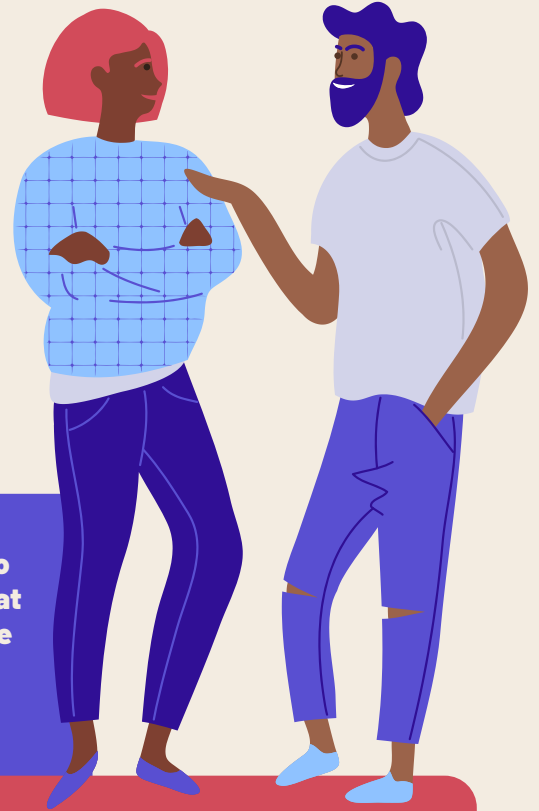


How to Suggest that you Should Test your Data Viz



Ideas to (gently) bring up with your designer:

1. The data viz “best practices” that we’ve relied on in the past are not universal; they were mostly based on the comprehension and preference of western college students.

3. The symbolism, structure, and language of data visualizations are not culturally universal. They can appear confusing or even oppressive to some audiences.

2. It’s more equitable for us to supply data visualizations that are effective for our audience than to expect our audience to train themselves in our preferences.

4. We tested every other part of the project, why stop now? We can easily test how effective our design is for the audiences we care about. Let’s put our data viz in front of some of them and have them identify what each of the elements (colors, shapes, scale, axis, symbols, icons, orientation, patterns, units, etc.) means to them (or doesn’t mean!). We All Count calls this the Reverse-Engineered Legend. *Note that you’re not testing them on how well they understand the information, you’re testing how effective your design is for them.

5. BONUS: We’ll get to think outside the box and created more interesting, unique, impactful and effective designs, with the testing to back up their efficacy in this specific situation.

P.S. If we’re stuck trying to improve our design for a specific audience, what kind of designs are they already using? What structures of visual storytelling are they already conditioned to understand and respond to? How do they see things?

Further reading:

<https://weallcount.com/2020/07/30/reverse-engineering-data-viz-for-equity/>

<https://medium.com/@kennelliott/39-studies-about-human-perception-in-30-minutes-4728f9e31a73>

<https://aea365.org/blog/gedi-week-cultural-considerations-in-data-visualization-a-ge-di-take-by-mike-osiemo-mwirigi-and-glen-acheampong/>



**WE ALL
COUNT**

project for equity
in data science