For the first half of my discussion board, I wanted to explore the process of determining what visualizations to use when presenting to an audience and what items you may or may not need throughout the process. Before creating the visualizations, it is important to understand how your audience processes information as a person, the science behind it. As humans, our brain’s ability to handle the cognitive load of information can easily be overwhelmed if someone speaks too fast or if the visual is complex. (Holst, 2019) To prevent any obstacles or barriers to your audience while presenting to an audience, author Brad Holst, speaks on three different mistakes you should attempt to avoid. While presenting to an audience, do not attempt to talk while your audience is trying to read and comprehend the visual or text you have showing at the time. By speaking about another detail while your visual is showing a different aspect, it will throw off an audience’s ability to visually understand and verbally understand your message or story. In creating your presentation, it is important to not crowd the slide with an excessive amount of data. Even though you may be able to create numerous visuals and want to have them all under one collection within a slide, it will do more harm than good in the end. Lastly, it is more of a presentation skill, but you do not want to be reading off your slide verbatim of what is on it especially if there is little text. In this area, you want to let you audience consume the information on the slide followed by you reinforcing why this is important and how to connects to your presentation.

Moving from the presentation aspect of data visualizations, I decided to further investigate and speak about the data-ink and signal to noise ratios. When attempting to understand this concept, you first must understand that all communication when it is making its way to its destination that it is being degraded by irrelevant information or outside influences and this is called noise. (Lynch & Horton, 2017) Now, with the data ink aspect, Edward Tufte explains it as, “the ratio of ink in a data graphic devoted to useful information, versus the amount used by distracting visuals noise which can be called chart junk.” In the visual side of communication, you do not need an excessive amount of colors or patterns to explain a message that you are attempting to portray to an audience. In some cases, the best solution at the time may be a simple chart. Like how I mentioned above, you want to be able to communicate with your audience without overloading them with information whether it be useful or not and to be efficient in summarizing it.

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