Title: From Engineer to Data Storyteller: My Journey into Data Visualization
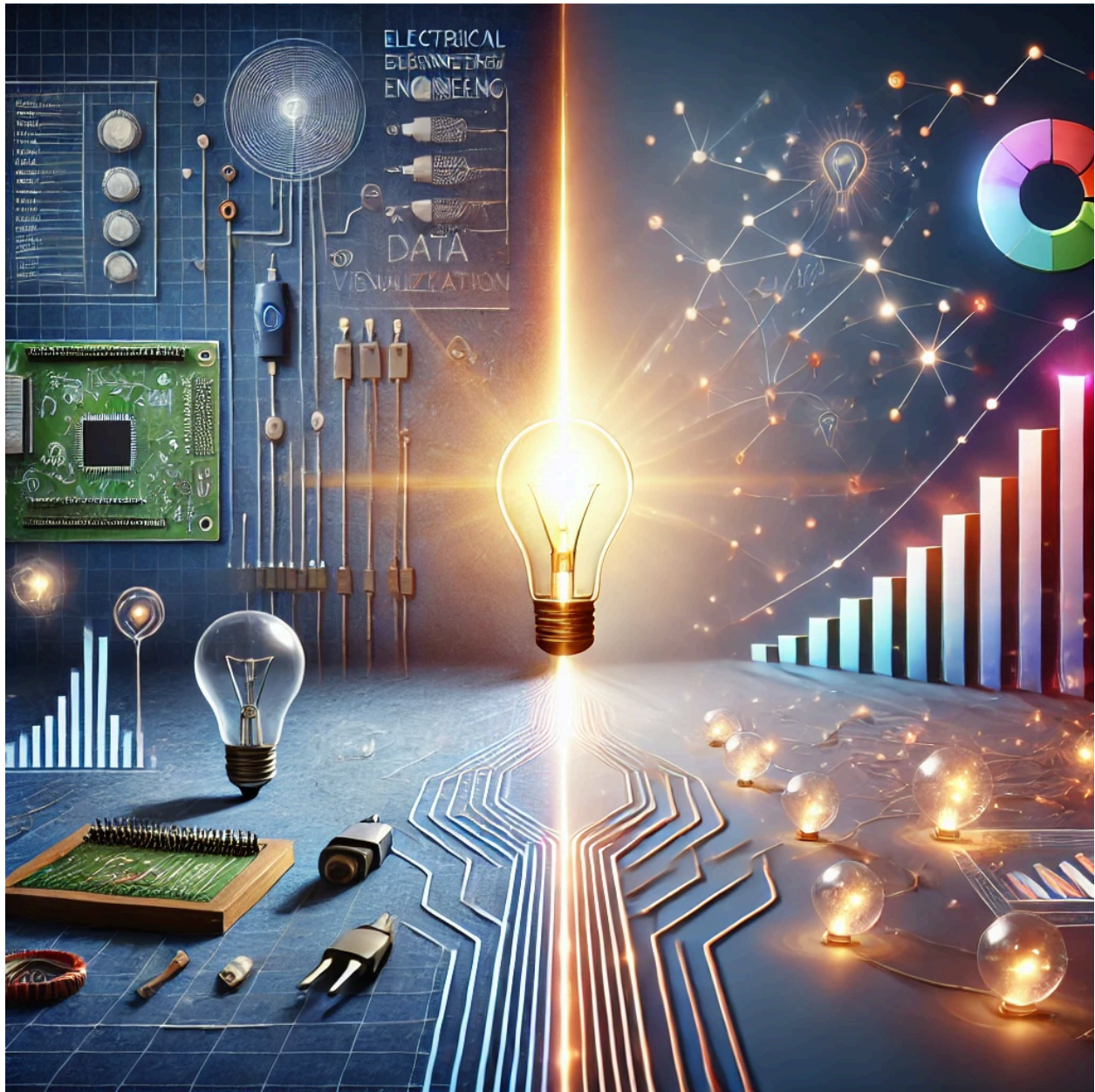

In 2021, I made a life-changing decision to leave my job during my pregnancy, stepping into a period of personal transformation and exploration. After more than four years of a corporate job in a multinational company as an electrical engineer, I decided to leap into the unknown, driven by the desire to explore something new and meaningful. With time on my hands and a spark of curiosity, I embarked on a journey into data analytics. Equipped with Python tutorials and a Kaggle account, I began immersing myself in this dynamic field.

After months of self-study, I entered a Kaggle competition focused on survey data analysis. My husband joined me in crafting the narrative while I focused on analyzing the data. This phase of my life wasn't without its challenges. Pregnancy complications confined me to bed rest for a month, and the competition's deadline loomed dangerously close to my due date. Yet, determination drove us forward. Five days after welcoming our baby into the world, we submitted our notebook, which was recognized as a "hidden gem" that week. It was a moment of pride that deepened my connection with data and storytelling.

Notebooks of the week: Hidden Gems - Vol. 87

A weekly series aspiring to showcase underrated Kaggle Notebooks and to illuminate the diversity and creativity of our community. My selections are highly subjective; reflecting my own views and preferences. I encourage you to post about other underestimated Notebooks in the comments. No self-promotions please.

Here are this weeks Hidden Gems in no particular order:

- The Success Story: Compete & Win with Kaggle Data by @sarahmashhood: An interesting Kaggle Survey story, approaching the data from an entrepreneurial angle and trying to extract actionable insights for small businesses. The narrative flow is engaging.

https://www.kaggle.com/discussions/general/298810#163846

Following this initial foray into data analytics, I embraced every opportunity to expand my skill set. I delved into machine learning, deep learning, artificial intelligence, and even large language models, completing boot camps and courses along the way. Each step enriched my understanding, but as I explored these fields, my strongest interest remained in data analysis and visualization. I began to notice gaps—not just in my dashboards but in many others I came across. They often lacked cohesive color themes, compelling narratives, and self-explanatory designs. Instead, they required extensive written insights to make sense.

This realization drove me to look deeper into the art and science of data visualization. My passion for this field runs even deeper, rooted in a lifelong love of art. As a young girl, I dreamed of attending art school, but life had other plans. Although my path took a different turn, my artistic side remained a constant, shaping how I perceive and present the world. Today, this artistic sensibility fuels my ability to craft visualizations that are not only functional but also engaging and inspiring.

As I delved further into data visualization, I sought to learn from renowned experts in the field. A few resources truly guided me in shaping my understanding and approach. *"Storytelling with Data"* by Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic was an eye-opener, helping me understand the power of effective visual communication. I also discovered Nadieh Bermer's work (Visual Cinnamon), whose creative and thoughtful visualizations sparked new ideas and approaches. Data School's tutorials provided invaluable insights into the practical aspects of design, while many other

online resources, books, and courses have helped shape my journey into the world of data visualization.

Looking back, my journey has been about finding balance—between challenges and opportunities, logic and creativity, personal growth and professional ambition. Through it all, I've come to see data as more than just numbers. To me, it's a canvas for storytelling—a way to connect, resonate, and drive meaningful action.

As I channel my focus into data visualization, I'm excited to merge technical expertise with creative storytelling, transforming raw data into insights that businesses can rely on. This field allows me to bring together the analytical and the artistic, creating visuals that inform, captivate, and inspire change.

What inspired your journey into data visualization or storytelling? I'd love to hear your thoughts!

#DataAnalytics #DataVisualization #CareerTransition #Storytelling