Medium Assignment

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Hi Charlie,

I hope you are doing well at your new job. You mentioned needing some help with your writing skills earlier this week. I am currently enrolled in a course (WRIT-2313) that focuses on professional writing skills for the workplace, so I feel qualified to advise you. In this email, you can find 3 ways to make your writing easier to digest and understand. I hope this helps!

1. Audience, Purpose, and Occasion

As you know, being a software engineer involves all different kinds of communication. Whether those communications be emails, presentations, or reports they must be easily accessible and digestible. You must know **who** you are communicating with (audience), **what** you are communicating (purpose), and **why** you’re communicating with them (occasion). Knowing your audience is key because it allows you to shape the tone of your message. For example, you would not want to speak to your boss the way you speak to your significant other because that would be seen as inappropriate. Knowing the purpose of your message also changes your general tone and the medium in which you present your message. For example, you may prefer a Slack message over an email when letting people know how complete a task is whereas an email may be preferred for a more intense task. Now that you know audience and purpose, you can apply those to the occasion. The occasion in writing is simple: why are you communicating this to your audience? The occasion sets a goal for your communication. If you want to learn more check out this article [here](https://www.comm.pitt.edu/approaching-speaking-situation-audience-occasion-purpose).

1. Document Usability—CRAP

Document usability more focuses on the design of a document rather than its content. CRAP stands for **C**ontrast, **R**epetition, **A**lignment, and **P**roximity. Contrast doesn’t just reference color. It can be any kind of contrast like in fonts (serif vs sans serif, font size, bolded vs unbolded text), space (near or far), and position (top or bottom). Contrast is important because it shows your eye where to go. Repetition makes for easy design. If you use bullet points for example, then all of a sudden switch to using numbers you can confuse your users. Using repetitive design choices makes a longer document easy to scan and search. Alignment goes along with repetition, if the eye is used to seeing things aligned one way it makes it easier for it to focus on the information being presented. Proximity moves things closer or further apart to achieve and organized design. For example, placing captions of photos close to their photos makes it easier for the reader to decipher which picture goes with which caption. [Read here for examples of CRAP](https://www.presentationzen.com/chapter6_spread.pdf).

1. Data Visualization

Data visualization focuses more on presenting data. Basically, how to form infographics or graphs to make the most sense. In your field of work, quantitative information is paramount; graphs and carts come up regularly. These graphs and charts should be easy to follow and abide by the Audience, Purpose, and Occasion principles. When being given a chart representing a percentage of a whole, you would want these to be shown in the easiest way possible i.e., a pie chart. A pie chart shows parts of a whole making it a clear choice for percentages. Stick to the norms. Do not try to reinvent the wheel. Whatever conventions are set in place for a particular type of data are useful. Make sure graphs or infographics can answer most of the questions it prompts like when was this? And where is this information from? By including dates and sources, the user gets a more well-rounded view of the data. I've included an [article](https://visme.co/blog/types-of-graphs/) with a list of graphs and infographics you can use as a guide along with their respective uses. Also here is a funny article of [horrible graphs/charts](https://www.businessinsider.com/the-27-worst-charts-of-all-time-2013-6).

**To recap**: I told you about Audience, Purpose, and Occasion, introduced you to CRAP principles, and gave you some tips for when you make infographics/graphs/charts.

I hope these three things can help you write more seamlessly in a professional writing setting. Please let me know if you have any questions and I can do my best to answer them. Good luck with this new chapter in your life.

Your friend,

Emma