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MIS 505

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Module 4 Reflection

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Module 4 provided another great week of learning for me. I became much more familiar this week with Tableau. The exercises in recreating charts were helpful in further exploring the software. The visualization redesign assignment really helped me conceptualize a better method for communicating a message. Finally, the Halloween data set exercise was a great opportunity for me to try different options in Tableau, and to align my visualizations with the best practices covered in the lectures and readings.

Although we have dabbled in Tableau in prior weeks, I was very pleased with the focus on it this week. The best way for me to learn this software is the method at play in Module 4; that is, semi-guided practice. After muddling through the chart recreation assignment, I found that I was able to locate those options much more quickly in the subsequent assignments. I ran into some brief stumbling blocks with the high-mileage outlier in the Bike Share data set, as well as with sorting the axis in the some of the charts. I was able to work through these issues, though, using online tutorials and resources.

For the visualization redesign assignment, I first needed to determine the message each of these charts was trying to convey. I then had to devise my own way of communicating that message. I spent a significant amount of time with each one, testing-out a number of different chart types. This was great practice in theory and application, and I am satisfied with the end result. I also appreciated that we had to explain the rationale for our redesigns; this actually made me go back and revise some things in the charts after thinking through my explanation.

I spent most of my time this week with the Halloween data set, looking for ways to incorporate a number of different visualizations to communicate relevant points. In addition to choosing the right charts and improving them, I took additional time on the layout of my dashboards. I found that dashboard design can be just as important as the design of each chart. All in all, this was a really great week, and I’m looking forward to the next one.