How to Tell a Good Story from Data

# 1. Know Your Audience

Before diving into the data:  
- Who are you speaking to? (Execs, stakeholders, the public?)  
- What do they care about? (KPIs, trends, risks?)

# 2. Find the Key Insight

Not all data is interesting. Ask yourself:  
- What pattern, anomaly, or trend stands out?  
- What action or decision does this influence?  
- Does the data confirm or challenge expectations?

# 3. Craft the Narrative Arc

Treat it like a story with a beginning, middle, and end:  
- Hook: Pose a compelling question or observation.  
- Conflict: Show the data and highlight the problem.  
- Resolution: Explain what was learned and what action to take.

# 4. Visualize Effectively

Use charts that match your message:  
- Line chart: trends over time  
- Bar chart: category comparisons  
- Pie chart: proportion (use sparingly)  
Keep visuals clean:  
- Use color for emphasis  
- Add labels and annotations  
- Avoid chartjunk

# 5. Add Human Context

People relate to stories, not just stats:  
- Add quotes or feedback  
- Use analogies or metaphors  
- Show how real people are affected

# 6. End with a Clear Call to Action

A good data story leads to a decision:  
- What should we stop/start/continue doing?  
- Who should take action, and when?  
- What's the measurable next step?

# 7. Iterate and Get Feedback

Refine your story:  
- Present it to a colleague first  
- Ask what was unclear or boring  
- Tighten the narrative and simplify