

# Infographics:

A designer's approach & best practices

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*for CALPACT New Media Best Practices:  
Using Infographics and Data Visualization Webinar*

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# My background & experience

It takes all kinds of people to make change. My output just happens to be pixels, lines of code, and printer ink.



# What's design?

Design uses **visual elements**  
**and text** to tell a story and  
move someone into action.

*This is a definition I created out of terms familiar to non-designers and clients.*

# What's an infographic?

An infographic is a  
**VISUAL ESSAY** that  
uses **DATA** to tell the story.

*This is another definition I created out of terms familiar to non-designers and clients.*

# Typical infographic design

Like an essay, infographics tend to have an **introduction**, **body**, and **conclusion**.

Introduce the situation

Tell the data story  
with supporting facts  
and data visuals

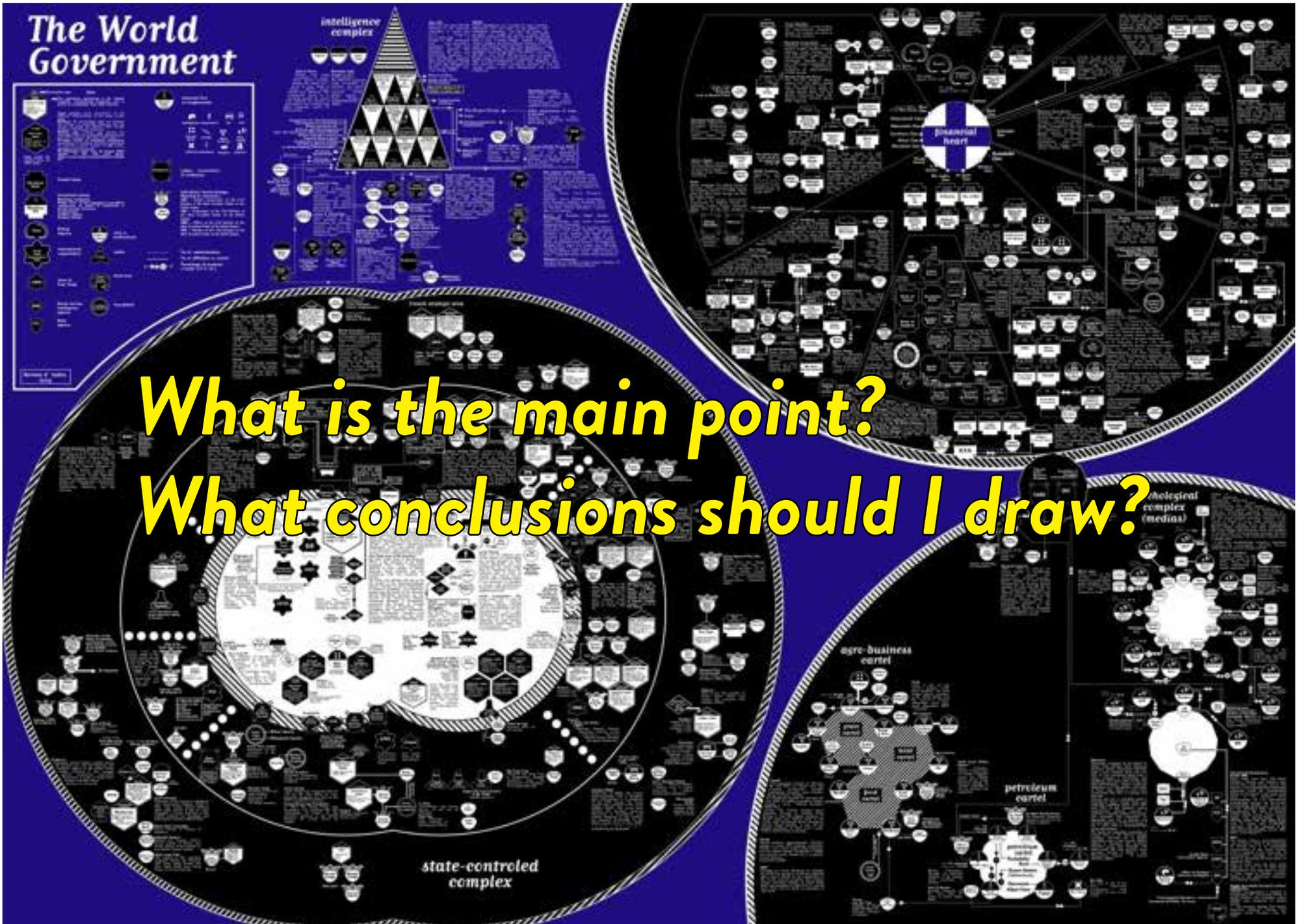
Solutions &  
Calls to action

# Bad infographics



***76% isn't accurately represented here!***

# The World Government



# 5 steps to a successful infographic

1. **Ask yourself and your team: *Do you have a COMPELLING data story?***  
*(Will it readily compel someone to share this graphic with others?)*
2. **Practice telling your data story to each other and people outside your team.** You will see gaps where the story could be clearer, needs additional data, etc.
3. **Use Post-Its to write down key pieces of data.** Move these around as you revise the story. Sketch constantly.
4. **Work on design last.** Don't design (color schemes, font sizes, etc) until your story is clear and your data is vetted.
5. **Good design is not a democratic process.** Allow for many stakeholders to weigh in at different stages, decreasing that number at each stage. Be very clear about their level of engagement and time to provide feedback. A small team (2-3 people) should make the final design decisions.

# GROW THE ECONOMY

*Raise the wages of tipped workers!*

## Who are tipped workers?

- **2 in 3** are women
- Most are restaurant workers (mainly servers)
- Half are 30 years old or older
- **1 in 3** are parents, and **1 in 6** of those rely on food stamps to feed their children
- **1 in 4** rely on food stamps

## Racial Composition



# Case study: Tipped Workers

Tipped work is one of the **FASTEST GROWING** occupations and one of the **LOWEST PAID**, especially for workers of color.

Tipped workers earn a median of \$8.00/hr,\* **but which state you live in matters:**

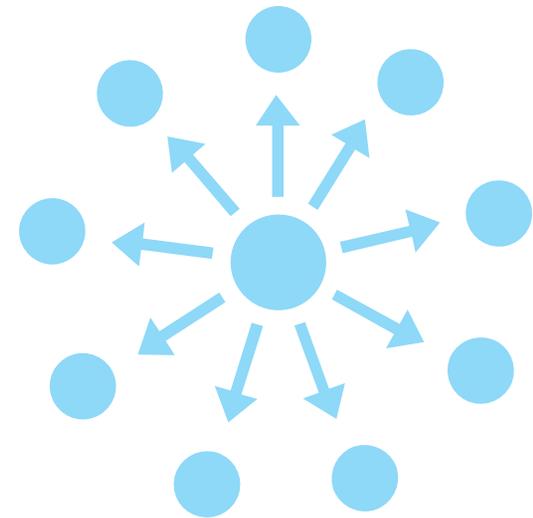
## MINIMUM WAGES OF TIPPED WORKERS BY STATE



# #1

Do we have a compelling data story?

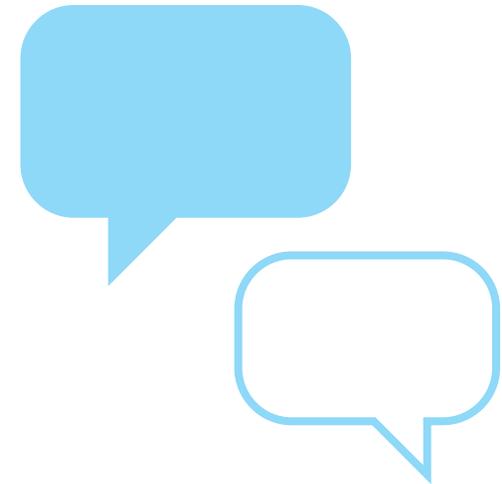
**We didn't know what the final story would be!** However, after a preliminary meeting with ROC-United, we felt confident enough to start analyzing the data. **Timing was also key.** We sought to release an infographic to add to the momentum (at the time) calling for a higher, fairer federal minimum wage.



# #2

Practice telling your data story to each other *and people outside your team.*

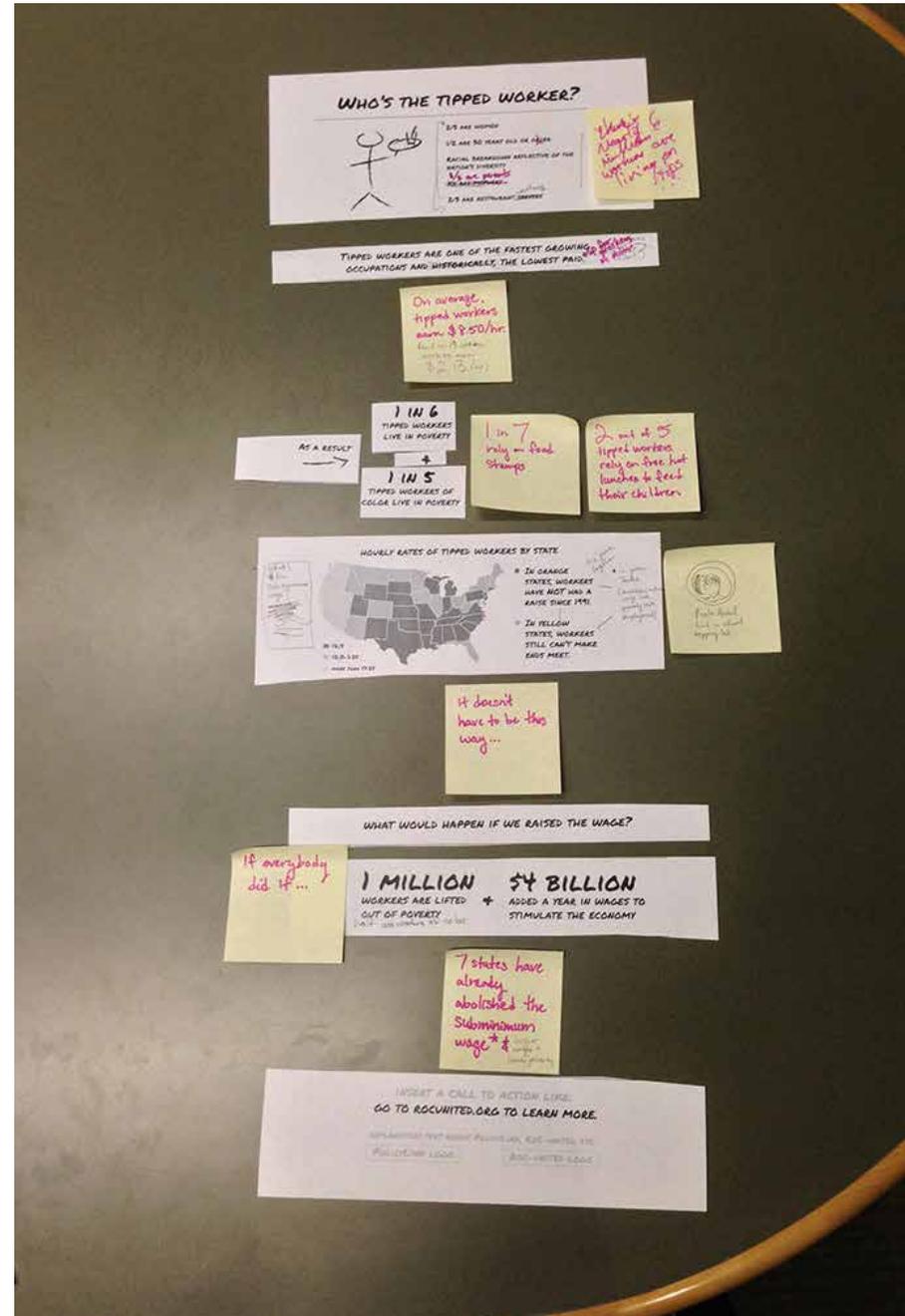
This created a natural outline. Our internal team took turns asking each other “So what? Why is *\_\_insert fact\_\_* important to me?” This practice pushed us to create a stronger, more compelling narrative.



# #3

Use Post-Its to write down key pieces of data.

Move them around as you practice telling the data story.



# #4

Work on design last.

Stay in sketch form and a format that suggests a draft stage. If you add a design treatment early on, it can distract when you most need feedback on content.

## WHO'S THE TIPPED WORKER?



2/3 ARE WOMEN  
1/2 ARE 30 YEARS OLD OR OLDER  
RACIAL BREAKDOWN REFLECTIVE OF THE NATION'S DIVERSITY  
X% ARE MOTHERS  
2/3 ARE RESTAURANT SERVERS

TIPPED WORKERS ARE ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING OCCUPATIONS AND HISTORICALLY, THE LOWEST PAID.

### HOURLY RATES OF TIPPED WORKERS BY STATE



- IN ORANGE STATES, WORKERS HAVE NOT HAD A RAISE SINCE 1991.
- IN YELLOW STATES, WORKERS STILL CAN'T MAKE ENDS MEET.

■ \$2.15  
■ \$2.15-3.25  
■ MORE THAN \$3.25

AS A RESULT → 1 IN 6 TIPPED WORKERS LIVE IN POVERTY + 1 IN 5 TIPPED WORKERS OF COLOR LIVE IN POVERTY

### WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF WE RAISED THE WAGE?

1 MILLION WORKERS ARE LIFTED OUT OF POVERTY + \$4 BILLION ADDED A YEAR IN WAGES TO STIMULATE THE ECONOMY

INSERT A CALL TO ACTION LIKE:  
GO TO [ROCUNITED.ORG](http://ROCUNITED.ORG) TO LEARN MORE.

EXPLANATORY TEXT ABOUT POLICYLINK, ROC-UNITED, ETC.

POLICYLINK LOGO ROC-UNITED LOGO

# #5

Good design is not a democratic process.

We had feedback from multiple stakeholders. By the end of the design process, final approval came solely from both organizational heads.

## GROW THE ECONOMY

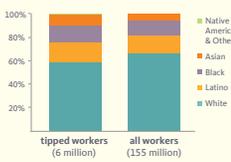
Raise the wages of tipped workers!



### Who are tipped workers?

- **2 in 3** are women
- Most are restaurant workers (mainly servers)
- Half are 30 years old or older
- **1 in 3** are parents and **1 in 6** of those rely on free lunches to feed their children
- **1 in 7** rely on food stamps

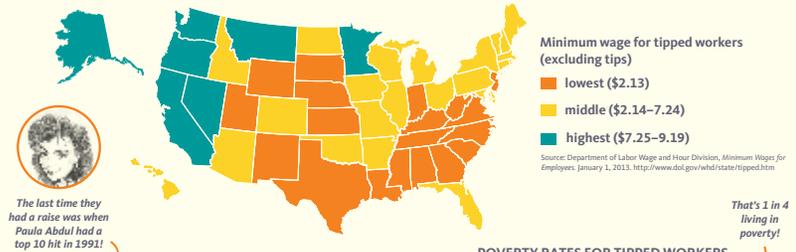
### Racial Composition



Tipped work is one of the **FASTEST GROWING** occupations and one of the **LOWEST PAID**, especially for workers of color.

Tipped workers earn a median of \$8.00/hr,\* **but which state you live in matters:**

### MINIMUM WAGES OF TIPPED WORKERS BY STATE



In states with the lowest minimum wage (\$2.13/hr), the poverty rate for workers of color is nearly **DOUBLE** that of states with the highest minimum wage.

In states with the highest minimum wage (\$7.25-9.19/hr), wages still aren't great, but the poverty rate for tipped workers is lowest of all the states.

In states with a minimum wage in the middle (\$2.14-7.24/hr), poverty rates are in between the other states.

### POVERTY RATES FOR TIPPED WORKERS



\*This wage includes tips. Tipped worker paychecks primarily go to taxes, meaning workers often live off of tips alone.

It doesn't have to be this way...

What would happen if we raised the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 for all workers?

**700,000** tipped workers would be lifted out of poverty (over half would be workers of color)

**\$12.7 billion** more wages every year and more spending to boost the economy and create jobs

Join ROC United's campaign to raise the tipped minimum wage at [livingofftips.com](http://livingofftips.com).



ROC United is working to raise wages and labor standards for the nation's 10 million restaurant workers. Learn more at [www.rocunited.org](http://www.rocunited.org).



PolicyLink is a national research and action institute advancing economic and social equity by *Lifting Up What Works*®. Learn more at [www.policylink.org](http://www.policylink.org).

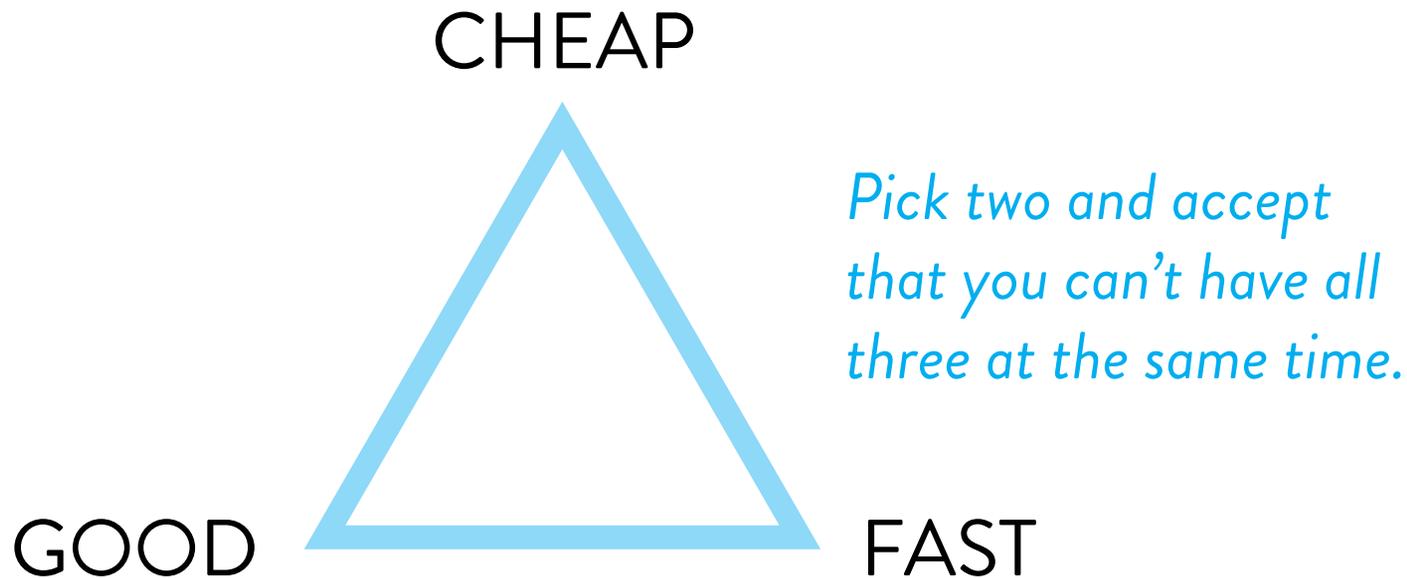
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, 2006-2012. Calculations by Restaurant Opportunity/Centers United based on King et al., Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 3.0 [Machine-readable database], Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010. <<http://usa.ipeds.org/usa/>> (accessed November 2013).

Design by Leslie Yang. Paula Abdul illustration by Jim Sweet.

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## Q. When should we work with a designer or design agency versus staying in-house?

A. If you have a budget, a clear and compelling data story, and have guidance on how to work with a designer or firm, give it a shot. That said, keep this old graphic design adage in mind:



# Agency or Freelance designer

- **LIKELY GOOD.** No guarantees. Ask for referrals from companies whose design work you admire.
- **FAST.** (They'll be faster than you, but like any relationship, it can take some amount of time to get someone's work and writing style. Factor this into your timeline.)
- **NOT CHEAP.** Talk to a few designers and agencies to establish a realistic budget. If you're too low, they'll tell you. Some have a nonprofit discount. Assume most designers and firms bill at \$60-100+/hr but most work at a flat project fee with a **set number of design rounds.**

# After you've secured a designer, have the following items ready:

- **Examples of infographics you admire.** This helps us better understand what you like.
- **Examples of your company's design work.** This helps us gauge the design aesthetic of your company.
- **Your deadline.**
- **Your audience** and where (online, offline, mobile) they're most likely going to be engaging with this content.

*NOTE: Not all design collaborations work out. Do your best to be clear about your design needs and be receptive to guidance by the designer. However, if you're not getting the results you need, end the project and relationship as early as possible.*

# Doing design in-house

- **GOOD? Could be good enough.** This depends on who your audience is. Perhaps they don't need a formal designed piece.
- **NOT FAST.** It make take you a while to get the design right as well as resolve stakeholder feedback.
- **CHEAP (relatively).** Be clear about what your time worth to your organization. Is your time best spent designing an infographic or leading another project?

# Design Tips: Design is restraint

- Use 1-2 typefaces *MAX*
- Use 2-4 colors in total (black, gray, and white are great too!) And use blocks of color to break up sections.
- Try to make infographic dimensions printable on copier (8.5x11, 11x17, etc.)
- Maintain the integrity of the data. Make sure visuals accurately represent the data.
- Establish a “visual hierarchy” to all content. For example, all sub-heads should be smaller than heads.
- Give content consistent spacing around each edge.
- **SHOW, DON'T TELL.** Don't over-explain.

# Design Resources

## Graphics

- [Creativemarket.com](http://Creativemarket.com)
- [YouWorkforThem.com](http://YouWorkforThem.com)
- [thenounproject.com](http://thenounproject.com)

## Photos

- [iStockphoto.com](http://iStockphoto.com)
- [Veer.com](http://Veer.com)
- [Blendimages.com](http://Blendimages.com)

## Inspiration *(there's plenty out there but here are a few to get you started)*

- [Visual.ly](http://Visual.ly)
- [informationisbeautiful.net](http://informationisbeautiful.net)
- [Dribbble](http://Dribbble)
- [WIRED](http://WIRED) magazine

# Design Tools

## Beginner

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel

## Intermediate

- Piktochart
- Infogr.am
- Visual.ly
- Easel.ly
- Venngage
- StatSilk
- Google Developers: <https://developers.google.com/chart/>
- Many Eyes: <http://www-958.ibm.com/software/data/cognos/manyeyes/>

## Advanced

- Adobe Creative Suite (Illustrator is the most flexible tool for graphic- and data-heavy design.) (TIP: You can subscribe to Adobe Creative Cloud for \$49/mo for multiple programs or \$9.99/mo for one program)

### ***Useful articles about intermediate options:***

- <http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/info-graphic-tools/>
- <http://www.creativebloq.com/info-graphic/tools-2131971>

# Thank you!

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