VE300 Technical Communication

Week 3

Creating Technical Charts and Visuals

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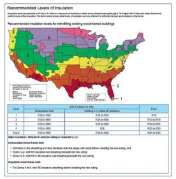
Organizing Information Visually

Graphic Type	Organizing Information	Example Signal Words
Timeline 	Order of events that occurred or that should occur	the first step the next part the third phase
Spatial 	Describe physical scenes, objects, or locations	directly above to the left of centered
Comparison and contrast 	Establish guidelines by which things are compared, and stick to all those criteria when making comparison	similarly in contrast by comparison

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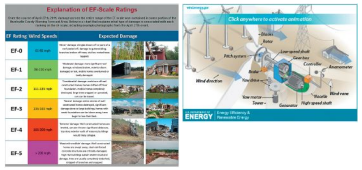
Partition or classification 	Establish categories in logical sequence (i.e. parts of a machine, degrees of severity)	first level, second level control system, auxiliary system
Table 	Show large amounts of numerical data with multiple variables	6% higher when increase of 15 points from
Bar graph 	Show relative values of two or more items across some variables	greater than less than
Line graph 	Show how value or quantity of items change over time	20% decrease between sharp spike steady decline

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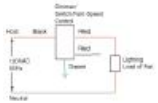
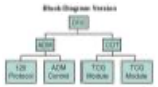
Pie chart 	Show relative size of parts of whole	larger than smaller than
Diagram 	Illustrate relationships between items or properties of items	connection between link to
Organizational chart 	Show hierarchical relationships or lines of authority	over, under subordinate to
Checklist 	Show necessary equipment or materials, and required steps	using the apply the

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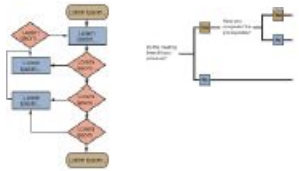
Flowchart 	Delineate stages in a process or procedure, with decision trees	first, next if … then …
Photograph 	Show external surface of objects	texture appearance
Screenshot 	Show what appears on a computer	shown, displayed information contained in

Principles of Designing Graphics and Visuals

- Content
  - Intended to be integrated with text
  - Contains “manageable” amount of data
  - Accurately and ethically represents data
  - Units of measurement logical for the data you wish to represent
- Format
  - Colors: use of color patterns to direct attention or compare/contrast
  - Labels and units of measurement visible but unobtrusive
  - Spacing and positioning: simple and uncluttered

Excel Formatting Principles

Tables	Charts/Graphs
Title	Title
Merge cells and center	Positioning
Font	Key/Legend
Size and style	Positioning
Bold, italics, underline	Font and colors
Cell	Content
Borders	Data labels
Colors and format	Units of measurement on x- and y-axes
Width and alignment	Color scheme: contrast or complement

WRITER'S CHECKLIST

- ☐ Does the graphic have a purpose? *(p. 294)*
- ☐ Is the graphic simple and uncluttered? *(p. 294)*
- ☐ Does the graphic present a manageable amount of information? *(p. 294)*
- ☐ Does the graphic meet readers' format expectations? *(p. 294)*
- ☐ Is the graphic clearly labeled? *(p. 294)*
- ☐ Is the graphic honest? *(p. 295)*
- ☐ Does the graphic appear in a logical location in the document? *(p. 295)*
- ☐ Is the graphic introduced clearly in the text? *(p. 295)*
- ☐ Is the graphic explained in the text? *(p. 295)*
- ☐ Is the graphic clearly visible in the text? *(p. 296)*
- ☐ Is the graphic easily accessible to readers? *(p. 296)*
- ☐ If you want to use an existing graphic, do you have the legal right to do so? *(p. 298)* If so, have you cited its source appropriately? *(p. 300)*
- ☐ Is the graphic inoffensive to your readers? *(p. 331)*

Source: Markel & Selber (2018)