

Basic Data Tips

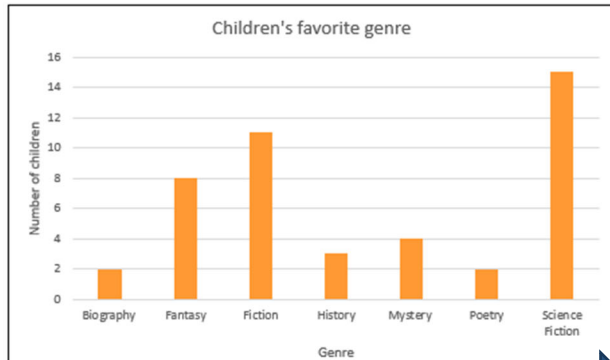
Collection

- Only collect what you will use
- Use validated tools when possible
- Ask one question at a time
- Always do at least a cursory review of results to be sure you are not missing any important messages or notes from clients or partners

Analysis

- Simplify spreadsheets – hide columns or copy and paste into a new sheet to help you focus
- Start by understanding the basics of your data – who, what, when, where
- Break outcomes down – by different groups, years, leaders, etc. to learn more

Visualization



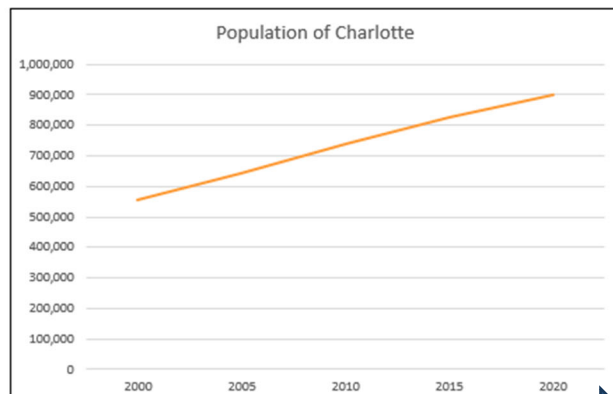
Default graphs from Excel are great for helping you understand your data but be sure to update them when telling your story to others.



3. Which data point is the story here?
Organize it as such

4. Brand it – use your org. colors and fonts, not the default

5. Use caption for other important information



Be sure your y-axis starts at 0. If the graph above started at 500,000, it would look as if the population increased ten-fold. We see it all the time – always check axes whether creating or reading.

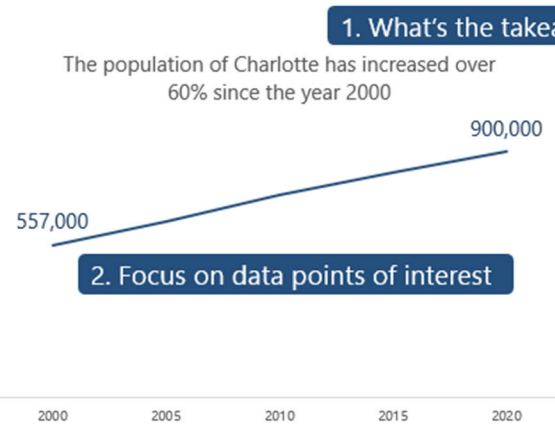


Figure 2. Charlotte population since 2000 (Source: US Census)

3. Clear clutter; brand; use caption

Other Tips

- Consider your audience
- Avoid pie charts - try using icons or large numbers to draw the eye and attention