amount of "hits" of my poster was like 1.5 per conference. I mean people who I did not know before and who did not know me. Also the number excludes the polite "I checked you poster, now you go check mine".

This time it was totally different. I used several tips of yours:
1) make the poster pop out and catch the eye. The poster design was inspired by the Top Gun movie and I really wanted to make my poster like a movie poster. The conference was about fluid/hydro/aero dynamics, so placing a cool looking fighter jet was not a bad decision.

- 2) the layout: from top left corner to the bottom right
- 3) "white space"
- 4) minimum words
- 5) special feature - stereo 3D
- 6) I printed 10 A4 versions of the poster. And 3 persons asked for them!

So the winning strategy was to use stereo 3D avatar-like technology in the poster, it would catch the eye immediately, since 3D is still not that common and still has WOW effect.

Also what was important - I got lucky choosing the right place to hang my poster. People going for the drinks after each sessions would always pass the place anyway. And they say lots of people gathering in front of the poster wearing 3D glasses, so it catch the attention. Eventually, it worked like a run away processes in physics - the more people are - the more will come. It is probably hard to convey with words the effect - there was a row with posters, looking more or less the same from the distance, and there was mine totally different. I saw many people passing by the row without intention to look at the poster, when suddenly something made them turn around and pay attention at my poster.

To make a comparison, the number of people who checked the poster (stood at least 5-10 seconds looking at it) was like 80. People who asked more deeply about the content and research were like 5 vs. 1.5 previously. And with 15-20 I had just general chit-chat. It was awesome to see people with their mouths open, saying wow, or others, who clearly had that "damn, I should have thought about something like this myself" look in the eyes. And many people were telling me that I would win the prize that time!

Too bad I did not win the poster prize, but I did have a tremendous amount of publicity. All my colleagues (we have a lab with about 20 people) told me I was the winner.

To conclude, I would like to thank you again for the great course. I hope my experience will help future courses.

Some sadness is in this final remark from the Top Gun: "there are no points for second place".

