

DS 735: Communicating About Data, Assignment 3 Description

This assignment is the assessment for Lessons 11-13 and is designed for you to demonstrate that you can create two convincing and accessible data visuals (graphics) that represent your skillset to two different job prospects/audiences. The two graphics will be targeted toward two different job descriptions. This assignment allows you to apply our study of **persuasive communication** from Lessons 11 through 13, **informational communication** from Lessons 6 through 10, as well as key concepts of our study of **foundational communication concepts** during Lessons and 2, and our study of **technical writing** during Lessons 3 through 5.

This assignment has 2 parts--

Assignment 3, Part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find 2 job descriptions that are relevant to the positions you are qualified for.• Write 2 paragraphs (1 for each job description) that summarize the details in the 2 job descriptions.• Create 2 different graphics (one for each position) that help advertise yourself to a potential employer (i.e. a visual resume). Include education, skills, and experiences in the graphic.• Post the two graphics and the two paragraphs in the Lesson 13 discussion board (no zip files please)
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Assignment 3, Part 2

- Using the *Assignment 3 Feedback Form*, review the documents of at least four classmates. Post feedback to each of the four classmates.

Any of these assignments can be completed ahead of schedule. Due date extensions or requests may be possible and when necessary should be requested by email.

Part 1

1. Find 2 job descriptions that are relevant to the positions you are qualified for. Consider the following questions, regarding the 2 different job descriptions:
 - a. What professional information about you as a candidate, is relevant or essential for you to include in your graphic?
 - b. What biases does the prospective employer have that might make them supportive of or resistant to your application?
 - c. What factors could weaken your candidacy, and do you need to proactively address them? For example, if you are weak in a skill area mentioned in one of the job descriptions, how will your graphic compensate for that weakness?
2. Write 2 paragraphs (1 for each job description) that **summarize** the details in the 2 job descriptions.
3. Create 2 graphics, following sound principles of design (see specific details and links below).
4. Share the two graphics and two paragraphs in the Lesson 13 discussion board.

The following are highlights taken from Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic, an expert in storytelling with data. She says, “one thing to keep in mind with a table is that you want the design to fade into the background, letting the data take center stage.”

In her book, *Storytelling with Data*, she explains the key principles, outlined below, that will help you in creating effective graphics, for this assignment. (Source: Cole Nussbaumer Knaflic, *Storytelling with Data: A Data Visualization Guide for Business Professionals*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Hoboken, New Jersey, 2015.)

Key Principles to Apply in Your Graphics:

- **Context** – determine the most critical skills the prospective employers want that are required skills for the job.

- **Visual style** – select the style of the graphics with care (scatterplot, slopegraph, table, bar, etc.)
- **Avoid certain layouts** – for this assignment, do not use 3D images, the secondary y-axis, or any clutter (anything that does not increase understanding)
- **Focus** – Keep the audience’s attention on things *you* want them to focus on, and be sure those things are what they are wanting *in the job applicant* (use of color, font sizes, position of information in the graphics)
- **Highlighting techniques** – use these to make the skills you have (that they want) stand out (i.e., **bold**, *italics*, underlining for captions and labels; upper/lower case and typeface, size, color (but use color sparingly and be considerate of color-blindness)).
- **Use clean vertical and horizontal lines** – for unity and cohesion
- **Leverage white space** – preserve margins; think “less is more”
- **Include all key skills and qualifications** such as education, work skills

Part 2

Using the *Assignment 3 Team Feedback Form* review the documents created by a minimum of four classmates. Provide feedback to each classmate based on their graphics and paragraphs.

Grading

Feedback and grade will focus on strength and opportunity areas. It is important that you review your feedback, ask questions as necessary and use this experience to improve your ability to help non-technical professionals visualize, explore and act on data science findings.

Assignments will be graded on an A-F scale based on *Assignment 3 Grading Rubric*.

Resources

If you are looking for some examples of good design principles, you can start with some of these websites:

- More from Cole Nussbaumer Knaflitz: Her book website, with numerous resources: <http://www.storytellingwithdata.com/>

Videos

- Google Talk by Cole Nussbaumer Knaflitz:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EMW7io4rSI>
- Declutter Your Data Visualizations:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X79o46W5pII>
- Importance of Contrast when Communicating with Data: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60KiAXbkrI0>
- Being Clever with Color in Data Visualization:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiD6etOB6qI>

Additional Resources

- Eager Eyes - Robert Kozara's website focused on data visualization
www.eagereyes.org
- FiveThirtyEight's Data Lab
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/>
- Flowing Data - Nathan Yau's website on the understanding of data visualization
<https://flowingdata.com>
- The Functional Art
<http://www.thefunctionalart.com/>
- The Guardian Data Blog
<https://www.theguardian.com/data>
- PolicyViz - Jonathan Schwabish's blog
<https://policyviz.com/>
- VizWiz
<http://www.vizwiz.com/>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What are the due dates for this assignment?

Please check the Course Calendar for all due dates.

2. Is there a required essay word count or length?

No, there is no required word count. The essay only needs to be long enough to demonstrate that you can use the checklist to revise a document.

3. What if I get confused or stuck?

Please contact me via the “Just Ask” discussion forum or by email if you get stuck.

4. Where do I submit my paragraphs and graphics?

You will submit your materials in the Lesson 13 discussion board.

5. What if the assignment is turned in late?

The best way to handle a late assignment is to contact me by email before the due date to negotiate a deadline that works for you.