**Notes**

**CHAPTER 3 –CLUTTER IS YOUR ENEMY!**

* Clutter – visual elements that take up space but don’t increase understanding.
* Gestalt Principles of Visual Perception – how individuals perceive order in the world around them.
  + Proximity – We tend to think of objects that are physically close together as belonging to part of a group
  + Similarity – Objects that are of similar color, shape, size, or orientation are perceived as related to belonging to part of a group.
  + Enclosure – We think of objects that are physically enclosed together as belonging to part of a group.
  + Closure – The closure concept says that people like things to be simple and to fit in the constructs that are already in our heads.
  + Continuity – When looking at objects, our eyes seek the smoothest path and naturally create continuity in what we see even where it may not explicitly exist.
  + Connection - We tend to think of objects that are physically connected as part of a group.
* Lack of visual order
  + Alignment – Avoid center alignment, use left justified text
  + Diagonal components such as lines and texts should be avoided
  + White space – In visual communications is as important as pauses in public speaking
  + Use contrast strategically

**CHAPTER 4 – FOCUS YOUR AUDIENCE’S ATTENTION**

* Pre-attentive attributes
  + Can be leveraged to help direct your audience’s attention to where you want them to focus it.
  + Used to create a visual hierarchy of elements to lead your audience through the information you want to communicate in the way you them to process it.
* Size – Relative size denotes relative importance. If multiple things are of roughly equal importance, size them similarly. Alternatively, if there is one really important thing, leverage size to indicate that: make it BIG!
* Color – When used sparingly, color is one of the most powerful tools you have for drawing your audience attention.
  + Use it sparingly
  + Use it consistently
  + Design with the colorblind in mind
  + Be thoughtful of the tone color conveys
  + Consider to leverage brand colors
* Position on page – Most members of your audience will start at the top left of your visual or slide and scan with their eyes in zig-zag motions across the screen.
  + Most important things should be at the top of the page.

**CHAPTER 5 – THINK LIKE A DESIGNER**

* Affordances – These characteristics suggest how the object is to be interacted with or operated.
  + Highlight the important stuff
  + Eliminate distractions
  + Create a clear hierarchy of information
* Accessibility – Designs should be usable by people with disabilities.
  + Don’t overcomplicate
  + Text is your friend
* Aesthetics – People perceive more aesthetic designs as easier to use than less aesthetic designs
  + Be smart with color
  + Pay attention to alignment
  + Leverage white space
* Acceptance – For a design to be effective, it must be accepted by its intended audience.
  + Articulate the benefits of the new or different approach
  + Show the side-by-side
  + Provide multiple options and seek input
  + Get a vocal member of your audience on board

**CHAPTER 6 – DISSECTING MODEL VISUALS**

* Model visual #1: line graph
  + Good use of text makes this visual accessible
  + A number of pre-attentive attributes are employed to draw attention to the “Progress to date” trend
    - Color
    - Thickness of line
    - Presence of data marker
    - Label on final point
    - Size of corresponding text
* Model visual #2: annotated line graph with forecast
  + Clear labeling of Actual and Forecast helps reinforce message
  + Numeric data labels are included for the forecast data points to give the audience a clear understanding of forward-looking expectations
* Model visual #3: 100% stacked bars
  + When it comes to focusing the audience’s attention, red is used as the single attention-grabbing color
  + The footnote contains a note about the total number of projects over time, which is helpful context that we don’t get from the visual directly due to the use of 100% stacked bars.
* Model visual #4: leveraging positive and negative stacked bars
  + Path of the audience eyes
    - Scan title
    - Big, bold, black numbers
    - Downward to other text
* Model visual #5: horizontal stacked bars
  + Stacked bars make sense here given the nature of what is being graphed
  + Orienting the chart horizontally means the category names along the left are easy to read in horizontal text.
  + The categories are organized vertically in descending order of “Total %,” giving the audience clear construct to use as they interpret the data.