

HELPFUL HINTS FOR STUDENTS

ANNUAL POSTER ART CONTEST TO PROMOTE ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR AWARENESS

KNOW YOUR MISSION

Read the instructions that were supplied by the Connecticut Coalition for Organ and Tissue Donation and then read them again to make sure you understand them. A high percentage of posters are rejected outright simply because instructions were not followed and rules were not adhered to.

Know what organ and tissue donation is all about. It's not just about heart transplants. Organs like kidneys, livers and lungs can be donated. So can a whole bunch of other body parts like eyes, bones, even skin.

SPELLING COUNTS!

Of all the rules that were broken, misspelling words was at the top of the list. The most often misspelled word? Donor! That's D-O-N-O-R, not E-R!

VAN GOGH OR JUST PLAIN JOE

You need not be an artist to do well in this contest. You should, however, be neat, organized in both thought and action and have a pretty good idea of how you will promote organ and tissue donation.

In the fast paced world of advertising, you've got an average of three whole seconds to capture someone's attention and get your point across. It is the graphic designer who takes all the elements – the words, the pictures, the colors – and arranges them in a way that is easy to read and understand.

Plan your poster before you start to draw. Know where you will put everything and ask other people if it all makes sense to them when they look at it.

If you have the time, study some magazine and billboard advertising. Pick ads you find appealing and write down what it is that's so special about them. Is it the bold headline or the picture or drawing? Do the colors contrast or compliment? Do your eyes move smoothly from one element of the ad to the next? Does it gain your interest?

KISS ME! KISS ME!

Subscribe to the KISS theory, as in Keep It Simple, Students. What do I mean by this? Well, most of the people out there simply don't know much about organ and tissue donation. So you need to talk to these people in simple, uncomplicated and non-technical terms.

Limit the number of colors you use to no more than four. Multiple colors may confuse a person's eyes and make them wander around your poster. Remember that three seconds is all you've got.

Symbolism works well and was a key factor in determining the winners of the last two contests. A recent winning poster depicted the silhouette of a figure against a dark background handing a gift-wrapped package to another silhouetted figure, this one against a bright background. The headline urged people to give the gift of life

One year prior, the winning poster was a take off on the omnipresent recycling symbol. This poster simply urged people to consider recycling life. Its bright and contrasting royal blue and orange color scheme was an instant attention grabber.

When the contest judges examine the entries, they place the posters on the tables and walls of this huge room. It does not take long to find the winning entries. They always seem to just jump right out. As you design your poster, take a few minutes every now and then to view it from across your room. You will find that it will look very different from far away. You should be able to read the words on your poster and your friends should understand the message.

DON'T GROSS ME OUT

While it is true, organs are removed from people's bodies after they die, drawing of dead people with their organs popping out and skeletons holding their hearts in their hands, while somewhat laughable, are not very appealing. Let's focus on the positive side.

One final note. Don't use corny or tired old slogans and clichés. Use your imagination and your feelings. That's what art is all about.

CRITERIA WHEN DESIGNING A POWERFUL POSTER

APPEAL TO A HIGHER AUTHORITY

- ◆ GOD, DOCTOR, LAWYER, STAR ATHLETE, MOVIE STAR, SINGER, MOTHERS

USE OF STATISTICS

- ◆ LIVES SAVED, LIVES LOST, ETC.

APPEAL TO INTELLIGENCE

- ◆ FAIR-MINDEDNESS, MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS, THOUGHTFULNESS

PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT

- ◆ KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE (YOUTH, ELDERLY)

I - MY (TAKE OWNERSHIP)

- ◆ IS THE MESSAGE FROM THE DONOR... OR IS THE MESSAGE FROM THE RECIPIENT...

YOU - YOUR

- ◆ IS THE MESSAGE TO THE DONOR OR IS THE MESSAGE TO THE RECIPIENT

WE - US

- ◆ IS THERE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND TOGETHERNESS, PROBLEM SOLVING AND GROUP INVOLVEMENT?

USE A FAMILIAR PHRASE APPLIED WITH NEW MEANING

- ◆ COMMERCIAL, LYRIC, POEM, QUOTE, CONTEMPORARY JARGON

RELATIONSHIP TO THEME

- ◆ DO THE ILLUSTRATIONS AND CAPTIONS REINFORCE EACH OTHER?

- ◆ IS THE CONCEPT GENERALIZED, OR DOES IT DEAL WITH ONLY ONE ASPECT OF ORGAN OR TISSUE DONATION?

- ◆ EMOTION/IMPACT? DOES THE MESSAGE "COME ACROSS" QUICKLY? OR DO YOU HAVE TO STOP TO FIGURE IT OUT?

- ◆ ARE THE MAIN WORDS MORE IMPORTANT (LARGER, STRONGER, BRIGHTER, ECT.) THAN SECONDARY WORDS

- ◆ AND PHRASES? DO THE COLORS REINFORCE THE EMOTIONAL SENSE OR FEELING OF THE CONCEPT?

ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

- ◆ AVOID NEGATIVE PHRASING..AVOID "DON'TS.. STRESS THE DO'S"

NEATNESS AND READABILITY

- ◆ IS LETTERING LEGIBLE?

- ◆ CAN WORDS BE READ AT A DISTANCE?

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