Messaging Matters: Five Ways to Share Data that Resonate Across Campus

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Our Plan

• Why sharing data matters
• Key considerations
• Five case studies
Our goal of assessment: Action
“...many of the actionable findings we thought we had discovered... were either already well known by a couple of people on campus or were tucked away unnoticed among assessment data collected previously.”

Source: Blaich & Wise, 2011, p. 11
Every job has questions. Having the right data mean having better answers.
Sharing data effectively means considering your:

- Audience (Who?)
- Purpose (Why?)
- Format (How?)
Audience: Who We Share With

Various:
- Levels of responsibility
- Decision-making
- Skill sets
- Experiences with data
Audience: Who We Share With

- Student staff
- Entry-level staff
- Mid-level professionals
- Directors
- Senior administrators
Purpose: Why We Share

Key question: What are we trying to accomplish?
Purpose: Why We Share

- Sharing strengths and weaknesses
- Highlight best practices
- Increase knowledge and awareness
- Challenge assumptions
- Focus attention on specific issues
- Demonstrate need
- Demonstrate impact
### Purpose: Why We Share

**Example: Highlight best practices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monroe Hall</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson Hall</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson Hall</td>
<td>588</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyler Hall</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Hall</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adams Hall</td>
<td>799</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison Hall</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierce Hall</td>
<td>292</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polk Hall</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrison Hall</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Hall</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What are the top performing halls doing?
Purpose: Why We Share

Example:
Increase awareness

An infographic can highlight how important programs are.

- 72% of family members know how to appropriately assist their student if he or she is struggling.
- 87% of orientation leaders say their experience improved the value of their education.
- 93% of family members and 84% of incoming students reported orientation office staff were helpful.
Purpose: Why We Share

Key question:
What are we trying to accomplish?
How We Share: Why Visuals Matter

65% of people are visual learners
50% of your brain is dedicated to processing visual stimuli
90% of information that comes to the brain is visual

Sources: Smiciklas (2012) and Modha (2015)
How We Share: Why Visuals Matter

Goals of visuals:
- Appeal
- Comprehension
- Retention

Source: Lankow, Crooks, & Ritchie (2012)
How We Share: Why Visuals Matter

Traditional Elements

- Headline or title
- Axes
- Source
- Labels or legend
- Caption or narrative
# How We Share: Why Visuals Matter

## Artists and Designers: A Visual Approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Principles</th>
<th>Tools</th>
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<tr>
<td>Unity/Harmony</td>
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<td>Color</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hierarchy</td>
<td>Enclosure</td>
<td>Shape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale/Proportion</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>Texture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dominance/Emphasis</td>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td>Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similarity/Contrast</td>
<td>Connection</td>
<td>Form</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Example: Retention Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committed to:</th>
<th>Not at all (1)</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Extremely (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completing a degree</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing degree at this institution</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coming back for spring term</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coming back next year</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enclosures can help to highlight the story.
Percent of students committed to:

- Completing a degree: 81%
- Completing degree at this institution: 61%
- Returning for spring term: 83%
- Returning for next year: 71%

Color helps to distinguish data points. But, there's still a lot to process.
Example: Retention Data

Commitment: Percent of students highly committed to:

- Completing a degree: 92%
- Completing degree at this institution: 78%
- Returning for spring term: 92%
- Returning for next year: 83%

Easier to understand and tells the same story.
Fall-to-Spring Persistence Rates by Intent to Return Survey Question

Low Intent to Return (% 1-2): 52%
Moderate Intent to Return (% 3-5): 77%
High Intent to Return (% 6-7): 90%

Shows relationship between the two variables.
Fall-to-Spring Persistence Rates by Intent to Return Survey Question

- Low Intent to Return (% 1-2): 52%
- Moderate Intent to Return (% 3-5): 77%
- High Intent to Return (% 6-7): 90%

Shows relationship, scale, and emphasis.
### How We Share: Why Visuals Matter

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How can you use these concepts to improve your visuals?
Pulling It All Together: Five Case Studies
Case 1: Housing Student Staff

The student staff in your residence hall each need to come up with programs tailored to the needs of their specific floors.
Case 1: Housing Student Staff

• Limited commitment, training, and professionalism
• Concrete understanding and focus
• Dual-role
Case 1: Housing Student Staff

- Pair evaluation and self-reflection
- Strategies for improvement

What would you share with your student staff?
Case 1: Housing Student Staff

- Floor-specific
- Color-coded,
- Narrowly-focused
Case 2: Academic Advisor

Your academic advisors have 500 students each to work with and are struggling to prioritize who to reach out to first.
Case 2: Academic Advisor

- Full-time positions
- Significant training and education
- Limited professional experience
- Limited focus to their positions
- Short time-frames
Case 2: Academic Advisor

- Use data to prioritize outreach
- Spot students with critical issues
- Address student needs

How would you help your academic advisors?
### Case 2: Academic Advisor

Advisors can reach out to first-year students who say they want to leave first.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Intent to Leave</th>
<th>Class Standing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knight, Elijah</td>
<td>R2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1st Year/Freshman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee, Sarah</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td>1st Year/Freshman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin, Sierra</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td>1st Year/Freshman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Danielle</td>
<td>R1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1st Year/Freshman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelson, John</td>
<td>R2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1st Year/Freshman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell, Marissa</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td>1st Year/Freshman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sullivan, Jordan</td>
<td>R1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1st Year/Freshman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 3: Student Union Assistant Director

Assistant director of student union needs data to show that the department is meeting goals.
Case 3: Student Union Assistant Director

- Significant training and experience
- Broader strategies and larger focus
- Longer time-frames
- May be responsible for departmental assessment
Case 3: Student Union Assistant Director

• Department-wide improvements
• Improving areas of responsibility
• Link data to assessment plans

How would you help?
## Case 3:
Student Union Assistant Director

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor Description</th>
<th>Peer Institutions?</th>
<th>Carnegie Class?</th>
<th>All Institutions?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publicizes the Union and Promotes Campus - 5th Predictor</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Union has a Positive Environment</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Union is Student Oriented</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Union is a Source of Entertainment - 4th Predictor</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Union Enhances Life and Leadership - 2nd Predictor</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Food Variety, Quality and Price - 6th Predictor</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspects of Dining Service</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore Staff</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
<td>![icon]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Highlight strengths and opportunities by comparing to other institutions.
Case 4: Physics Department Chair

Department chair needs data to show how the department has improved over time.
Case 4:
Physics Department Chair

- Significant training, expertise, and education
- Holistic, long-term view
- Manage information flow
- Strategic planning
Case 4: Physics Department Chair

• What is the long-term picture?
• Are we improving over time?

What would you share?
Case 4:
Physics Department Chair

What if your department recently changed from graduate advisors to full-time advisors?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Program Effectiveness</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction: Advisor</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning: Role Development</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction: Work and Class Size - 3rd Predictor</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction: Classmates</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning: Core Competencies</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning: Professional Values</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning: Core Knowledge</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case 5: Vice President of Student Affairs

Vice President of Student Affairs needs data for a presentation to the governing board.
Case 5: Vice President of Student Affairs

- Long-range view
- Cross-departmental view
- Comprehensive approach
- University-wide priorities
Case 5: Vice President of Student Affairs

- Pull together pieces
- Determine how to tell the story internally and externally

What would you share?
Case 5: Vice President of Student Affairs

Simple infographic can demonstrate top issues faced by first-year students.

- Struggling in at least two courses: 26.3%
- Plan to study five hours or less a week: 24.7%
- Homesick (distressed): 20.9%
Pulling It All Together

Sharing data effectively means considering your:

Audience (Who?)
Purpose (Why?)
Format (How?)
Questions?
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