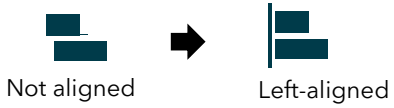
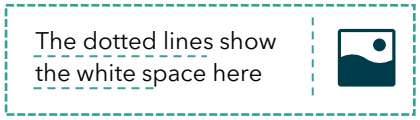
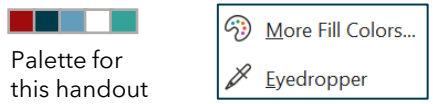
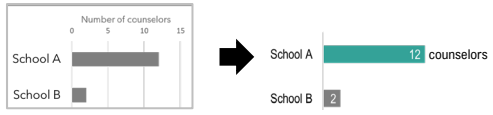
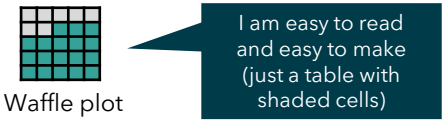
10 tips for creating change with your data

Always keep audience in mind!

FACENTE CONSULTING
UNDERSTAND • IMPLEMENT • TELL YOUR STORY

TIPS: Making data look good		Examples of how to apply this tip	What might this look like?
1	Align text, objects, and shapes	• Use the "shape format" PPT menu to align & distribute objects • Group (right-click menu) objects so they move together	
2	Buffer for "white space"	• Leave enough empty space around graphics/text and within them (such as line & paragraph spacing)	
3	Choose a color palette*	• Use colors that complement each other (via) Word & PPT "design" tab, or sites like https://www.colourlovers.com/ or https://coolors.co/ • Match colors with HEX codes or eyedropper (see Word/PPT color menus)	
4	Don't overcomplicate graphics	• Use large photos, remove borders of photos/graphics/icons • Find graphics in Word/PPT ("insert" menu → pictures → stock images), through Creative Commons, Canva, Noun Project	
TIPS: Making data digestible		**Examples of how to apply this tip**	**What might this look like?**
5	Check: Do you even need a chart?	• Don't make charts for the sake of charts • Consider the simplest and most impactful way to share your message with your specific audience	
6	Say what you mean	• Don't leave the reader guessing; just tell them your key message, in a way appropriate for your audience • This applies to chart titles! They need not be "neutral" in most cases.	*"Average arts funding and race/ ethnicity, by school"* → *"Schools with less arts funding have more Black students"*
7	Declutter your charts	• Remove borders, choose a narrow font, and replace axes with directly labeled datapoints when possible	
8	Use color intentionally*	• Use color to make your main point(s) stand out or to convey meaning • For charts, avoid using colors for the sake of being colorful	
9	Avoid pie charts (mostly)	• Don't use pie charts when you have more than 2-3 categories; they are hard to interpret! Try the built in "stacked bar" option.	
10	Consider out-of-the-box chart types	• Simple, less-used charts can be appealing and impactful • For more training on simple, impactful chart development, we recommend Stephanie Evergreen's "Chart Starter Series"	

*Keep in mind color contrast (for accessibility) and cultural meanings of color or other icons/symbols or chart decisions (e.g., how time is depicted). To support accessibility, do not rely on color as the only cue to explain your data.