Elements of a Scientific Poster

Title
Titles for scientific posters should summarize the project as a whole with particular emphasis on the results. An author line should follow your title.

Abstract
An abstract summarizes the entire research project. The abstract should not repeat what is stated in other sections, but should encapsulate critical features of all the other poster elements.

Introduction
The introduction clearly defines the research question as well as the rationale for the study. Relevant background information provides a context for the study and reports important trends, findings, and natural history information gleaned from other sources (primary literature, web, texts, etc.).

Methods
Experimental methods are described in a concise paragraph or through an original representation that describes the flow and proper sequence of important aspects of the experimental protocol. This may be represented as a model, flowchart, or series of ordered bullet points. The methods section clearly and concisely answers the question, “what did the researchers do?” Photographs and/or drawings may be used to illustrate relevant aspects of the experimental methods (e.g., structures, phases, the study organism, etc.).

Results
Summary data (means, standard deviations, etc.) are organized in clearly labeled tables, graphs, and figures that are appropriate to the type of data. Descriptive captions accompany all figures. Titles, legends, keys, and other descriptors contribute to organization and clarity of the data. Data analyses indicate proper use of formulas and statistics (if applicable) and are free from calculation errors. If relevant, results may also include drawings and/or photographs that aid in data interpretation.

Conclusion/Discussion
Major findings are clearly and concisely summarized with reference to the original purpose of the experiment (i.e., what do the results tell you about the “big picture”?). Conclusions are logical and consistent with the data presented. Where appropriate, authors may offer alternative interpretations of data and/or critically evaluate the effectiveness or limitations of their methods. Suggestions for future studies are noted that expand understanding of the question tested.

References
References are cited within the body of the text and a complete bibliography is presented that is correctly formatted according to CSE guidelines (http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/csegd.php; Council of Science Editors).

Photos/Images
Photos and images add to the aesthetic quality of the poster and aid in aspects of interpretation for any or all poster elements. Photos may be of the study organism and/or students conducting the research. All images include captions, including proper credit for materials that have been used from other sources.