

Exceptional Presentations In Spite of PowerPoint: *How to Communicate in the Digital Age*



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Abstract:“PowerPoint poisoning” and “death by PowerPoint” have entered the lexicon for good reason. PowerPoint is a tool, just like a hammer is a tool. Wielded well, PowerPoint provides a sound foundation for great presentations, just as a hammer can make beautiful things in the hands of a craftsman. Wielded poorly, both hammers and PowerPoint can do significant damage. Giving a good presentation is about engaging with an audience, using what is on the screen to reinforce and solidify what is being said. Too frequently, what is on the screen is allowed to overshadow the presenter. This is bad both for the audience and the presenter.



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The Battle of Gettysburg was fought from July 1 to July 3, 1863. It was a horrible battle.

On November 19, 1863, a national cemetery was dedicated at the battlefield. Speeches were given on that occasion. This man was the featured speaker of the day. This man spoke for 2 hours. He spoke 13,508 words. That speech was, by all accounts, a great speech. After some music was played, another man stood up

He began:

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate -- we can not consecrate -- we can not hallow -- this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.



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Not 13 thousand words, only 280 words.

The man on the left is Edward Everett, a man that few people know and most can't quote. Abraham Lincoln used less than 3 minutes to say something that most Americans recognize.

There are a couple of lessons in this. The first is that you should always aspire to tell your story in as few words as possible. Don't waste your audiences time. If your message can be conveyed in a 17 syllable haiku, stop after 17 syllables.

The more important message is

A presentation succeeds because of what you say, not because of what you show.

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Make words memorable – Lincoln didn't say 87. He chose four score and seven.

Why Use Visual Aids?

	Recall in 3 hrs	Recall in 3 days
Telling (alone)	70%	10%
Showing (alone)	72%	20%
Telling and Showing Together	85%	65%

Gene Anderson

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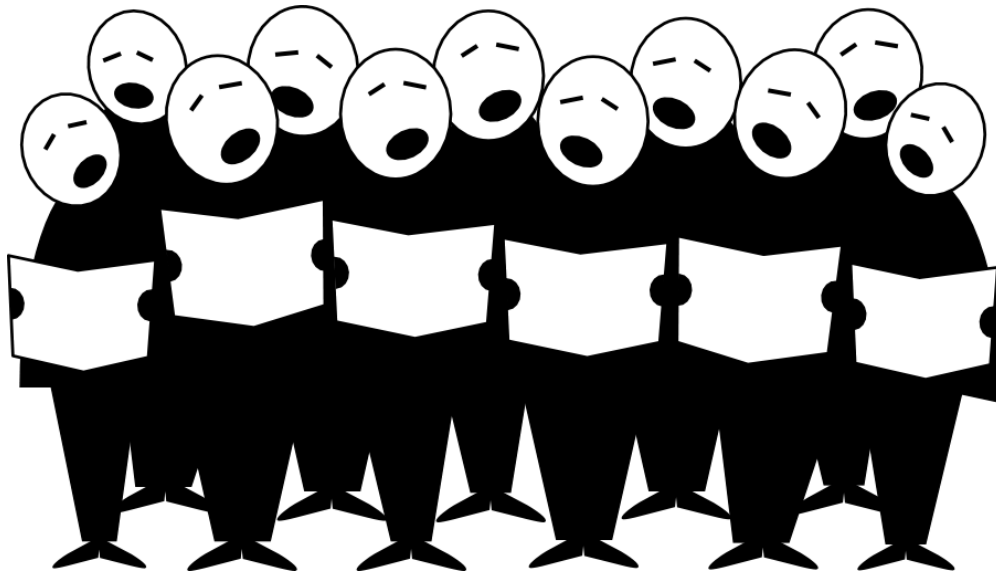


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Lincoln didn't have the benefit of audio visuals. No slides. No powerpoint, yet he delivered a powerful message.

That opens up the question of whether we really need slides. Some data supporting using slides is that they improve recall. That is what you want. You want your audience to remember what you say.

Slides As Chorus



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Slides as chorus. They reinforce your story, they aren't the story.



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Too often we sit at desks and give presentations, just as we are doing now. It teaches you bad behaviors.

If you take away one thing from this presentation, let it be this: when you have a live audience, act like it.

Command the Room



from <http://genius.com>

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Steve Jobs is certainly famous for his presentations. One thing he did was always command the room. He made himself the focus of the presentation. He knew his audience

Proactively Paranoid

Adam Bryant NYT Guide



Use hyperlinks in the document to give yourself flexibility to shorten or amplify topics

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show how buttons work to move around a presentation flexibly. Point being made is that you can easily build in flexibility for skipping ahead or to the end. Hyperlinks are easily added in PowerPoint or PDF or other presentation software.

Bryant, Adam; "How to Speak in Public", The New York Times, downloaded from www.nytimes.com/guides/year-of-living-better/how-to-speak-in-public on 11 Nov 2018.



Designing a presentation without an audience in mind is like writing a love letter and addressing it 'to whom it may concern'.



Ken Haemer
Presentation Research Manager,
AT&T

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In HBR Guide to Persuasive Presentations



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The Six Signals All Audiences Want to Hear



1. I will not waste your time
2. I know who you are
3. I am well organized
4. I know my subject
5. Here is my most important point
6. I am finished

Ed Wohlmut in The Overnight Guide to Public Speaking



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The beginning is the most important part of the work.

Plato



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Most valuable real estate in any talk. If you lose the audience to their cell phones, you may never get them back.



No one can remember more than three points.

Phil Crosby



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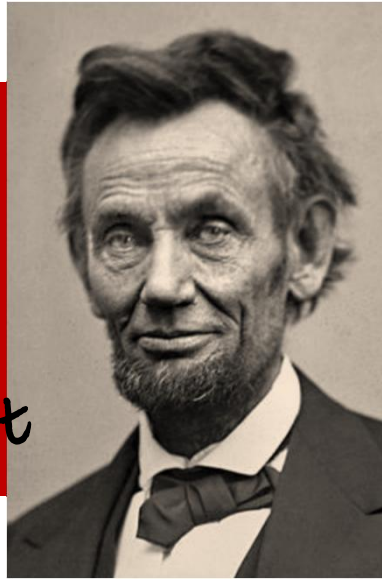


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One of the rules of thumb is the 4 plus or minus 1 rule. Don't expect your audience to really remember more than 4 plus or minus one things. The key to a good talk is to get them to understand and remember the 4 plus or minus one things that you choose.

Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.

^point



*Google Peter Norvig PowerPoint
Gettysburg – fun stuff*

Lincoln quote modified by Duarte

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Duarte in Slideology altered one of Lincoln's most famous quotes

Good news. There is an abundance of websites, books, tutorials, lists, guides, tips and more on giving presentations and on powerpoint. If there is something – anything – you want to do in a presentation, you'll be able to find someone who agrees. There is no fool proof method, no formula that you can follow to guarantee success.

I am going to offer examples and food for thought that I hope will help all of you to be better presenters. PowerPoint in previous versions offered to make slides from a text document. Applying the technology to the Gettysburg Address gives a humorous result, as demonstrated by Peter Norvig.

Gettysburg Cemetery Dedication

Abraham Lincoln

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Agenda

- Met on battlefield (great)
- Dedicate portion of field - fitting!
- Unfinished work (great tasks)

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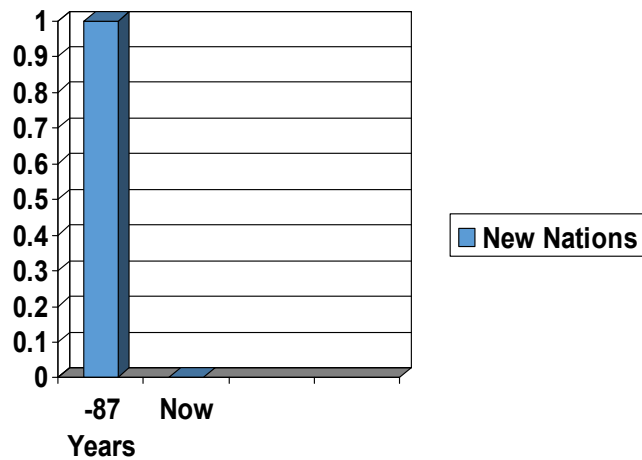
Not on Agenda!

- Dedicate
- Consecrate
- Hallow
(in narrow sense)
- Add or detract
- Note or remember what we say

Review of Key Objectives & Critical Success Factors

- What makes nation unique
 - Conceived in Liberty
 - Men are equal
- Shared vision
 - New birth of freedom
 - Gov't of/for/by the people

Organizational Overview



Summary

- New nation
- Civil war
- Dedicate field
- Dedicated to unfinished work
- New birth of freedom
- Government not perish

PowerPoint Poisoning

Dilbert by Scott Adams

INTRODUCED THE CONCEPT OF POWERPOINT
POISONING

<http://dilbert.com/strip/2000-08-16>

August 16, 2000

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All of us have sat through presentations that were torture. I want to give appropriate credit to Scott Adams for introducing the term "PowerPoint poisoning".

The New York Times

April 26, 2010

We Have Met the Enemy and He Is PowerPoint

By ELISABETH BUMILLER

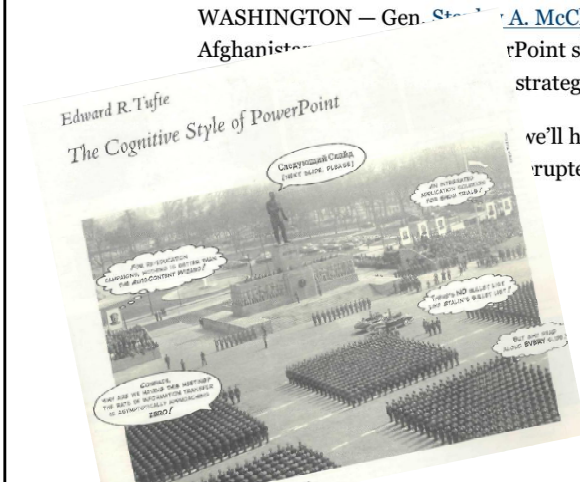
WASHINGTON — Gen. Stephen A. McChrystal, the leader of American forces in Afghanistan, used a PowerPoint slide in Kabul last summer to outline his strategy, but looked more like a nervous wreck than a confident commander.

“We’ll have won the war,” he said, then he burst into laughter.

What's Your Point, Lieutenant? Just Cut To the Pie Charts
The Pentagon Declares War On Electronic Slide Shows That Make Briefings a Pain

By GREG JAFFE
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
WASHINGTON — Earlier this year, Gen. Hugh Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, issued an unusual order to U.S. military bases around the globe. His message: enough with the bells and whistles — just get to the point. It seems that e-mailed military briefings larded with electronic “slides” of booming tanks and spinning pie charts were gobbling up so much of the Defense Department’s classified bandwidth that they were slowing more important communications between headquarters and the field.

Too many bright, young junior officers are leaving the military for the private sector? A recent survey of captains at Fort Benning, Ga., cites the “ubiquity of the PowerPoint Army” as a prime reason for their disaffection. “The idea behind our eyes is for us to see the world through all-



It doesn't end there.

“PowerPoint makes us stupid,” Gen. James N. Mattis of the Marine Corps, the Joint Forces commander, said this month at a military conference in North Carolina. (He spoke without PowerPoint.) Brig. Gen. H. R. McMaster, (currently National Security Advisor) banned PowerPoint likening it to an internal threat.

“It’s dangerous because it can create the illusion of understanding and the illusion of control,” General McMaster said in a telephone interview afterward. “Some problems in the world are not bullet-izable.”

Commanders say that behind all the PowerPoint jokes are serious concerns that the program stifles discussion, critical thinking and thoughtful decision-making. Not least, it ties up junior officers — referred to as PowerPoint Rangers — in the daily preparation of slides.

It led some in the military to suggest its best use would be to give it to our enemies to distract them.

These are amusing and, to be fair, PowerPoint has its defenders. It is just a tool. Before using a tool, you have to plan. Let’s talk about preparing a message, preparing a story, before focusing on the tool.

Mind Ready



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Mind Ready is a term I like to use to describe presentations of data. You want to do the work for your audience. You don't want them to struggle to understand your slide, you want to craft it to make it easy for them to digest. You want it to be memorable.

Have you ever attended a presentation where the speaker says I know you can't read this? That should never happen. Your job is to prepare the material in a way that the audience can understand.

You want it to be mind ready.

Font Choice

Focus on readability.



Sans serif

Arial

Segoe

Tahoma

Serif

Times New Roman

Averia

Bookman

Century

Trouble

Comic Sans

Bazooka

Script

Fancy

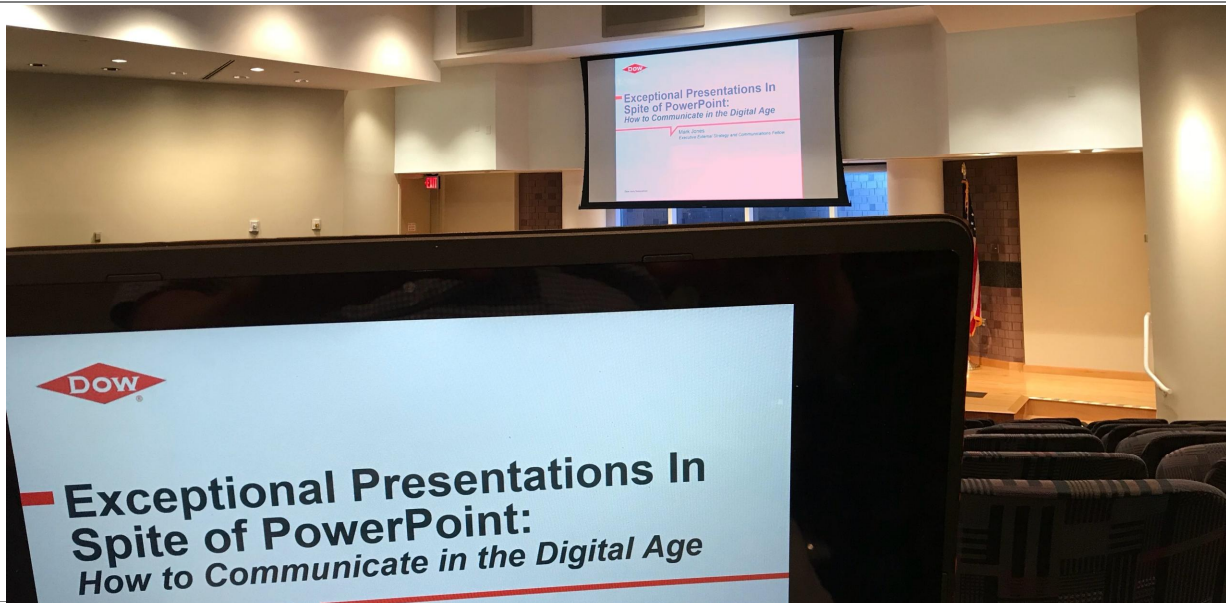
Wierd

STRANGE

Swirly

BZAPPE

Size?



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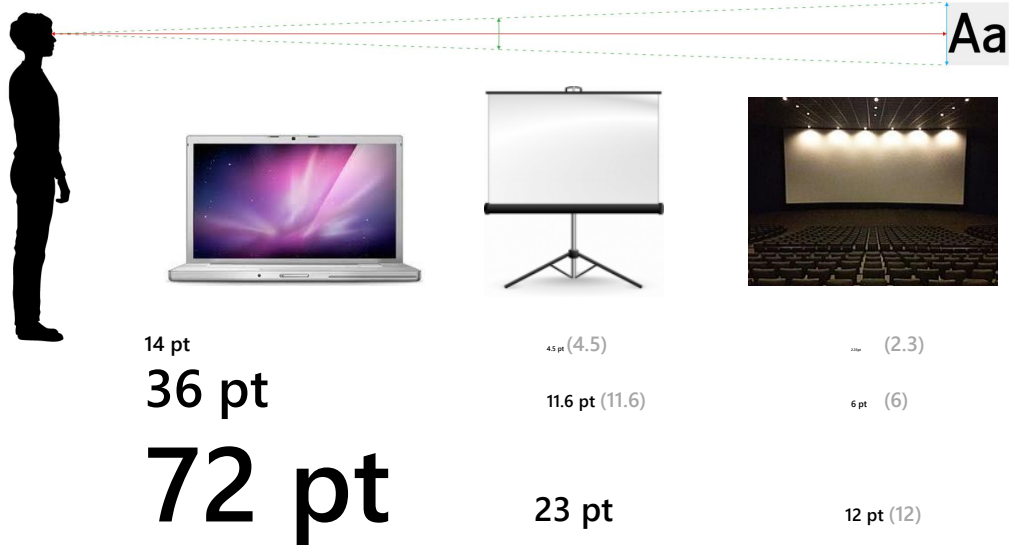
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Remember the screen your audience will view will be far away and smaller than it appears on your screen.

Size?



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assumptions are 74 inch at 28 feet and 18 feet screen at 180 feet (Kavli hall in Boston 2018)

Memorable is Good

Which is better for the environment?

A meat-eater in a Prius



A vegan in a Hummer

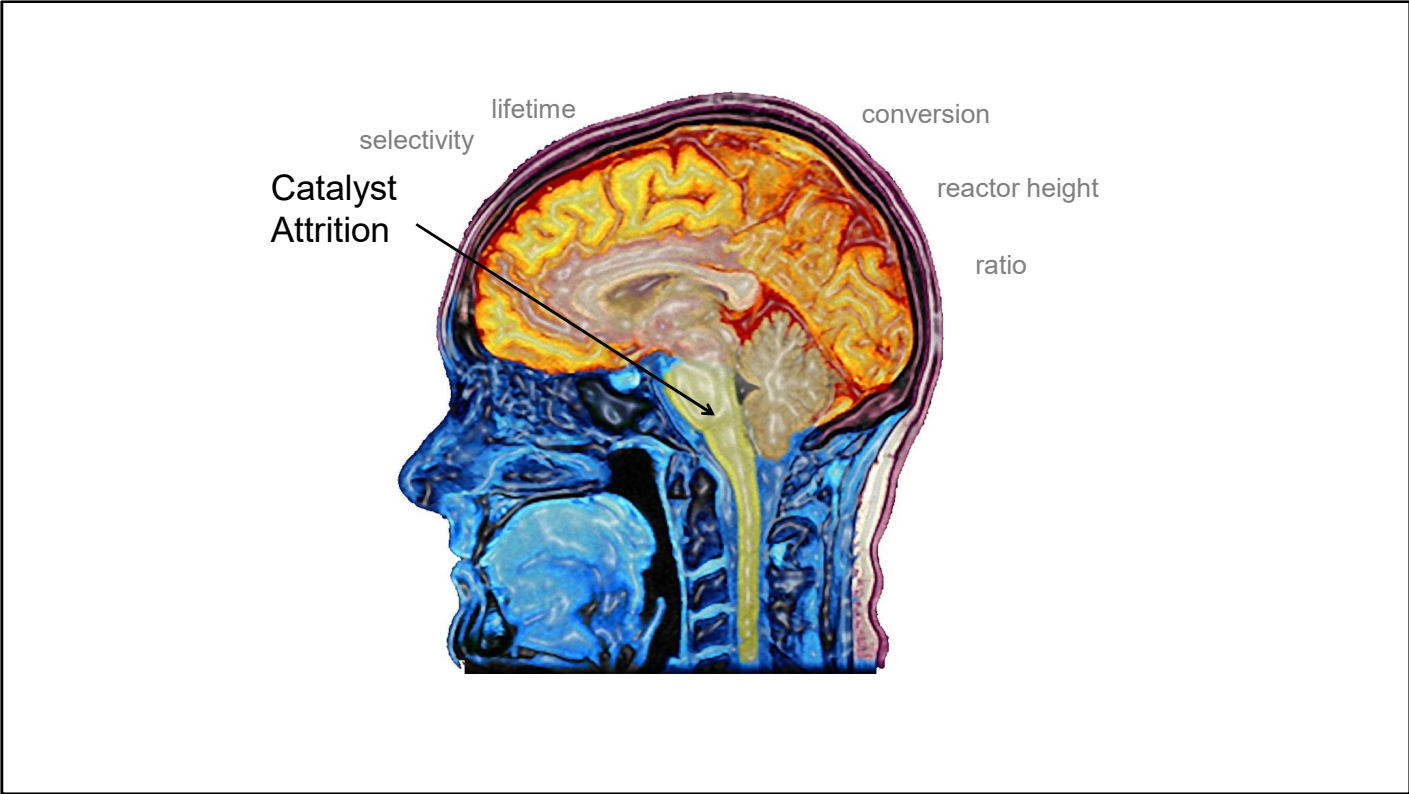
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Michael Pollan said that “a vegan in a Hummer has a lighter carbon footprint than a beef eater in a Prius.” Highly tweetable, yes, but not true, [says Adam Pasick of Reuters](#). Pasick cites a 2005 paper that “found that the difference between a heavy meat-eating diet and a vegan diet was about 2 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per person per year. The difference between a Prius and an SUV (they used a Suburban, which gets about the same mileage as a Hummer) was 4.76 tons per year.” However, Pasick admits that when you factor in improvements in gas mileage that have occurred since 2005, the difference between a Prius and Hummer driver is 2.6 to 3.3 tons per year — which isn’t *that* far from the two-ton difference between a heavy meat eater and a vegan. Pollan now says he doesn’t feel comfortable defending his statement, but that he stands by the gist of it.



Critical to life functions are in the brain stem.

Embodied Fossil Energy

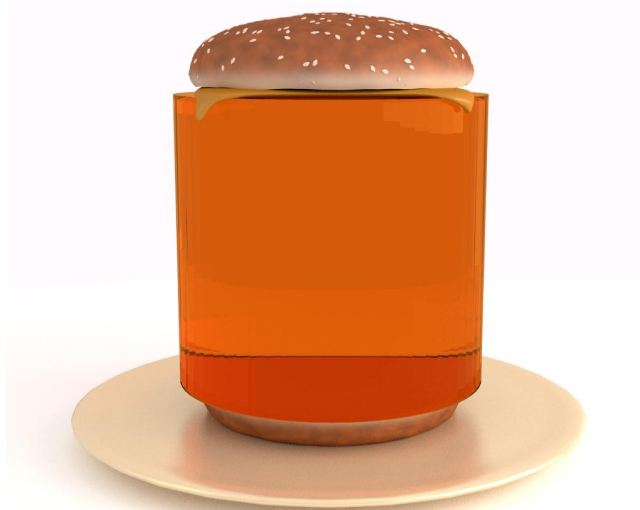


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“All the truth
is in the past
that the right hand
highlighted what is
important
Keep it simple”

Five Principles of Data Presentation



- Tell the truth
- Get to the point
- Pick the right tool
- Highlight what is important
- Keep it ~~simple~~ **appropriate**

Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.



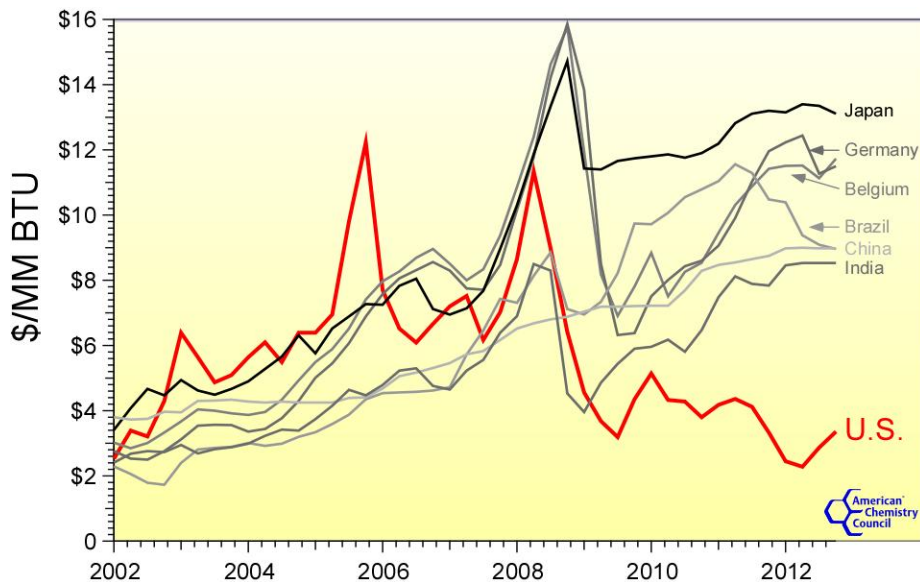
Nancy Duarte in Slideology

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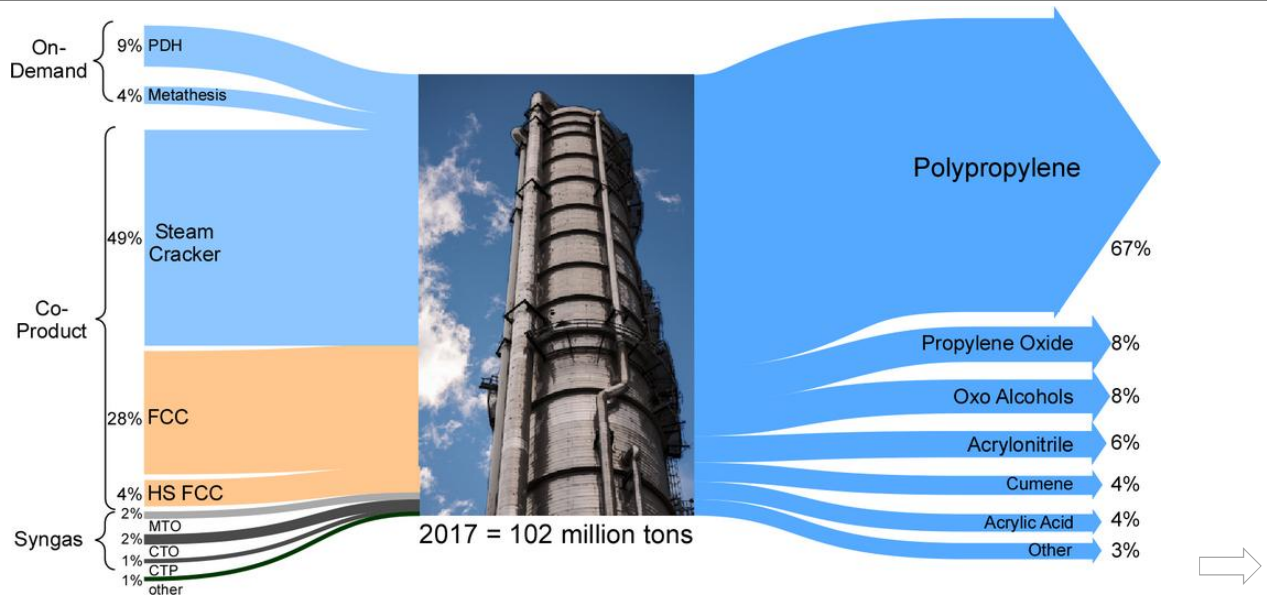
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World Propylene



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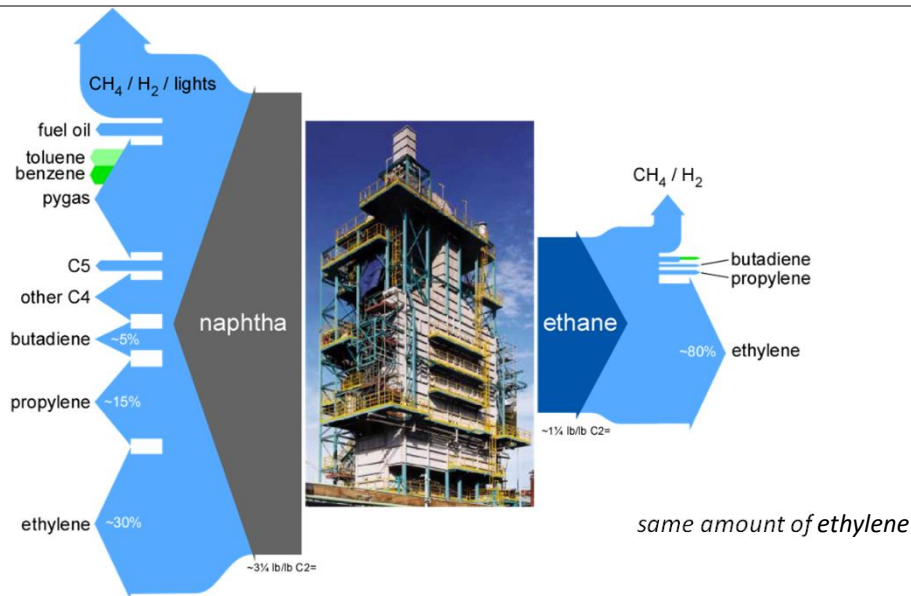
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Sankey diagram or flow diagram can be a powerful way to display data.

Naphtha vs Ethane Cracking Comparison



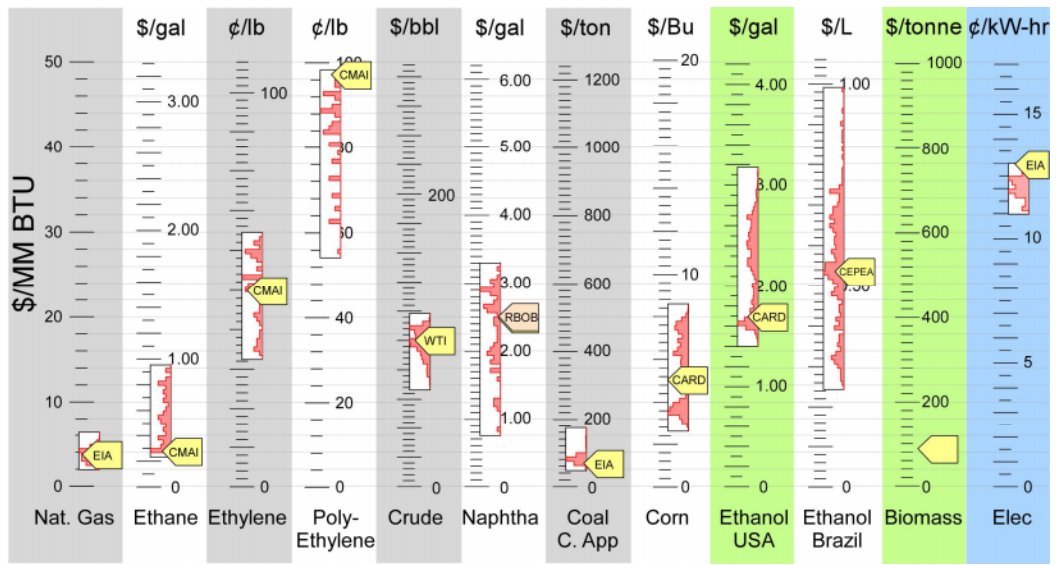
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Data Rich Slide



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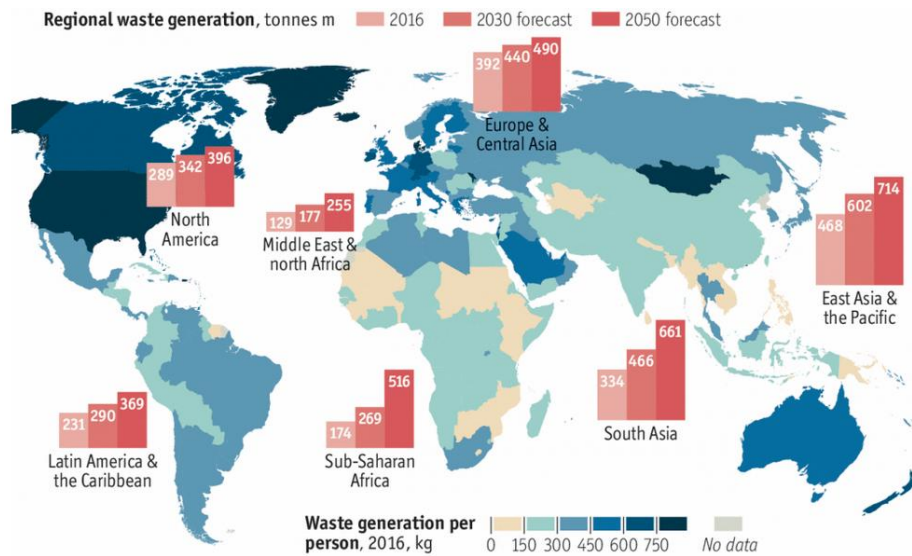
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Energy comparison slide connecting a variety of materials. All read against the far left energy axis.

Lots of Information – Throwaway World



Source: World Bank

The Economist; 2 Oct 2018

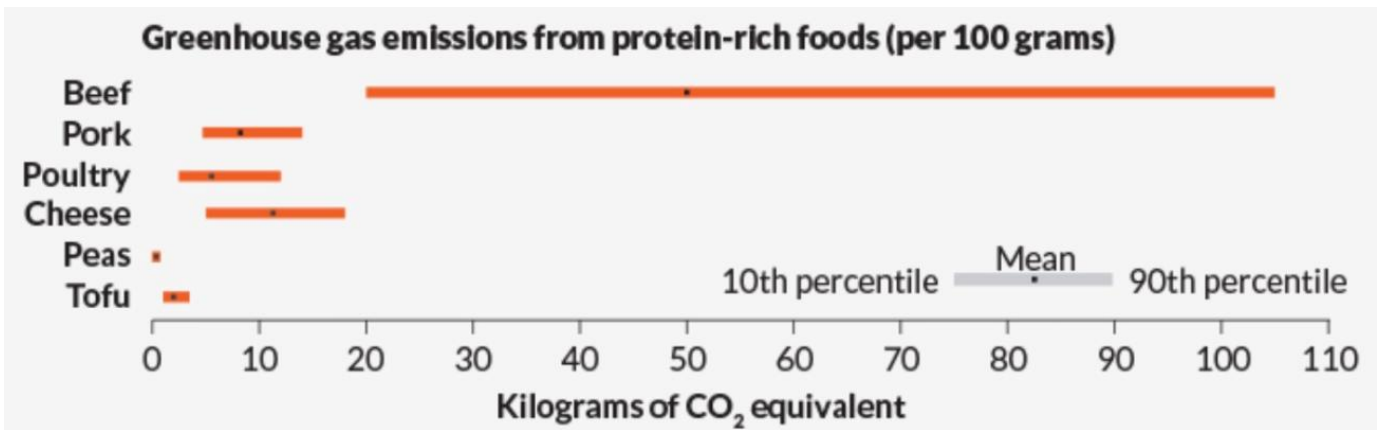
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Farm to Table



graphic by C. Chang in Milius, Susan; "Can science build a better burger?"; *Science News*, September 20, 2018 downloaded from sciencenews.org/article/can-science-build-better-burger on 2 November 2018.

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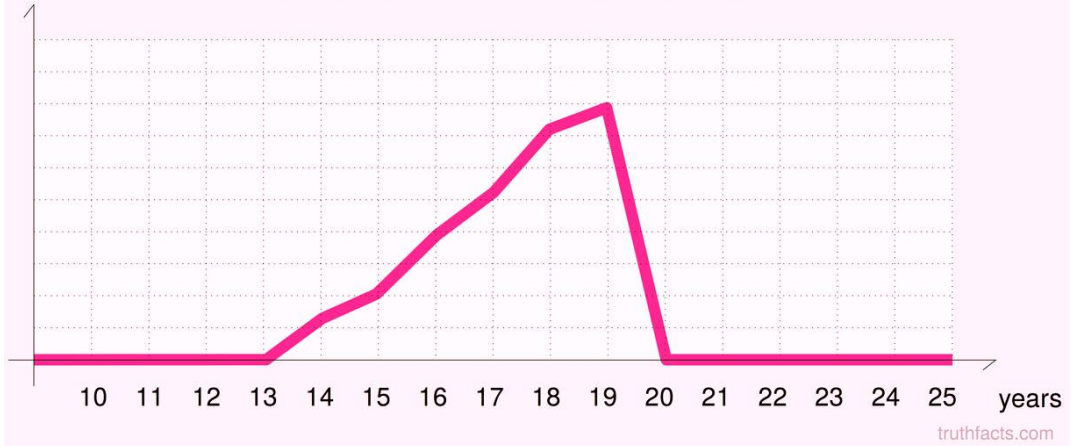


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Bad Graphs



STATISTICS SHOW THAT TEEN PREGNANCIES DROP
DRASTICALLY AFTER THE AGE OF 20



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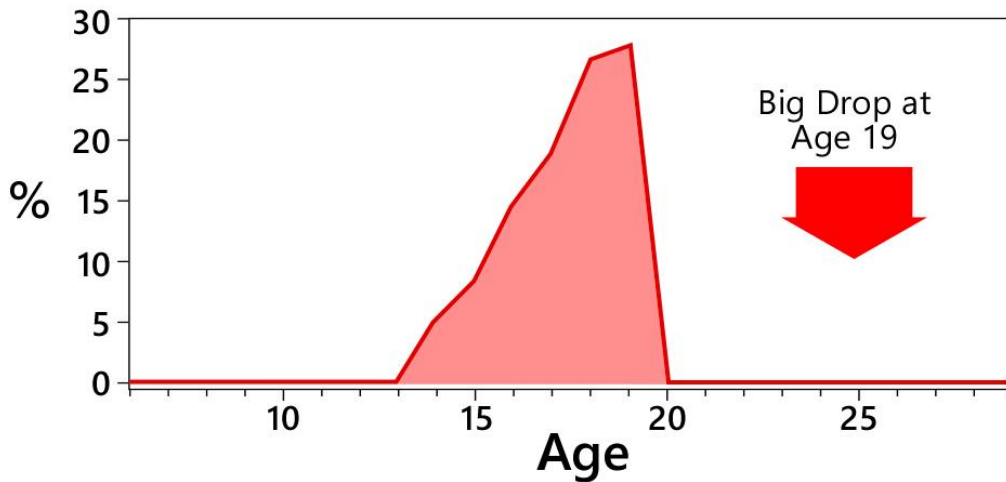
<http://www.truthfacts.com/top-100>



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Flawed Conclusion, But Better Graph

Teen Pregnancy



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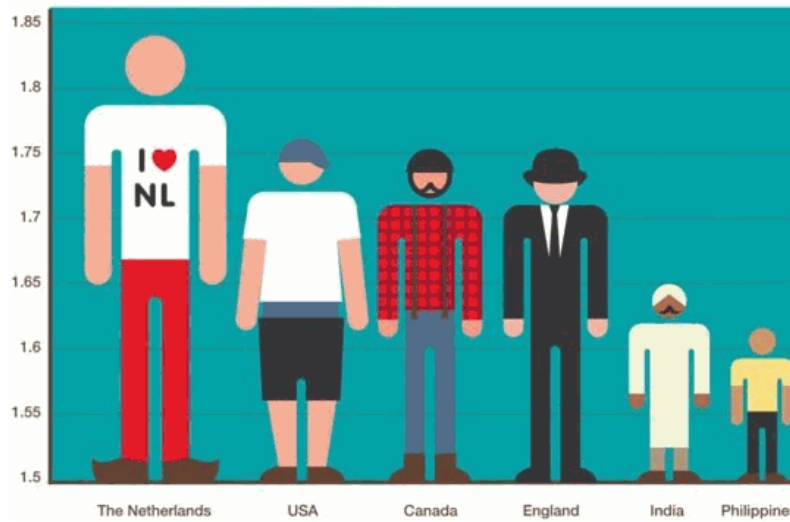
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Data is silly since teen years end at 20. Problem is there was no axis label.

Bad Graphs – Looking Down on the Rest of the World



(Average male height in m)



ticktockmaths.co.uk/bad-graphs/



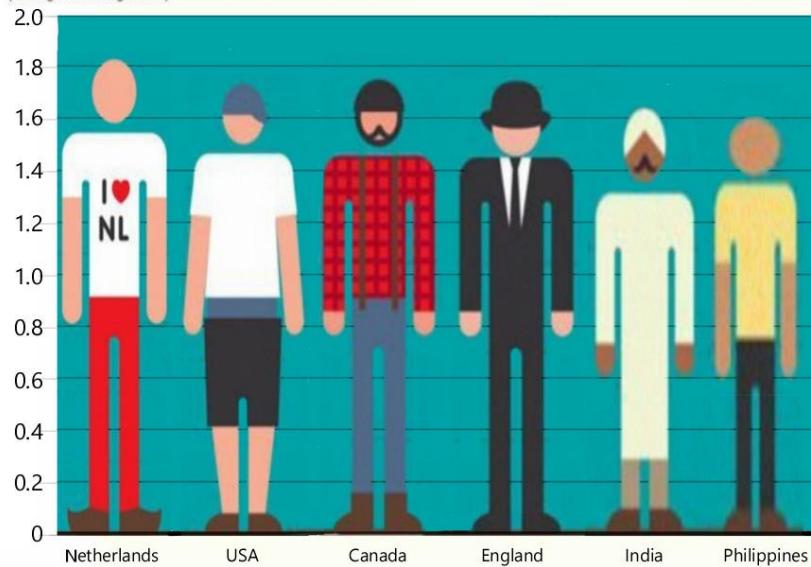
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Better – but not good enough

(Average male height in m)



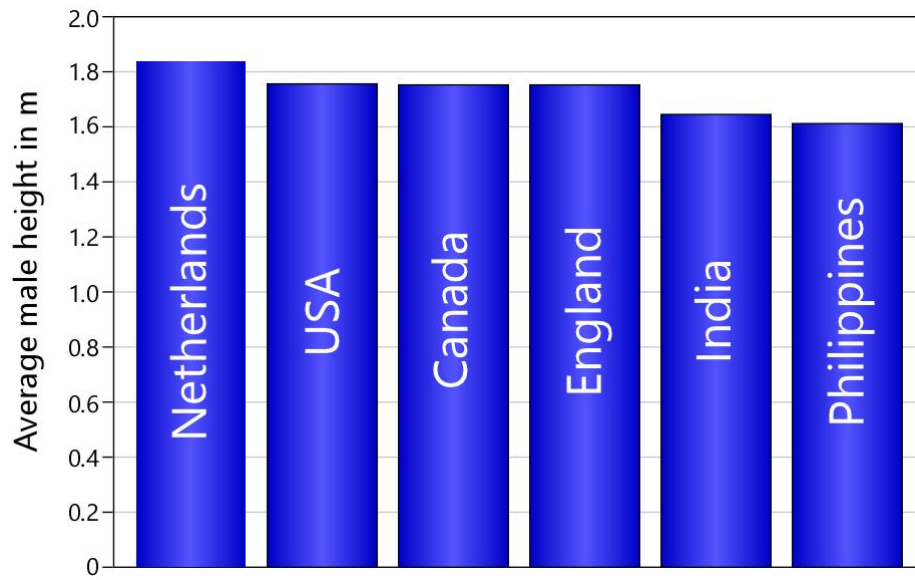
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Problem is the axis doesn't start at zero.

Better Graph



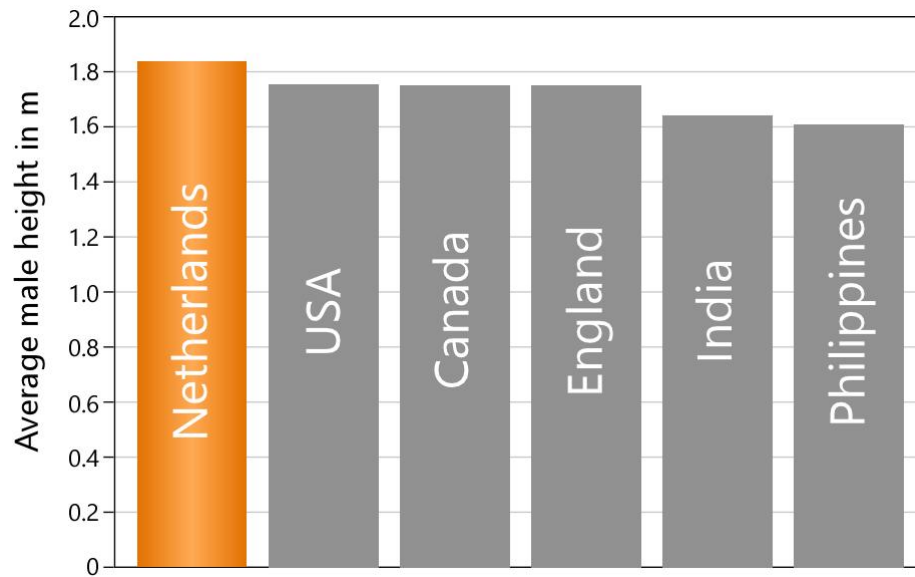
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Making the Point



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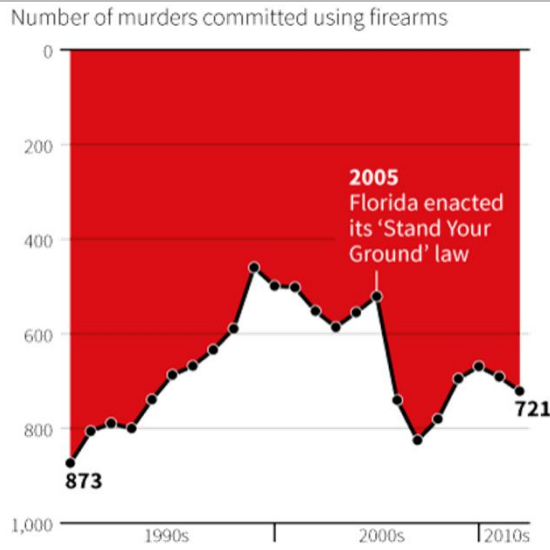
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Best way to show if your only point is the Dutch are the tallest.

Gun deaths in Florida



Source: Florida Department of Law Enforcement

methodsavvy.com/good-data-bad-graphs/



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C. Chan 16/02/2014

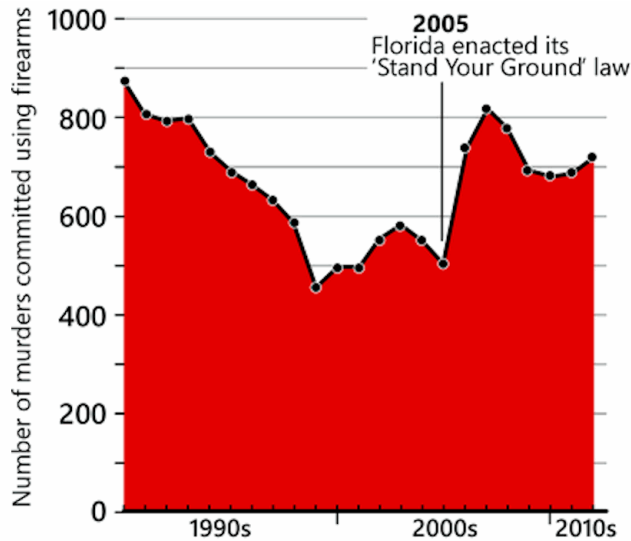


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Graph appears to show drop in gun deaths after enactment of 2005 law.

Example of using a plot that doesn't tell the truth.

Gun deaths in Florida



Source: Florida Dept of Law Enforcement



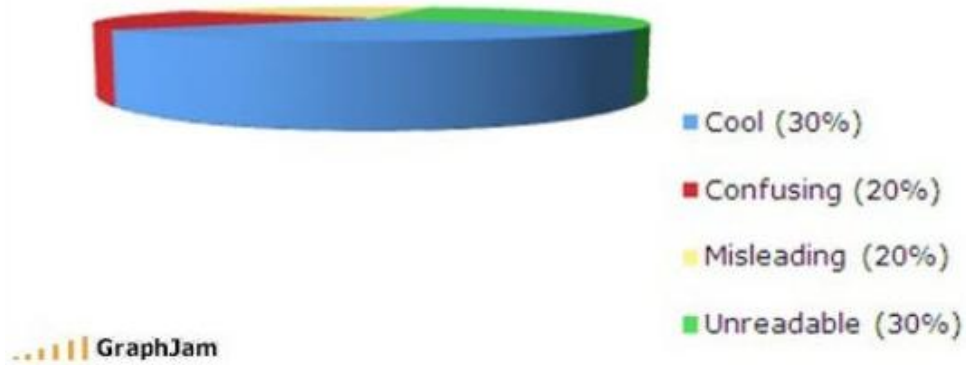
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Axes were reversed, Putting zero at bottom shows very different story.

Perception of 3D Pie Charts



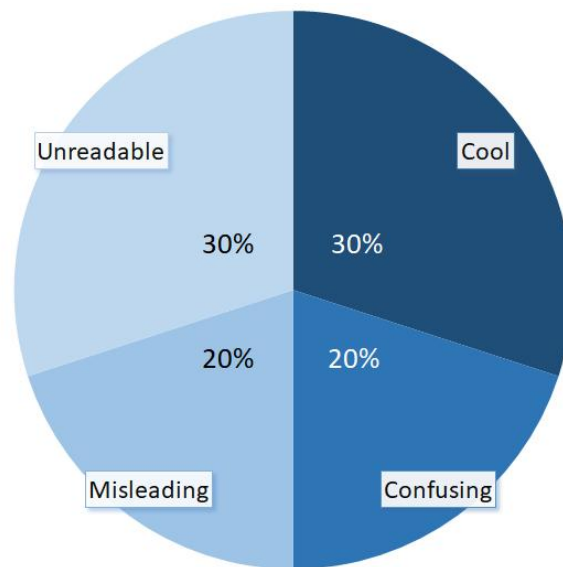
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Which is largest?

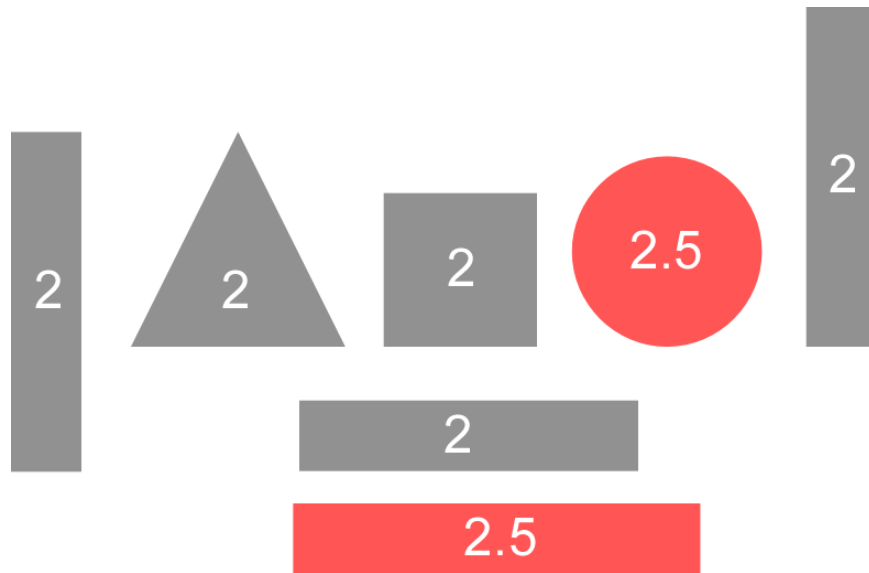


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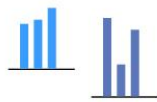
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Human Perception



position
(aligned)



position
(unaligned)



length



slope



angle



area



volume



color intensity



color hue

more
accurate

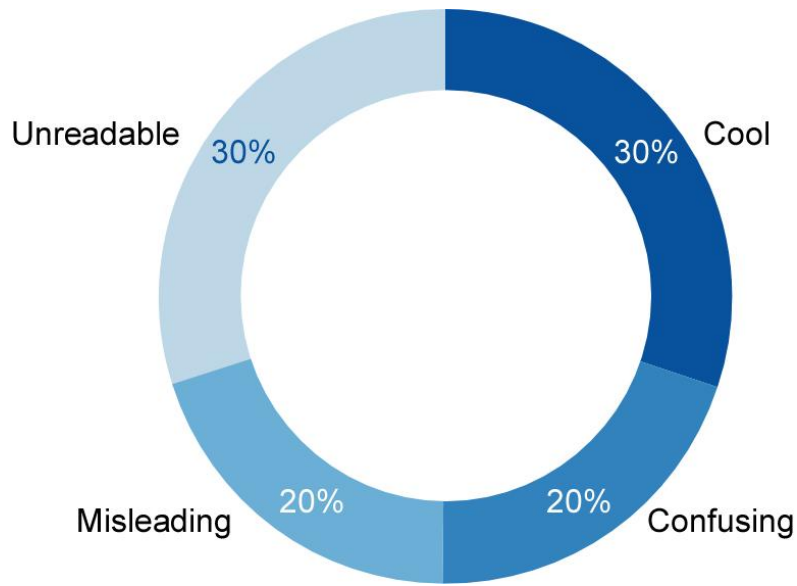
human perception

less
accurate

Cleveland, W.S. and McGill, R., 1984. Graphical perception: Theory, experimentation, and application to the development of graphical methods. *Journal of the American statistical association*, 79(387), pp.531-554.

Presentation methods on left are most mind ready. They are the most easily absorbed by a viewer.

Perception of 3D Pie Charts



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SANFORD AND SELNICK

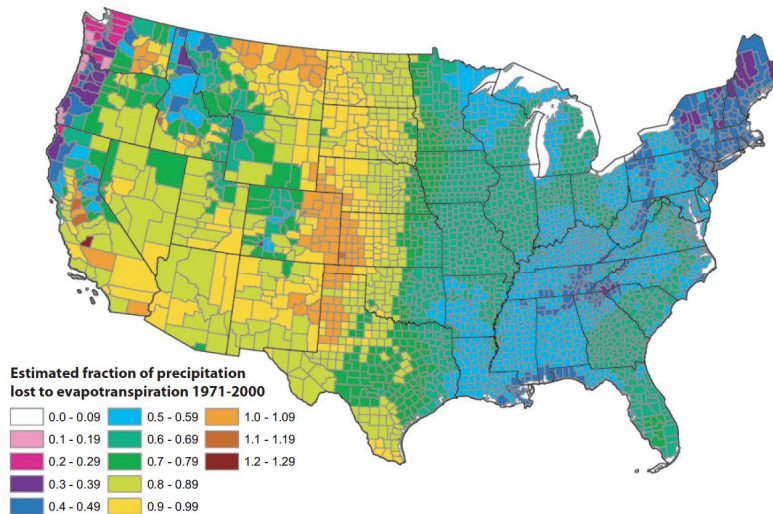


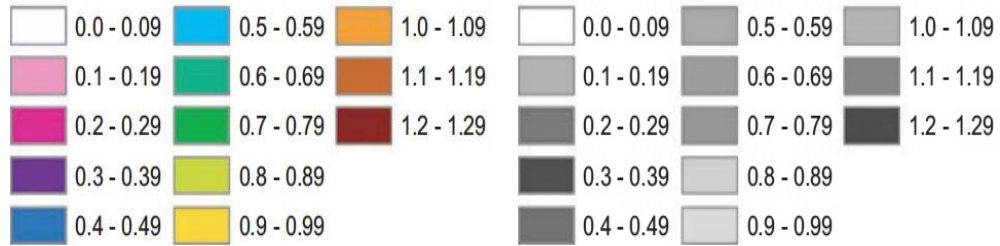
FIGURE 13. Estimated Mean Annual Ratio of Actual Evapotranspiration (ET) to Precipitation (P) for the Conterminous U.S. for the Period 1971-2000. Estimates are based on the regression equation in Table 1 that includes land cover. Calculations of ET/P were made first at the 800-m resolution of the PRISM climate data. The mean values for the counties (shown) were then calculated by averaging the 800-m values within each county. Areas with fractions >1 are agricultural counties that either import surface water or mine deep groundwater.

Sanford, W.E. and Selnick, D.L., 2013. Estimation of Evapotranspiration Across the Conterminous United States Using a Regression With Climate and Land-Cover Data. *JAWRA Journal of the American Water Resources Association*, 49(1), pp.217-230.

<https://eagereyes.org/basics/rainbow-color-map>

Looks like an abrupt change at the Mississippi. Reality is color scale is poor.

Abrupt Change In Luminance



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Number of data classes: 4

Nature of your data: sequential diverging qualitative

Pick a color scheme: Multi-hue: [Color swatches] Single hue: [Color swatches]

Only show: colorblind safe print friendly photocopy safe

Context: roads cities borders

Background: solid color terrain

color transparency

4-class BuGn

HEX

#edf8fb

#b2e2e2

#66c2a4

#238b45

how to use updates downloads credits

COLORBREWER 2.0
color advice for cartography

axismaps

© Cynthia Brewer, Mark Harrower and The Pennsylvania State University
Source code and feedback
Back to Flash version
Back to ColorBrewer 1.0

Example of a place to help pick colors.

EPA Trash Data

Figure 5. Total MSW Generation (by material), 2014
258 Million Tons

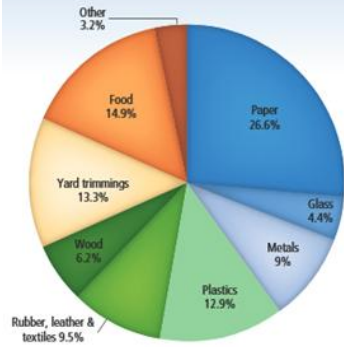


Figure 6. Total MSW Recycling and Composting (by material), 2014
89 Million Tons

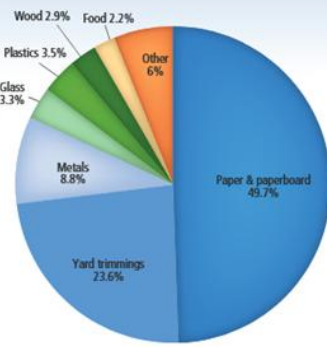


Figure 7. Total MSW Combusted with Energy Recovery (by material), 2014
33 Million Tons

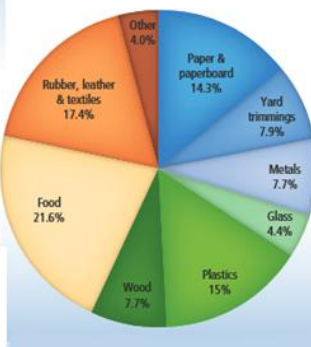
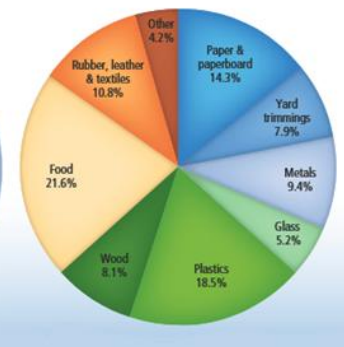


Figure 8. Total MSW Landfilled (by material), 2014
136 Million Tons



https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-11/documents/2014_smmfactsheet_508.pdf



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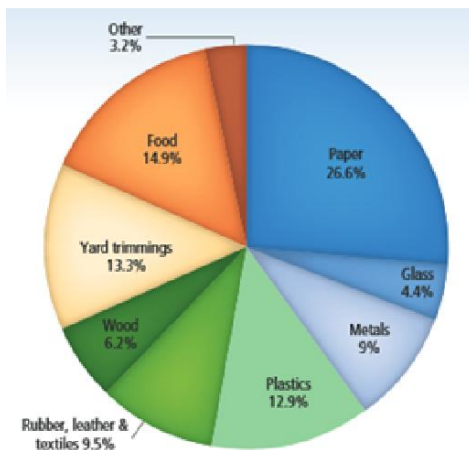
#RD100

EPA data in 4 plots of municipal solid waste (MSW).

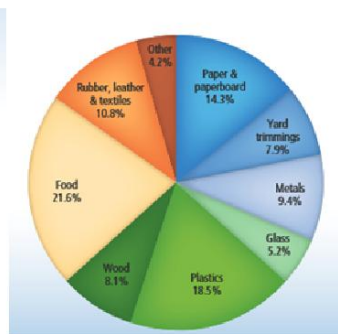
Issue is that each plot shows a very different amount of material, called out in the label.

Real Example

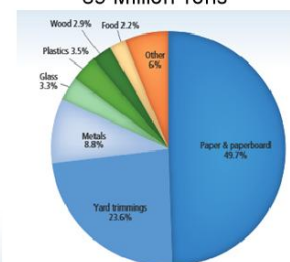
Total MSW Generation
258 Million Tons



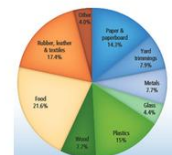
Total MSW Landfilled
136 Million Tons



Total MSW Recycling and Composting
89 Million Tons



Total MSW Combusted with Energy Recovery
33 Million Tons



https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-11/documents/2014_smmfactsheet_508.pdf

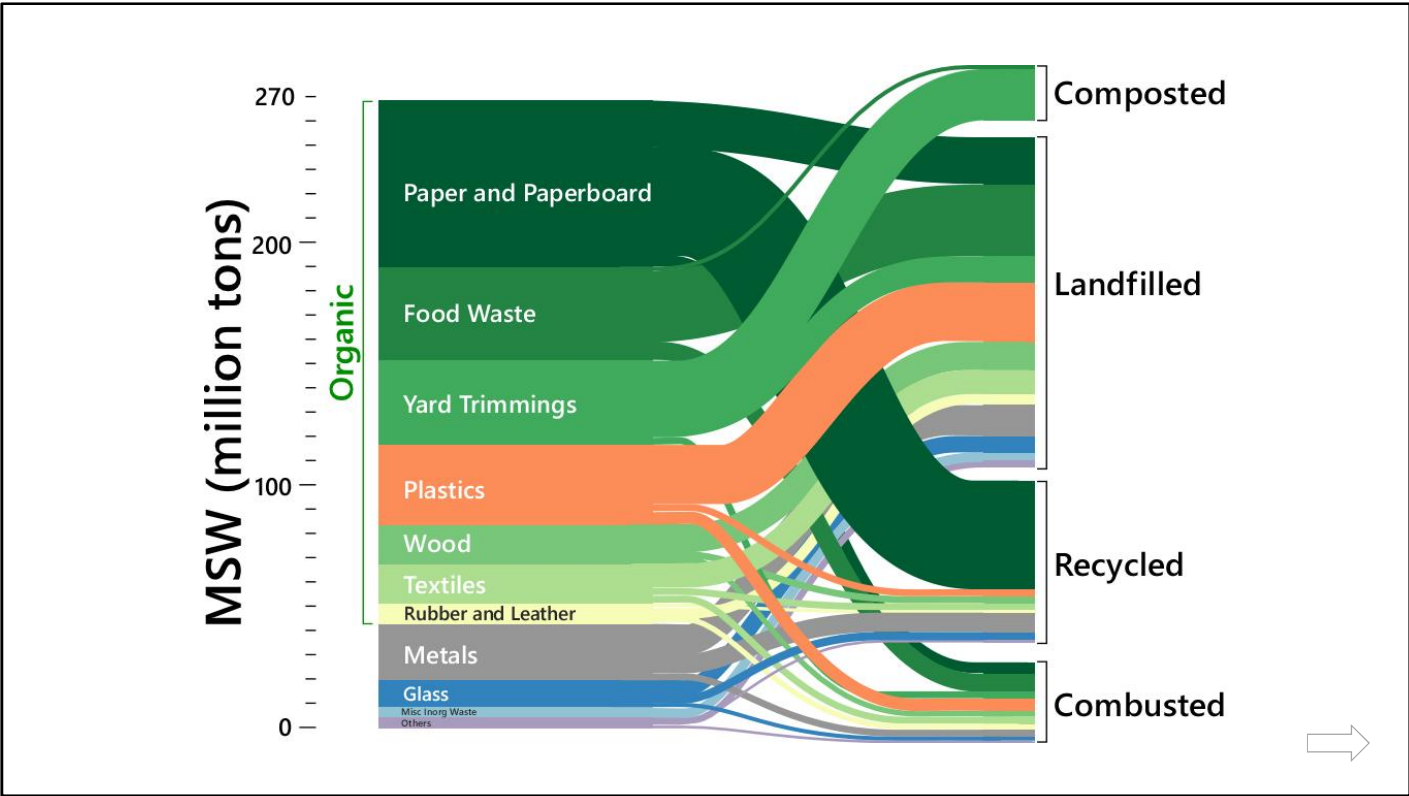


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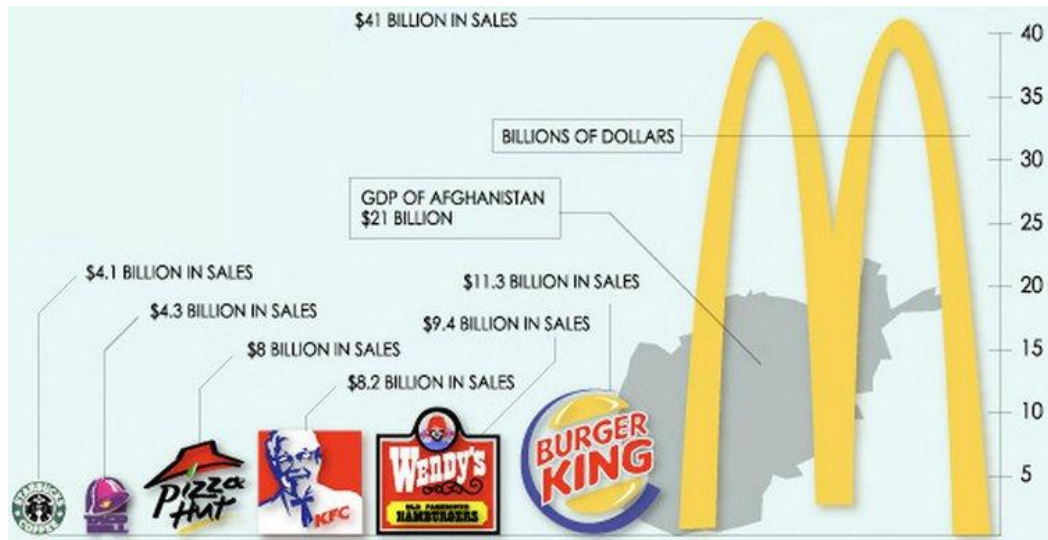
Adjusted circle area to represent amount in each



Converted away from area or angle based pie charts to linear scale.

Believe Sankey diagram is a far better way.

Fast Food Sales



<http://ticktockmaths.co.uk/bad-graphs/>

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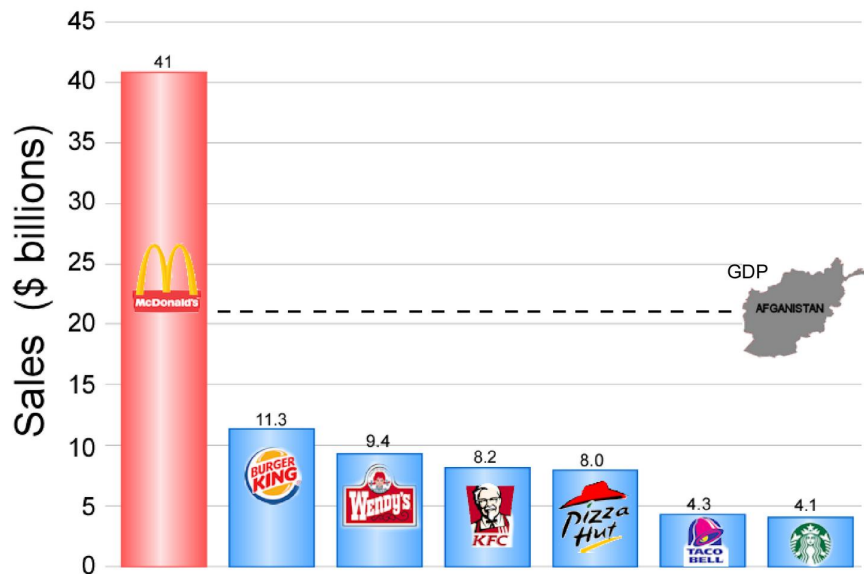
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Iconography is good, but varying sizes make plot near impossible to read.

Fast Food Sales



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Just Don't Do It



The top 10 Payment Card Processors account for 57% of the total number of Merchant Outlets in 2010.



Distribution of the top 100 Payment Card Processors @CBInsights 28 Jun 2017

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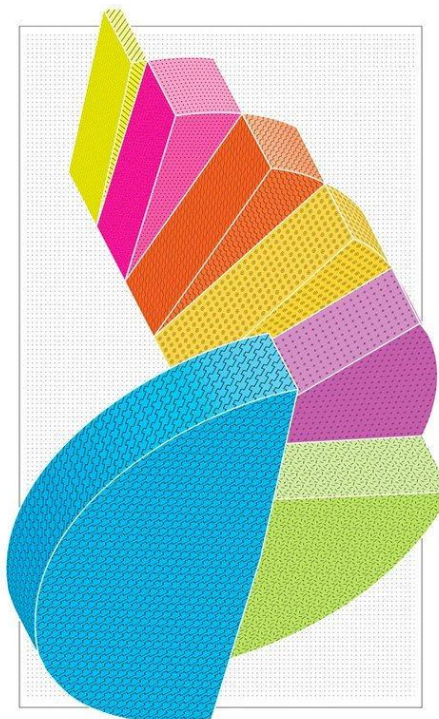


#RD100

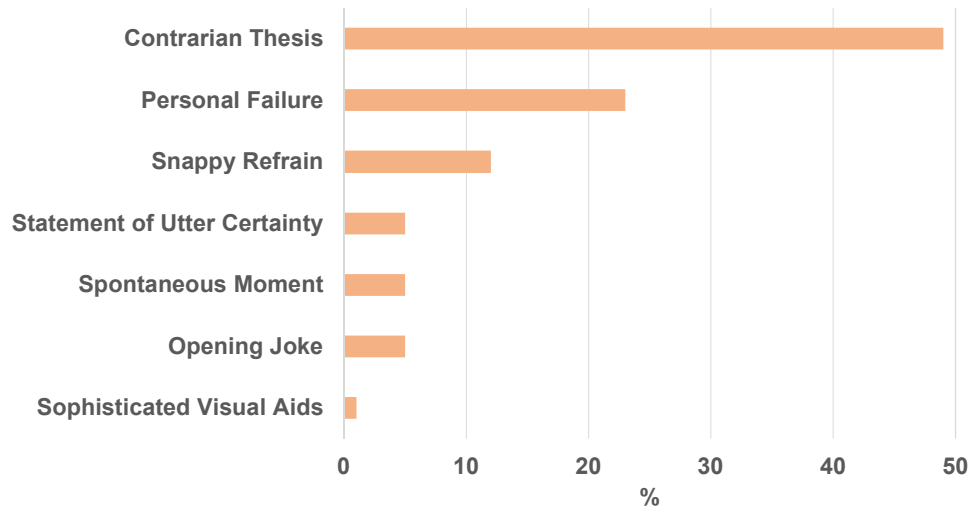


Anatomy of a Winning TED Talk

- 1%**
Sophisticated Visual Aids
We're not sure who puts the D in TED—most of the best presentations favor rapid PowerPoint slide shows (sorry, Brené Brown), Pictorial-quality drawings (really, Simon Sinek?), or no props at all.
- 5%**
Opening Joke
Remember the one about the shoe salesman who went to Africa in the 1900s? That's how Benjamin Zander opened his talk—which turned out to be about classical music.
- 5%**
Spontaneous Moment
Don't overprepare. Tease the guy in the front row ("You could light up a village with this guy's eyes"). Commend the stagehand who handles the human brain you brought.
- 5%**
Statement of Utter Certainty
People come for answers—give 'em what they want, as Shawn Achor did: "By training your brain ... we can reverse the formula for happiness and success."
- 12%**
Snappy Refrain
The TED equivalent of "I have a dream." Example: "People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it." Repeat 7x.
- 23%**
Personal Failure
Be relatable. We want to know about that nervous breakdown. Or at least the time you didn't fit in at summer camp.
- 49%**
Contrarian Thesis
Wait a sec—we should be playing more videogames? The more choices we have, the worse off we are? TED is where conventional wisdom goes to die.



Anatomy of a Winning TED Talk



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CAR RENTAL COMPANIES MARKET SHARE

ENTERPRISE HOLDINGS

HERTZ CORP.

AVIS BUDGET GROUP

ENTERPRISE
43.9%

HERTZ
14.7%

THRIFTY

1.9%

DOLLAR

3%

AVIS
10%

OTHER*
6.3%

NATIONAL
7.7%

ALAMO
7%

BUDGET
5.5%

*OTHERS INCLUDE PAYLESS, AN AVIS SUBSIDIARY WITH VERY SMALL MARKET SHARE

SOURCE: EUROMONITOR
Fortune, Nov. 1, 2018, page 124.

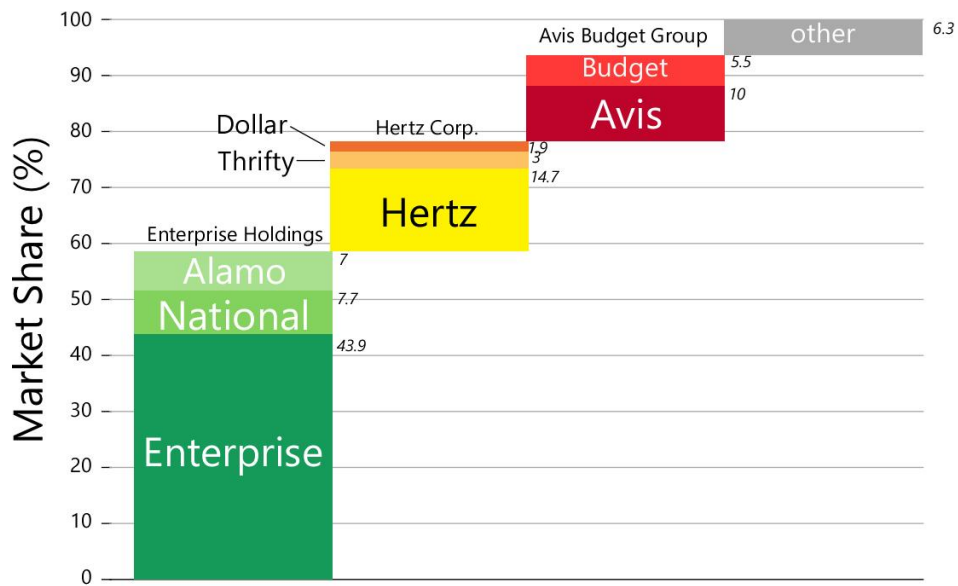
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Plot relies on ability to see area of different shaped boxes. Doesn't look like National and Alamo equal Hertz. Note mistake on Thrifty and Dollar.



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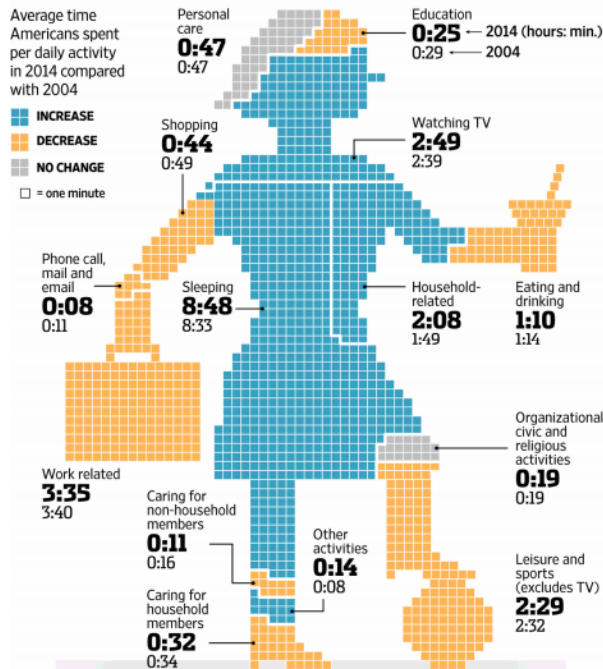
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A Day in the Life

Average time Americans spent per daily activity in 2014 compared with 2004

- INCREASE
- DECREASE
- NO CHANGE
- = one minute



Note: Time may not total 24 hours due to rounding.
Source: Labor Department

Christopher Kaiser/THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Microsoft
Bad Ideas

Which is better for the environment?



Microsoft® Bad Ideas

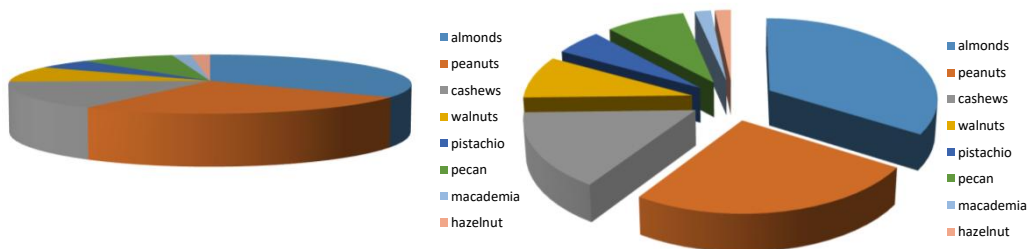
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U.S. Nut Production



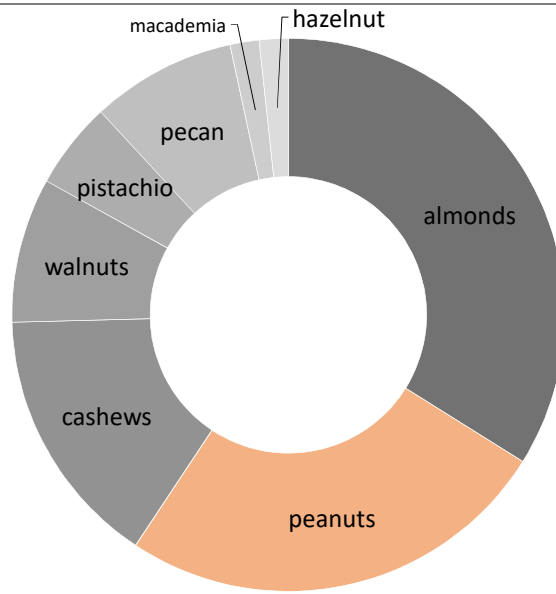
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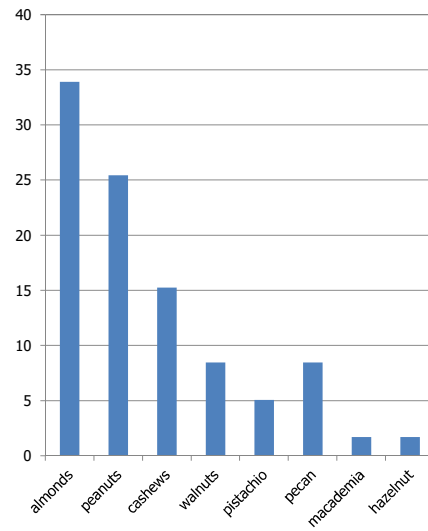
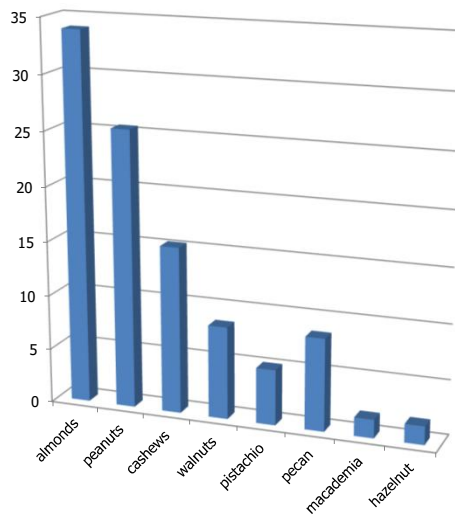
U.S. Nut Production



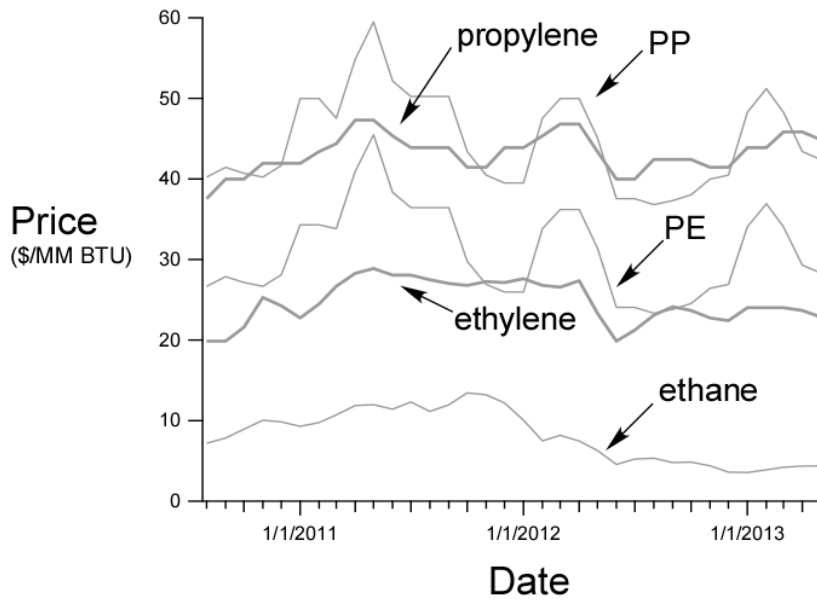
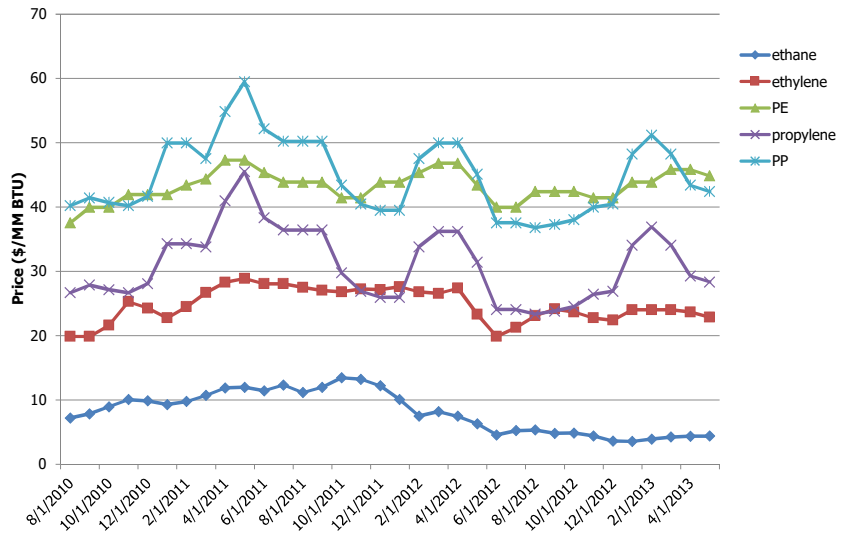
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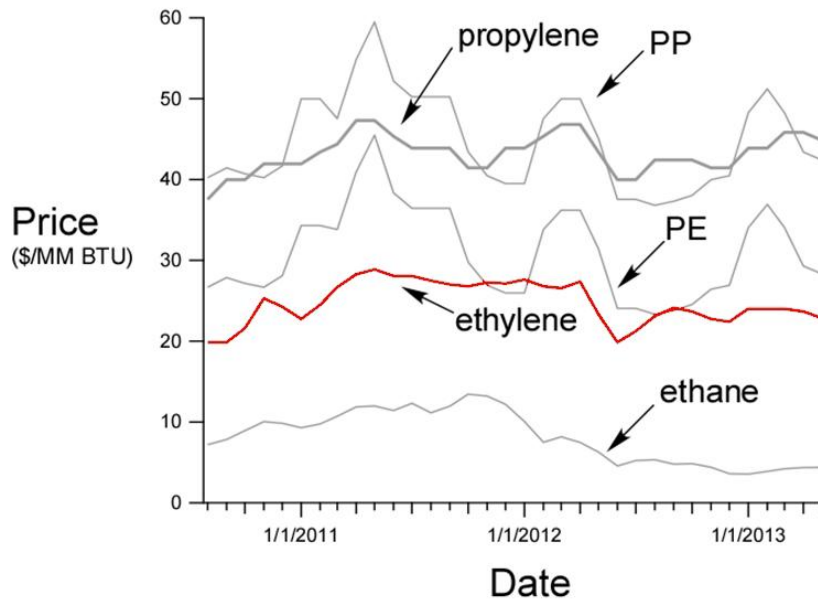
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Dow
#RD100



Dow





Which Is Better For The Environment?

A MEAT-EATER IN A PRIUS



A VEGAN IN A HUMMER

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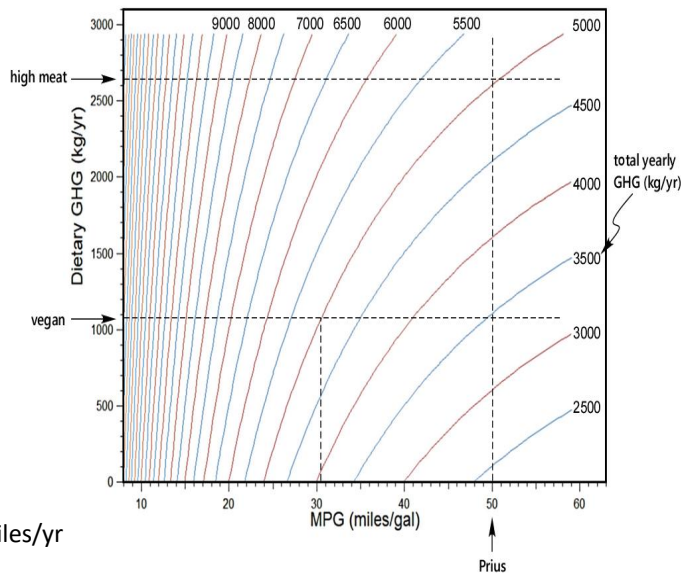
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Michael Pollan said that “a vegan in a Hummer has a lighter carbon footprint than a beef eater in a Prius.” Highly tweetable, yes, but not true, [says Adam Pasick of Reuters](#). Pasick cites a 2005 paper that “found that the difference between a heavy meat-eating diet and a vegan diet was about 2 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per person per year. The difference between a Prius and an SUV (they used a Suburban, which gets about the same mileage as a Hummer) was 4.76 tons per year.” However, Pasick admits that when you factor in improvements in gas mileage that have occurred since 2005, the difference between a Prius and Hummer driver is 2.6 to 3.3 tons per year — which isn’t *that* far from the two-ton difference between a heavy meat eater and a vegan. Pollan now says he doesn’t feel comfortable defending his statement, but that he stands by the gist of it.

Vegan/Meat-eater Driving Comparison



assumes 13,476 miles/yr

Scarborough, Peter, et al. "Dietary greenhouse gas emissions of meat-eaters, fish-eaters, vegetarians and vegans in the UK." Climatic Change 125.2 (2014): 179-192.



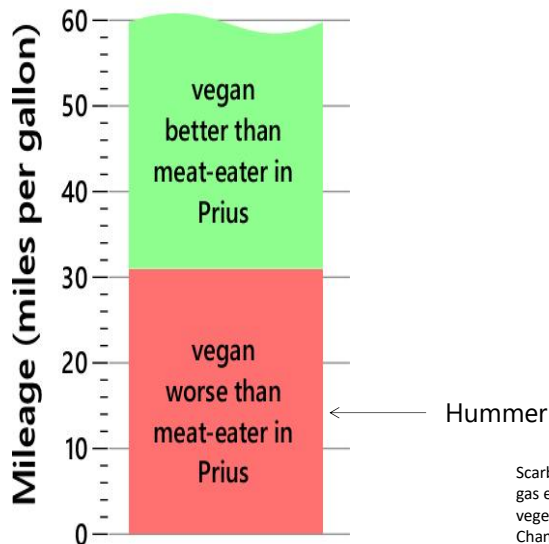
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High meat 7.19 kg/day 2624.35 kg/yr
vegan 2.89 kg/day 1054.85 kg/yr

Vegan/Meat-eater Driving Comparison



assumes 13,476 miles/yr

Scarborough, Peter, et al. "Dietary greenhouse gas emissions of meat-eaters, fish-eaters, vegetarians and vegans in the UK." Climatic Change 125.2 (2014): 179-192.



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graphs used to gain
understanding are unlikely
to be good for presentation



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Just Because
it doesn't
PowerPoint
mean you
Lets You Do
should!
Something...

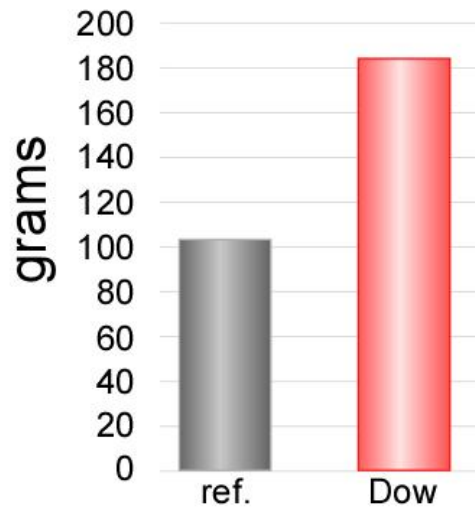
Animation is almost always a bad idea.

See video of bad animation at <https://www.mjphd.net/Presentations/BadPowerPoint.wmv>

Video ≠ Animation

Film Performance

Dart Impact Results



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Film Performance



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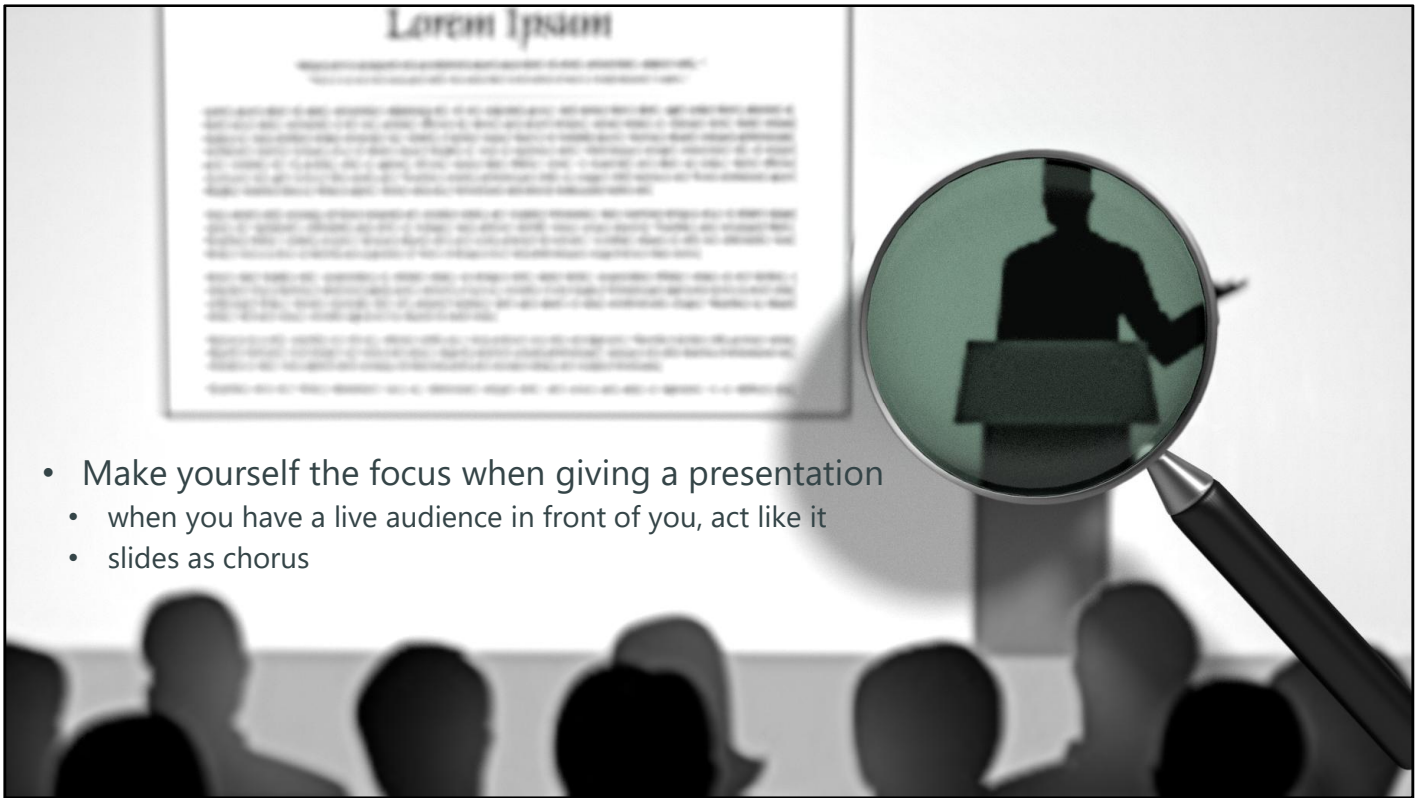
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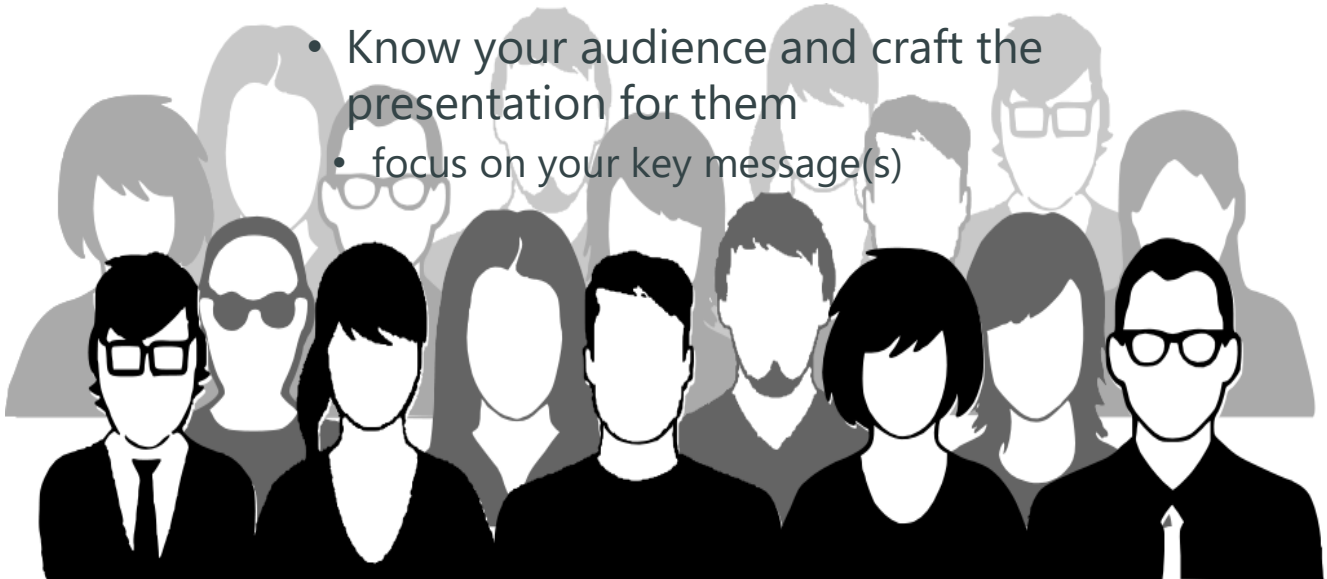
During presentation, a video was shown.

extracted from https://youtu.be/GUW1_KR26L4



The Presentation Is For Your Audience

- Know your audience and craft the presentation for them
- focus on your key message(s)

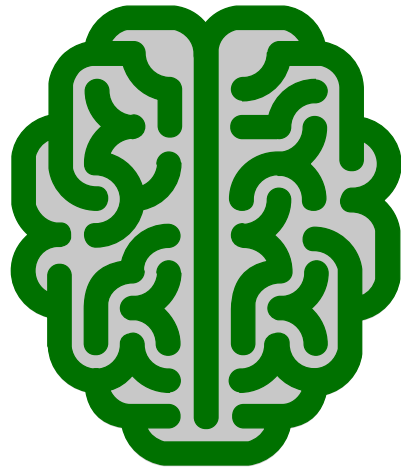


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ready

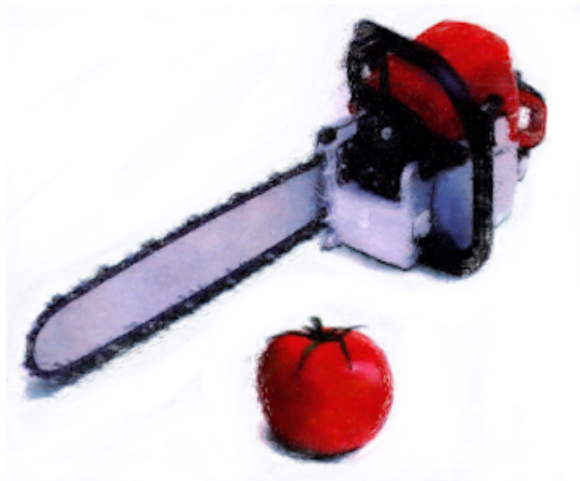
- memorable is better than forgettable (pics memorable)
- make graphics *mind ready*
- info density right for material and audience

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• *don't let tools get in the way*

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TIPS

- be prepared
- *practice*
- *script at least the first 3 minutes- most valuable real estate*



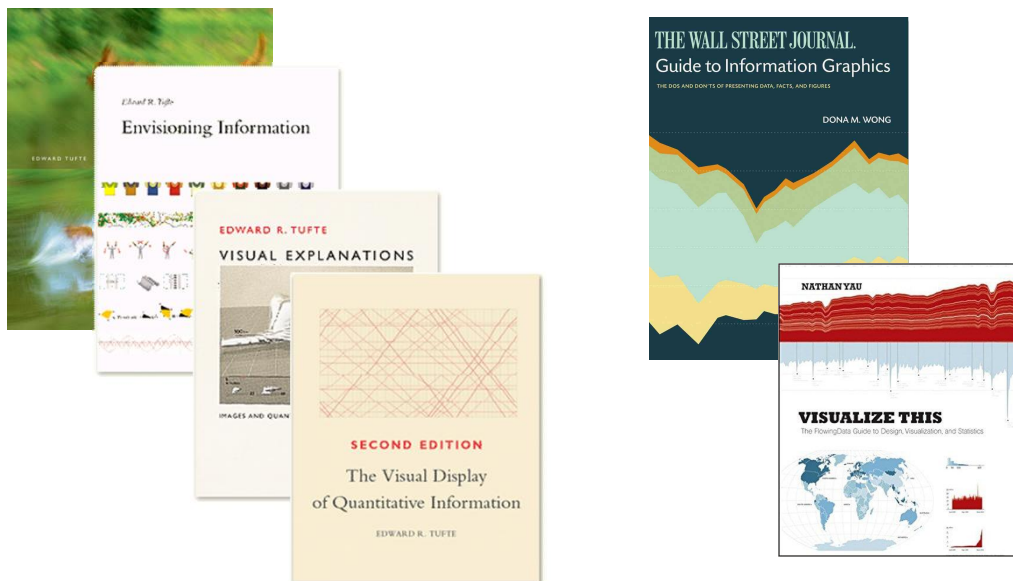
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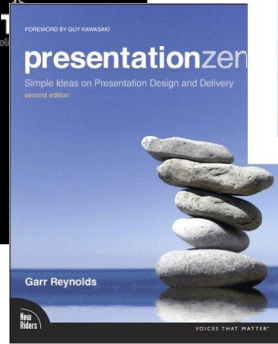
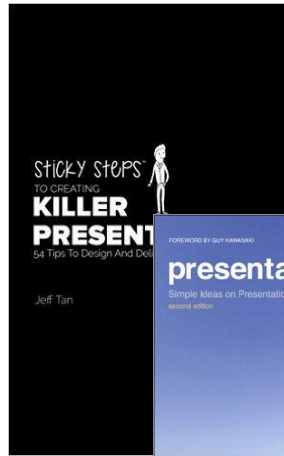
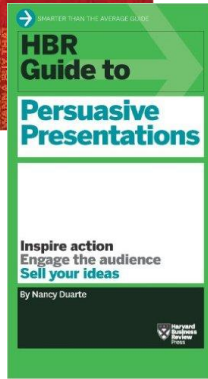
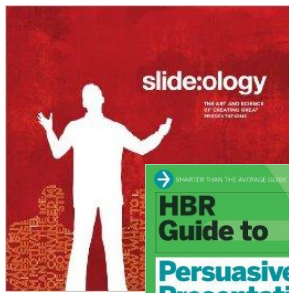
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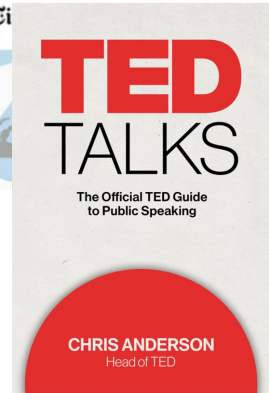
Favorite References - Presentations



How to Speak in Public

By ADAM BRYANT

The New York Times
November 2018



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Duarte's Golden Rule



Never give a presentation you wouldn't want to sit through.

Nancy Duarte in HBR Guide

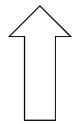


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Skip Ahead Slide



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