The following is a reconstruction of the workshop using the Tweets published live during the event.

Dean Magda Peck of UWM Silver School of Public Health now opening our Data Viz wksp

Dr Peck asks us to think abt a time when data "sang" to us
Timothy Schaefer of Northwestern Mutual addresses data viz wrkshp attendees

Schaefer talking abt importance of data to private sector

Schaefer says data is becoming an incredible asset

Acc to Schaefer we are creating data at a fast pace but often starve to understand all the data

Northwestern Mutual is striving to not just collect data but also learn from it

Northwestern mutual has learned that having data is not enough unless it is put in context & connect it to decisions—that is knowledge

@Danielle_MKE: Great to hear @NM_News's Timothy Schaefer on data "We are all constantly generating data"

Northwestern has learned you can be seduced by trying to measure it all but instead you must start w the questions you want to answer

Northwestern knows you have to democratize the data, connect more ppl to the data

Thx to all sponsors of data viz wrkshp Zilber Property Group, Bader Fdn, Nonprofit Mngmt Fund, United Way, Zilber Family Fdn, Joxel Grp
Milw mayor Tom Barrett addresses data viz wrkshp attendees abt city's extensive use of data
Mayor Barrett says city uses data on foreclosures, infant mortality, poverty, crime, to better deploy city resources where they are needed
Mayor Barrett presents city proclamation to Katie Pritchard for National Community Planning Month
Lee Ann Garrison of UWM Peck School of the Arts addresses data viz wrkshp

Garrison says good design can lead to good decisions

Cole Nussbaumer, keynote speaker at data viz wrkshp takes podium

Nussbaumer blogs about data viz at Storytelling w Data

Cole says understanding the situational context of the data is key

Who do you want to communicate to? What do you want to communicate? How can you communicate?

Keep in mind what background info is relevant? What sound bite could you use to clearly articulate ur message? No more than 3 minutes

Ur big idea must be a complete sentence that tells the audience abt the context of ur data

V imp to choose the right way to display ur data. Sometimes plain text is best option

Table or graph? Tables interact w our verbal system. Graphs interact w our visual system
Line graphs are for continuous data, usually across time. Bar graphs are for noncontinuous data. Bar charts should always start from zero.

Exploding 3D pie charts misrepresent the relationships between the sections. Don’t use them. Our eyes have difficulty judging the size of areas.

There are many different types of graphs. Always use the type that makes the most sense for your data and audience.

Give your graph to a friend to see if they understand it.

Don’t use 3D bar charts either because it is hard to read the actual values on them.

@laurynbb: And kill the 3D bar chart - data viz wkshp “@planningcouncil: Give your graph to a friend to see if they understand it”

You know you’ve achieved perfection in design when you have nothing more to take away.
Gestalt principles of visual perception: proximity, similarity, enclosure, closure, continuity, connection

Eliminate clutter from your graphs.

Get rid of anything that makes the audience work. Make it easy for audience to understand the point you're trying to make with the data

@HelenBaderFound: RT @planningcouncil: Eliminate clutter from your graphs. #zentweets

To focus attention where you want it, understand how ppl perceive info

@HelenBaderFound: Follow @planningcouncil for tips on presenting your nonprofit's data, beautifully and effectively.

Nussbaumer recommends Stephen Few's book as a good resource on data viz
Ppl can keep abt 4 pieces of data in their memory at one time so design your graphs accordingly

@HelenBaderFound Thx for following our live tweets of Cole Nussbaumer & Thx for your support of this wrkshp!

You have 8 secs to get audience's attention

@laurynbb: VizComm tenets “@planningcouncil: You have 8 secs to get audience's attention”

The most effective data viz will still fall flat if you don't have a story to go with it.

Stories stick in our minds in a different way than facts do.

Use text to highlight key points in your graph

Plot, twists and ending are components of your data story. If there's no twist - if it's not interesting, don't share the data.

Tactics for making story clear: horizontal & vertical logic, repetition, reverse storyboarding, fresh perspective

Your graph is the evidence that backs up your story

Cole says Excel can be used to make good graphs. It's not the default charts but a good user can make excel work
Much appreciation to our Evaluation Institute sponsors: McBeath Fdn, Foley Family Fdn, Grtr Milw Fdn, LISC

We could not have hosted this great data viz event without our sponsors

Thanks to data viz sponsors: Bader Fdn, Joel Grp, Nonprofit Management Fund, Northwestern Mutual Fdn, United Way of Gtr Milw, UWM

Light backgrounds on graphs are easier on the eyes (and ink) than dark backgrounds

Any time you cut out info be sure to think abt what context you might be losing

Everything in a data viz (text & visuals) needs to reinforce the same message

Rather than hope the data will tell you what it's about, be clear what your question is & then organize the data to answer the question

Cole asks what distinction do you make btwn data viz and infographics?

Infographics came out of journalism but have changed over time so now they are more glitz than data

Just putting in a graph or infographic in to fill white space is not a good reason

Donut graphs are even more difficult to read than pie charts; don't use them
@MilwaukeeStat: @planningcouncil and @storywithdata – thanks for putting on the best data viz gathering Milwaukee has ever seen. Well done!

@storywithdata Thanks, Cole, for inspiring 50 Milwaukee data geeks today with your advice on good data visualization!

@storywithdata: @planningcouncil Thank you for the invitation to speak to your group - an engaged and lively bunch - I had a fantastic time with you all!