Poster design principles

When designing a poster or other marketing material, there are some basic principles to use in order to present your information as clearly as possible.

Consistent font. Use just one or two different fonts to keep the appearance uniform and easy to read. Font variety can be achieved using the BOLD, ITALIC and UNDERLINE choices on the font toolbar. Sans serif fonts, such as Arial, are preferred for reading from a distance.

Symmetry. Keep the layout symmetrical. Try to space text evenly and keep design proportions balanced.

Keep it simple. Don't try and squeeze every last piece of information into your design. Be strategic, focus on the elements that are most likely to entice visitors and make these clear and concise. Don't forget the What, Where, When and How information.

Consistent alignment. Align the text boxes and illustrations in the poster by using guides in order to make the poster easy to navigate when seeing it for the first time.

Self-contained. A poster should be self-contained, self-explanatory and designed to allow several viewers to view it simultaneously.

Viewed from a distance. The narrative text should be minimised into short, separated paragraphs using a large typeface. The minimum size recommended is 24pt; larger typefaces (28pt+) are easier to read from a distance.

Backgrounds. The best legibility is achieved by using black text on white backgrounds. Backgrounds made of dark images or texture patterns can cause the text to be obscured.