

1.2.4 Conditional Formatting

We're about to go a little deeper into data analysis with Excel and use conditional formatting to customize our worksheet. This will refine the visual presentation of the data in the worksheet to provide Louise with information at a glance.

By now, you should feel pretty familiar with the dataset. You've read it, resized it, filtered it, formatted it, and froze it. Now we're going to take our analysis a step further and customize the data to provide visual feedback.

What do we mean by "visual feedback"? Imagine if traffic lights were words rather than colors. What would that experience be like? Or think of a weather map, where the strongest part of a storm is shaded an angry red. In the cases of traffic lights and weather maps, colors provide a visual link to a specific situation. We can do the same in our data worksheet with conditional formatting.

What's Conditional Formatting?

Conditional formatting in Excel refers to customizing the appearance of a cell based on its value. This is a great way to provide viewers with information at a glance. And, much like customizing an essay or report with Microsoft Word, there are several ways to format a spreadsheet: each cell can be filled with a different color, various fonts and text sizes can be used, and so on. For our project, we'll apply conditional formatting to some of the columns in the worksheet in order to more easily view the outcomes of Kickstarter campaigns.

IMPORTANT

Conditionals in Code If you're an experienced Excel user who's looking forward to the coding portions of this course, that's great! Conditional formatting is a concept that you'll see in action often.

Conditionals make frequent appearances in all programming languages. When coding, they are referred to as conditional statements because they are paired with keywords such as *if*, *and*, and *or*.

When using conditionals in Excel, a cell can be highlighted a certain color based on its value. *If* the value of a cell is greater than 50, *then* color it green.

These same logical rules apply when conditional statements are included in coding script.

Let's put this into action by applying conditional formatting to our data.

Use Conditional Formatting

There are four main categories in the Outcome column—Successful, Failed, Canceled, and Live—so let's color-code by category. We can use conditional formatting to automatically apply a preselected color to the cell.

Watch the following video to learn about conditional formatting in Excel.
Choose the video that corresponds to your operating system.

macOS



Windows



We now have our first two rules! These apply a color to the live and successful campaigns. There are two more rules to create. Give them a try in the Skill Drill.

SKILL DRILL

Create two more rules for the remaining outcomes.
Highlight failed outcomes in red and canceled outcomes in yellow.

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