

Building your Visualization Checklist

Note that every item below is not mandatory for a good visualization, but all of these questions should be considered before finalizing a data visualization. If you are not able to check a box, make sure you can justify why you have made that choice.

Chart Choice

- Does your chart/visualization complement the kind of data you want to show?
- Will your chart/visualization be understood by your audience?

Simplicity

Have *unnecessary* marks been removed or minimized?

- Check: grid lines.....
- Tick marks
- Axes
- Are your data labels as simple as possible (e.g. no unnecessary decimals)?.....

Is it easy to read and interpret?

- Are categories labeled directly?.....
- If you need a legend, does it align with the orientation of the chart?.....
- Are data points labeled appropriately?.....
- Does the chart have a clear title?.....
- Are technical indicators/acronyms defined?
- Are colors and fonts legible?

Highlighting your story

- Do you have (or need?) text to summarize your main message or action point?.....
- Have you used preattentive attributes strategically to highlight your main point?
(note, more is not better here, select just 1 or 2 to highlight a clear story).....

Honesty: Does your visualization accurately represent your data?

- Does your y-axis start at zero?.....
- If using a percent distribution (e.g. stacked bar, pie chart) do all categories add to 100?..
- Have you removed any 3-D or additional affects that may distort your data?.....

Additional questions for packaged visualizations such as infographics/videos/dashboards

Story Flow

Is there a clear title/subtitle/summary that explains the main point of the set of visualizations?.....

Do the individual elements (charts, text, photos) flow together to tell a clear story?

Are the design elements (fonts, colors, scale) consistent throughout the story?

Overall Design

Is it interesting and aesthetically pleasing to look at?

Does the design add to the impact of the story?