30th Annual BACP Counselling and Psychotherapy Research Conference, May 2024

In-person conference: Birmingham

Tips for Presenters (particularly useful for first time presenters)

The BACP Research Conference has always been an event that encourages input from those new to research and academic conferences, as well as enjoying papers from leading international figures. On request, we have produced some tips and suggestions that might be helpful, especially for those with less experience in presenting a paper.

These tips relate to 30-minute Research Paper presentations.

Planning:

- Make sure the study you are presenting is valid and the methodology sound (it should not be opinion). Make sure the strengths of the research are clear and be aware of its limitations.

- Decide where the focus should be and the 3 key points you want to make. If it is a large piece of research, eg, a PhD, only include key issues. Develop a logical and clear structure. Take account of colleagues' and friends' comments.

- The main body of your research and its implications for practice should be given at least 10 minutes in your presentation in a 30-minute 'Research Paper' slot in the programme. It is vital you limit the presentation of your methods to between 3 and 5 minutes. Too often, presenters get carried away with their enthusiasm at this stage, leaving insufficient time to present and discuss their research and findings, which leaves their audience frustrated.

- It is usual for presenters to have a handout available (in addition to the abstract). It is impossible to say for certain how many you will need, but around 40 should suffice. Further references, literature reviewing and details about the methodology should be put in your additional handout.

- Imagine the audience and try to relate your presentation to them. Most delegates at the BACP Research Conference will be practitioners. Most (but not all) will have some knowledge of research. Some will be experts but usually only very familiar with one area.

- Allow up to 20 minutes for the presentation and keep to the point (rehearse the presentation in full).

- Allow 10 minutes for questions and feedback (rehearse questions you can expect).

- If you are using audio-visual aids (OHP or Power Point slides) in your

presentation (strong visual images work well) a good rule of thumb is no more than 5 pieces of information (clear, readable and appealing) on each slide, and allow at least one minute for each slide. They should be key points or illustrations only - not a script.

Structure:

- Introduce yourself and your topic, and outline your aims/plan for the presentation.

- What was the context of the study and how does it relate to previous research?

- Why was it done?

- How was it done? (And what are the criticisms/ limitations of your research approach?).

- What did you find or what are your emerging findings? (And what are the weaknesses in your evidence?).

- What are the implications? (Implications for practice, how far can this be generalised, and what are the future research questions?).

- Sum up - clear conclusions are strong ones (no matter whether they are popular or positive in themselves).

On the day:

- If using PowerPoint, make sure you have your presentation on a memory stick with you, ready to upload when your session is scheduled.

- Have some handouts with any additional information ready for your audience.

- Be positive, enthusiastic and get excited. Above all, do not worry. If your research is good the audience will be interested in what you have to say. Our evaluations report that the BACP Research Conference is not an 'intimidating' event; nobody will be there to pick holes in your work, but *constructive* criticism is encouraged.

- Enjoy giving your presentation as much as you can!

You will have a chance to get valuable feedback on your work during the 10 minute discussion after your presentation and all delegates present will also be asked to evaluate your presentation on the sheets provided in their pack.

Presenters are encouraged to prepare their conference presentations as papers for the BACP publication **'Counselling and Psychotherapy Research'** (known as CPR) after the conference. Information on style and format for submissions can be found on the Wiley website.