Infographics: Visual Instructions

Infographics, like charts, are visual representations of information. Infographics can help you simplify complicated information by providing graphics that consolidate the information into several captivating visuals. In the workplace, infographics can be used to help convey material prior to a training session, to illustrate results of a campaign, to reinforce a company's message, and to illustrate the features of a new product.

Analyzing Infographics

Purpose   Composers create infographics to explain complex information concisely by using engaging visuals. When people view an infographic, they should be able to understand the information presented with a simple glance. Infographics can be designed to communicate messages, show relationships between things, and/or clarify complex processes.

Audience   Composers of infographics know that their readers want information in a concise, easy-to read format. They know readers might consult their infographic for data that will help them make a decision.

Rhetorical appeals   To gain readers' confidence in the content and establish ethos, composers of infographics need to conduct research and present correct information. They can also appeal to audiences through logos by using logical organization and smart, digestible design.

Modes & media   Infographics use visuals and text to convey information. Often the visual content dominates and text is used mainly for labels. Infographics can be communicated in print and digitally, although most infographics are distributed digitally.

Elements of the genre   Infographics are:

- *Based on facts and data.* The information presented in infographics is based on research that others have done (such as existing statistics) or that the composer has collected personally (through primary research such as interviews).
- *Precise and clearly labeled and titled.* The elements in infographics are labeled so that readers know what they represent.
- *Illustrated with symbols that convey information.* Visual devices, such as icons, represent ideas.
- *Focused on relevant data.* Only data that is relevant to the information being presented is included.

Style   Creators of infographics make the following stylistic choices:

- *What details to present.* Infographics only include the details necessary to convey the message. Since the goal of an infographic is to make it easy for readers to absorb data quickly, too much detail might make it difficult for readers to see what's most important.
- *What techniques, tone, and voice to use.* The best infographics use simple, direct language. Text is used judiciously, providing just enough information to clarify the visuals. Tone is neutral and objective.

Design   When designing an infographic, remember the following:

- *Simple is best.* Infographics make information accessible and digestible.
- *Color is key.* Colors are used to help separate and highlight different pieces of information. However, too many colors can be distracting.
- *The parts need to be arranged logically and spatially.* Infographics lay out information and visuals in a way that shows readers what is most important. When there are multiple visuals, designers add white space between the elements to show separation or place the elements near each other to show connections.

Sources   Infographics are based on composers' knowledge or research. Readers assume that the infographic is presenting reliable data based on specific sources. Many infographics include a source or list of sources, which adds to their credibility and authority.