

Good to Great

The Family Planning Council



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Tips on how to design a poster

Posters are commonly used to announce or promote something new. They must grab a passerby's attention and connect quickly so that the person is drawn in to read additional information and the call to action.

The Family Planning Council came to us to create a new poster to promote the state Department of Public Welfare's SelectPlan for Women program. The promotion had started with a small poster produced in-house, which didn't generate the desired call volume. Council leaders recognized the need to take this public awareness campaign to a higher level with a professionally designed poster that was "larger in every sense of the word: bigger, bolder, better."

The display type on the existing poster wasn't clear about the offer. The text lacked a hierarchy and provided too much information, leading to confusion. The single image, while friendly and appealing, was not the kind of visual that instantly told the passerby "this offer is for women."

The poster redesign started with a clear statement of the compelling offer: Free Women's Healthcare. The text was pared down to a few basic points. The designer picked up and enhanced the sunflower motif to provide visual continuity, but added the faces of diverse women spread across the age range eligible for SelectPlan for Women.

When designing a poster:

1. Start with a headline that goes right to the heart of the message. End with the call to action. Those two elements top your hierarchy of information; everything else should be treated as secondary information that "fills in the blanks." Keep the copy tight. On a poster, less really is more.
2. Use photos and/or illustrations that speak to the target audience. Nothing draws people into a design more quickly than a face they can relate to.
3. Place text and visual elements so they bring interest to the design. In this poster, for example, clusters of text and photos reinforce the playful, fun sunflower motif.



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