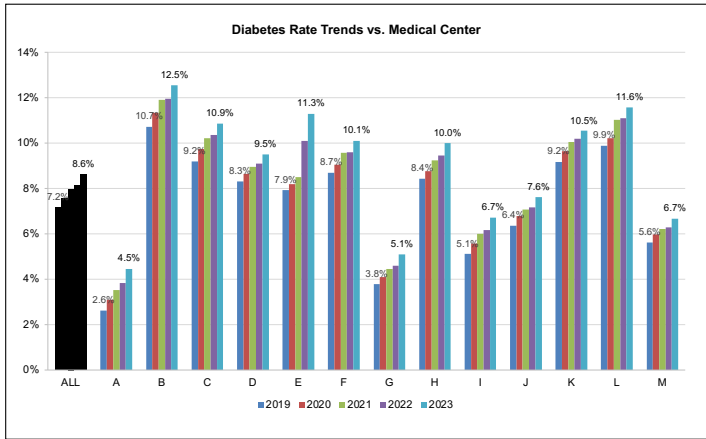


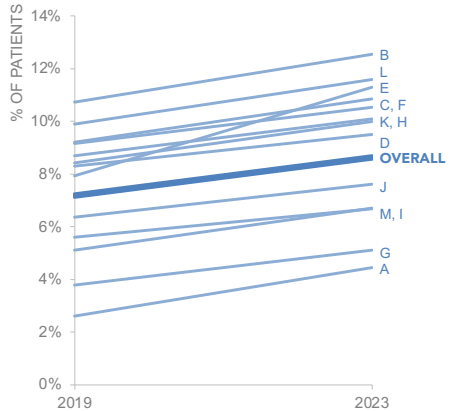
LESSON HIGHLIGHTS: identify & eliminate **clutter**

BEFORE



AFTER

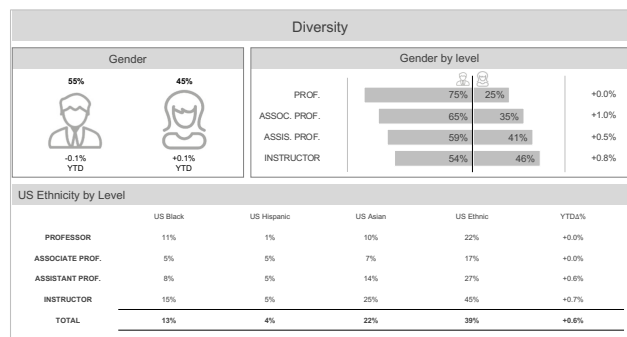
Diabetes rates over time by medical center



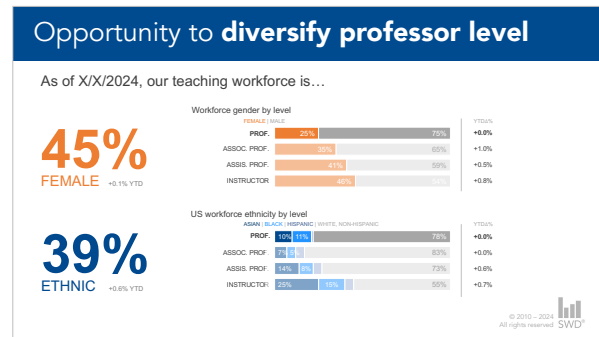
- Every element on the page, whether it is meaningful or not, creates **cognitive burden** on our audience. Our goal is to limit the amount of work a viewer has to do in order to see the data and the insights in the graph clearly.
- Identify and eliminate any elements that have **no informative value**, such as borders, gridlines, background shading, decorative images, or gradient or pattern fills.
- Conversely, the absence of certain elements can make a visual much more difficult to understand. Make sure that all of your **graphs and axes have titles**.
- Resist the temptation to add **markers and labels** for every single data point. If you have an axis, you don't need to label every data point, and if all your data is labeled, you might not need an axis.
- Avoid **diagonal elements** and text, which are distracting and harder to read than text written on a single horizontal line.
- Employ **alignment** and use **white space** strategically for clean horizontal and vertical lines.
- Fade the **skeleton** of your visual into the background so the data shines through.
- **Use contrast strategically**: don't let your message get lost in the clutter.

LESSON HIGHLIGHTS: focus **attention**

BEFORE

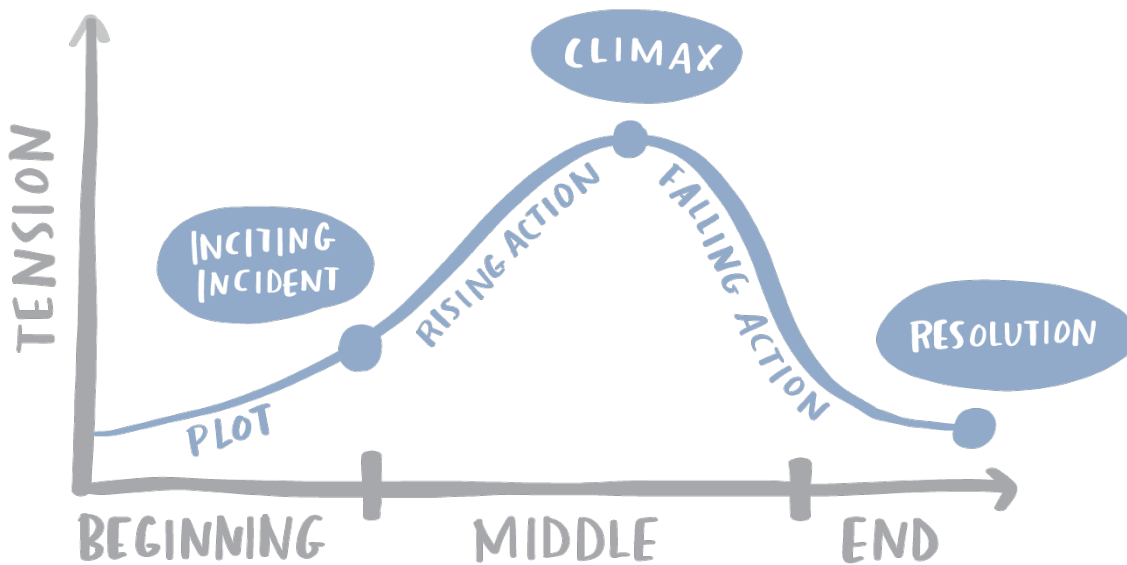


AFTER



- **Employ the power of preattentive attributes and use selectively** to direct your audience’s attention and provide a visual hierarchy of information
- Preattentive attributes can be leveraged in **text** as well as **data visualization** to show your audience where to look and make it easier to interact with your visual
- Determine whether you’re using preattentive attributes effectively by conducting the **“where are your eyes drawn?”** test
- Don’t use **color** just for decoration—when used sparingly, color is one of your most powerful tools for drawing attention where you want it
- When choosing color, be mindful of desired **tone, company/team branding,** and **accessibility**

LESSON HIGHLIGHTS: tell a **story**



- **Stories resonate**, stick in our memory, and can be retold.
- Narrative arc is one way to structure a presentation and make it engaging. Include a **plot** (context), **twists** (interesting data), and a **resolution** (call to action). This takes time to craft, but it's worth the effort when done well.
- **Written communications** that are circulated to be consumed independently require a greater level of detail and words to make sense to an audience. **Materials for a live presentation** should be sparse with minimal written text, so that the focus is on the presenter.
- **Conflict** and **tension** are key components of story; consider how you can leverage these.
- There can be immense value in soliciting a **fresh perspective**—both in the context of a specific data visualization as well as your broader communication. Take the time to seek feedback from a friend or colleague before your final presentation.

The STORYTELLING with DATA PROCESS

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND the CONTEXT

CRAFT your BIG IDEA



- ① articulates your point of view
- ② conveys what is at stake
- ③ is one complete sentence

STORYBOARD



STEP 2: CHOOSE an APPROPRIATE VISUAL

ITERATE through GRAPHS

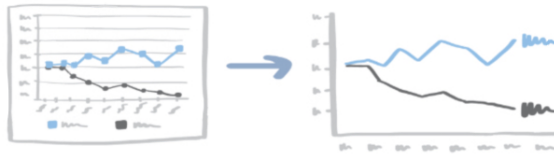


SEEK FEEDBACK



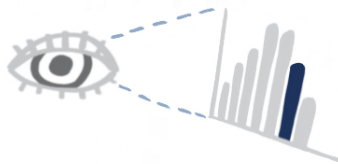
STEP 3: ELIMINATE CLUTTER

REMOVE UNNECESSARY ELEMENTS



STEP 4: FOCUS ATTENTION

SIGNAL WHERE to LOOK



USE this COMBINATION



STEP 5: TELL a STORY

REVISIT your STORYBOARD & CREATE a SHAPE

