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# BIDD 330 A Sp 25

# Assignment02

# Technical Write-Up: StorytellingWithData.com

Blog Reviewed: https://www.storytellingwithdata.com/

## Overview

Storytelling With Data is a blog dedicated to helping people create effective, clear, and impactful data visualizations. It was founded by Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic, a former Google data analyst, and the blog provides a wealth of resources including articles, tutorials, and real-world chart critiques. The blog’s main goal is to teach readers how to communicate data visually in a way that tells a compelling story.

## Technical Observations

One of the key strengths of this blog is its emphasis on clarity and simplicity. The visuals showcased are typically clean and minimalist, avoiding unnecessary elements such as 3D effects, excessive labels, or distracting colors. For example, in one post, Cole demonstrates how a cluttered stacked column chart can be transformed into a much simpler and more effective line chart with annotations and a focused message.  
  
The blog consistently follows core data visualization principles such as:  
- Choosing the right chart type for the data and the message.  
- Using color with purpose, not decoration.  
- Removing clutter (e.g., gridlines, excessive data labels).  
- Highlighting key data points to guide the viewer’s eye.  
- Building a narrative around the data by including titles that act like headlines.  
  
From a technical standpoint, the blog is tool-agnostic — though you can apply its lessons to any visualization tool including Tableau, Power BI, or Excel. However, the design choices shown are highly relevant for Tableau developers, especially when trying to improve dashboards for business communication.

## What I Learned

I learned that great data visualization isn’t just about putting numbers into charts — it’s about guiding the audience through a clear, intentional narrative. One particularly helpful tutorial showed how to turn a basic bar chart into a compelling visual by:  
- Using color sparingly to emphasize the most important bar.  
- Reordering the bars to follow a logical story flow.  
- Adding a meaningful title and removing axis labels that weren’t needed.  
  
These techniques help the audience grasp the insight immediately, rather than trying to interpret the raw numbers.

## How This Applies to My Work

I can apply these principles directly to my Tableau dashboards. For example:  
- I will start using more meaningful chart titles that summarize the key takeaway.  
- I’ll review my dashboards to eliminate clutter and make sure every element has a purpose.  
- I’ll also use color strategically — to emphasize trends, highlight outliers, or guide attention — rather than just making visuals more colorful.  
  
This approach will help my work communicate insights more effectively, especially when presenting dashboards to stakeholders who need quick, actionable takeaways.