Attributing Poster Presentations and Symposia

Conference attendees often decide to use presentation material in manuscript writing. However, many authors question the proper format that should be used for such sources. Never fear! That dilemma is about to be resolved for you.

If the reference item in question is a poster or paper presentation, then the creator/presenter acts as the ‘author’ of the piece. Your reference entry should include the presenter’s name, year and month of the display, title of the contribution, “Poster [or Paper] presented at the meeting of...,” the name of the presenting organization, and the location.

For example, this citation was created from a poster that was presented at last year’s AMSN Convention:

Doshi, S. (2009, September). Lung transplantation surgery for patients who have idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. Poster presented at the meeting of the Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses, Washington, DC.

Similarly, if your manuscript is going to include attribution to a particular symposium or session, the speaker acts as the author of the source material. The major difference here is that your entry will also include the conference title and the name of the Chair of the event. Verbiage is also altered to read “Symposium conducted at the meeting of...”

If you were to include a presentation from this year’s AMSN Convention, you might use:

Atkins, J.M. (2010, October). Impetus for change: The impact of new regulations to improve outcomes. In G. Hurst (Chair), Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses 19th Annual Convention. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses, Las Vegas, NV.

The inclusion of printed symposia material is very much like the use of a standard periodical or book. The appearance of these references don’t vary drastically from those of journal articles, and thus, don’t really need explanation here. See your APA Style Manual (6th ed.) for further details.

Katie R. Brownlow, ELS, is a Managing Editor, Jannetti Publications, Inc., a Division of Anthony J. Jannetti, Inc., Pitman, NJ. She may be contacted via email at katie@ajj.com.