Why Public Profit’s Reports Look Different

Prepared by Public Profit

Our reports look a little different. This is intentional and for good reason! At Public Profit, we incorporate cutting-edge research into our report design. This document explains why we do what we do.

Paragraph and Font Choices

*Short sentences increase reading comprehension*

We indent the whole paragraph in the body text significantly, as demonstrated by this very paragraph. White space increases reading comprehension, since people take in information better when sentences are eight to twelve words per line.¹ Wider margins also give readers space to write comments or questions.

*Headers are 150-200% bigger than body text*

Serif fonts set at 11-point text (just like this one) are easiest to read at length.¹ Our headers are larger, and in sans serif font, which makes our reports easier to skim.

*Tables don’t use extra ink*

Our tables reduce unnecessary lines, so you can focus on the data.² Table headings tell you what the data show, rather than repeating the obvious.

**Table 1: Short, descriptive captions describe key takeaways**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SUBTLE REFERENCE</strong></th>
<th><strong>COUNT IN REPORT</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear Visuals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive Captions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to Read Paragraphs</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: We believe it is important to keep readers informed of where the data came from, as well as the N (number of cases).

Use of Graphics and Color

Data visualizations in our reports

We use page-breaks to make sure that the graphics and corresponding narrative are on the same page. Since most readers do not read the entire report (or entire report in one sitting) this ensures you can reference the graphic while reading about it, like this sentence (see Figure 1).

Our visuals display the most important data. To make these data points stand out we remove unnecessary clutter such as borders, gridlines, and axis tick marks (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Color helps interesting information stand out

| Readers who read entire report | 21% |
| Readers who read most of report | 16% |
| Readers who skim report | 56% |
| Readers who only look at visuals | 7% |

Source: In this case, we made up all of the data so N=0; aren’t you glad you read the source?

Color is meaningful

As demonstrated in Figure 1, color is meaningful and deliberate in our reports. Color signifies change in information or highlights key findings. To keep color meaningful, we aim to use no more than three different colors, and make sure it is legible when printed black and white. When we can, we love using our clients’ color scheme!

We hope this covers the reasoning behind our awesome evaluation reports. If you have any additional questions, please contact us at info@publicprofit.net.