Designing Tables and Graphs to Enlighten
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Description

The ability to design effective visual displays of data is not intuitive; it requires a set of visual design skills that must be learned. Based on his book, Show Me the Numbers: Designing Tables and Graphs to Enlighten, Stephen Few will introduce best practices in data presentation.

No information is more important to a business than quantitative information—the numbers that measure performance, identify opportunities, and forecast the future. Most quantitative information is presented as tables and graphs. Unfortunately, most tables and graphs used in business today are poorly designed—often to the point of misinformation. Why? Because almost no one who produces them, including specialists such as financial analysts and other report developers, have been trained in effective table and graph design.

This lecture will cover

1. The current state and challenges of data presentation
2. Learning to recognize what doesn’t work
3. Introduction to table and graph design
   a. The goal of tables and graphs
   b. The two fundamental challenges of data presentation
   c. Characteristics of quantitative information
   d. Different types of quantitative scales
   e. Differing characteristics and uses of tables and graphs
   f. The seven common quantitative relationships in business graphs
4. Best practices in graph design
   a. How graphs communicate
   b. Visual objects used to encode values in graphs and the best uses of each
   c. Matching the right visual encoding objects to the seven common quantitative relationships in graphs