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Academy



Database Design

11-3

Preparing Visual Materials

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Objectives

- This lesson covers the following objectives:
 - Construct entity relationship diagrams that demonstrate industry conventions
 - Prepare tables and visuals that support their database documentation
 - Demonstrate and provide examples of table formatting for database documentation
 - Demonstrate and refine oral presentation skills during rehearsal and refinement

Purpose

- Visual materials complete the presentation
- They complement the written documentation and the oral presentation
- For nontechnical readers, graphs, tables, and visual presentation of data are key to understanding and clarifying the written documentation

Purpose

- Sports teams hold regular practice sessions, theater companies have rehearsals before a show, and musicians practice regularly on their instruments
- The stellar performances you see at the game, the show, or the concert would not be possible without practice
- Think about the first time you solved a math problem, played a video game, or learned to swim
 - Were you very good at it?
 - What did you do to get better?
- Practice!

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

- People take in a lot of information through their eyes, much more than through their ears
- Well-drawn and clearly labeled visual materials add impact to the presentation as it is being delivered and support it afterward

Guidelines for Preparing and Using Visual Elements

- All diagrams, drawings, tables, or graphs should have a title that identifies what it depicts
- All diagrams, drawings, tables, or graphs should have a label that identifies it for reference from the written documentation
- For example, label a diagram "Figure 1 - ERD " and refer to it as "Figure 1 – ERD" in the written documentation

Guidelines for Preparing and Using Visual Elements

- If different colors or different styles of lines are used in a drawing, be sure to make a key to explain their meaning
- Keep all diagrams, drawings, tables, and graphs simple and easy to understand
- The reader doesn't need 85 rows of data output to understand your point
- Size diagrams, drawings, tables, and graphs to fit in the flow of the documentation and within the page margins

Guidelines for Preparing and Using Visual Elements

- Use tables for numerical data and to show database output
- Label each table with a centered bold row heading and a column heading
- If several tables are part of a group, label them Table 1-1, Table 1-2, etc.

Guidelines for Preparing and Using Visual Elements

- Use the same font size and style of all similar elements in each table
- Line up decimal points in columns
- Don't abbreviate without providing a key
- If you use "mname," make sure you reference it
- Your audience may not know if this is maiden name, middle name, or manager name

Guidelines for Preparing and Using Visual Elements

- For charts and graphs, choose the style (pie chart, bar graph, line graph, line graph) that best fits the data being illustrated
- For visuals to be shown during a presentation, make sure the print size is large enough for someone to read from the last row of seats



Guidelines for Preparing and Using Visual Elements

- Keep visual content simple
- Your audience may not understand technical jargon or have time to read many lines of text
- Rehearse the presentation to make sure you understand how to explain all visual elements



Practice Makes Perfect

- Very few people get everything right the first time
- The key is to practice and be willing to listen to constructive criticism
- You have an important role both as a presenter and as an audience member
- When you offer feedback to your class members about their presentations, be constructive, helpful, and positive

Classroom Activity: Presentation Rehearsal

- Review your presentation with your group.
- Present a “mini” version of your presentation to the class (make a brief introduction, show the ERD, make one statement about it and then conclude)
- Refine your presentation, incorporating feedback from your classmates



Summary

- In this lesson, you should have learned how to:
 - Construct entity relationship diagrams that demonstrate industry conventions
 - Prepare tables and visuals that support their database documentation
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