# Individual Reflection

Prior to undertaking this module, data visualization was often viewed abstractly as mostly pie charts and bar charts presented in sales reports. However, with the advent of big data and organisations trying to make sense of the data and derive useful and profitable insights, data visualization has taken on a bigger and more strategic role.

It is worth noting that data visualization can no longer be seconded to junior staff or interns but requires a strategic think tank within the organization to present large volumes of data in a synthesized manner.

This module presented key concepts in data visualizations that are the foundation for anyone working with data, 1). Humans are visual and are able to interpret complex information if it is presented visually 2). The goal of data visualization is communication.

I have used Tableau/Powe BI in a professional setting and navigated the tools through trial and error. However, the foundational understanding and context, including design principles was still a work in progress. This module introduced learners to a systematic and strategic approach to building dashboards. As a data analyst, I have moved away from complex, cluttered dashboards, to more streamlined easy to easy-to-navigate dashboards that allow the audience to understand what is being presented and give them the confidence to navigate and explore the data further.

Another important element is knowing your audience and what answers they seek from the data. As a data analyst, one is prone to wanting to show their ability to use visualization tools which often leads to cluttered and complex dashboards that do not convey any relevant information. Knowing your audience is the first step at building a useful dashboard.

Finally, programming in R and Python has been challenging but enjoyable. These two languages are extremely useful when working with large datasets and modelling data for further analysis.

According to Gibbs (1988), there are different learning styles that individuals may prefer in their learning and approach to problem-solving. My approach to programming was actively experimenting without reflecting on why at times certain code was not working or producing the desired results. This approach is not an effective way of approaching programming tasks, especially in R and Python. A more practical approach would be to adopt an adaptable style of learning coding by recognizing my own habitual style. Gibbs, (1988) recommends learners to recognize their habitual learning style and characteristics of learning tasks as this will allow for the learning to be more flexible at meeting their learning demands. In this regard, I needed to set my own personal learning objectives and set schedules for different learning phases. A practical way of doing this would have been slowly applying what I would have learnt in my work tasks. Thus, applying R or Python code to data I am very familiar with would make the learning curve less daunting.

In conclusion, the module was relevant and important in building my data analytics and visualisation skills. I noticed that my thinking and approach to analysis in my professional work had improved and I was able to apply what I was learning to my work. I learnt the ability to question my data, by building visualisations, and interpreting the visuals.