How to create an infographic:

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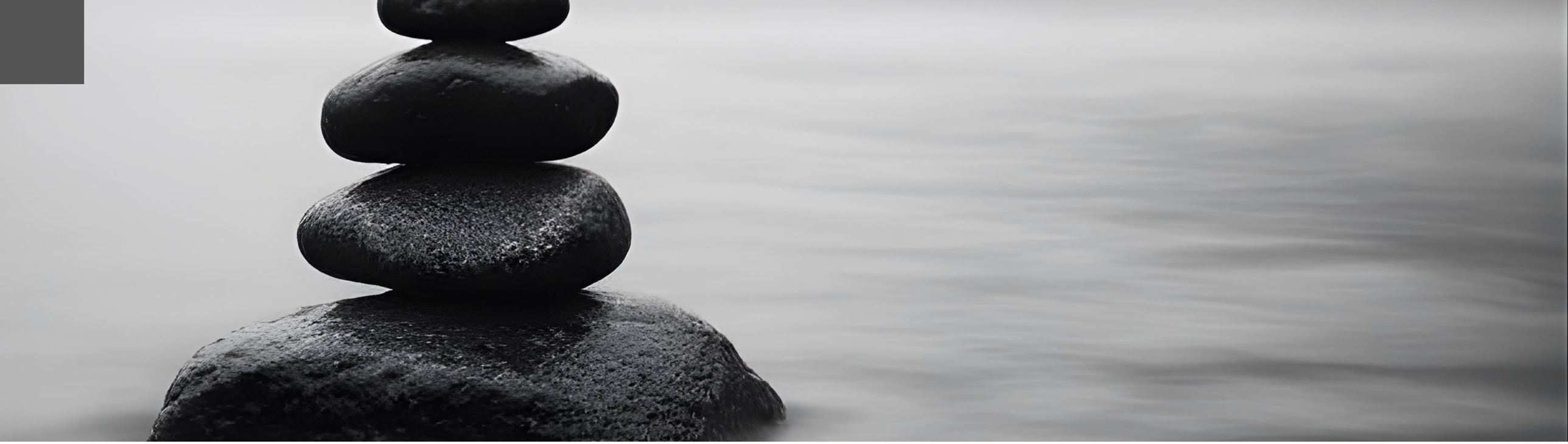
Learning Goals:

- Choosing the right format
- Identifying audience, purpose, & message
- Distilling a clear takeaway
- Applying visual hierarchy, layout, accessibility, and evidence-use principles
- Draft creation



Why infographics matter in research and academia

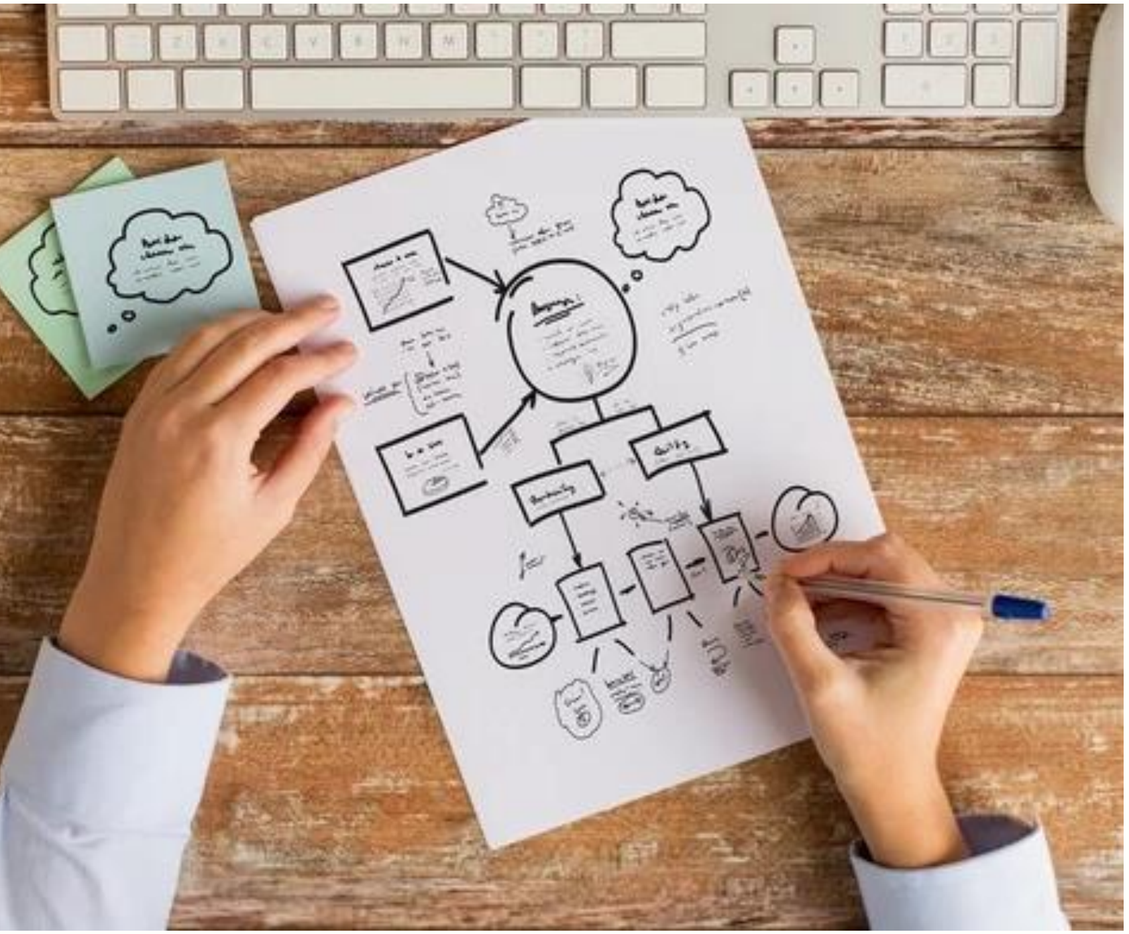
- Audiences are busy
- Evidence can require translation
- Economy of Attention
- Shareability

What an infographic is, and isn't

Visual explanation of an idea:

- Identifies specific audience
- Has a clear purpose
- Uses visual structure to help that audience understand something quickly

Planning before Design



Before any design is started, need to be able to answer:

- Who is this for?
- What do I want them to understand?
- What is the one main point I want them to take away?

Design should serve the purpose of the research, the research should not serve the design.

The Infographic workflow

5-step process:

- Audience
- Purpose
- Message
- Content
- Design

Each subsequent step will be informed or determined by a prior step. That is why we plan first!

Step 1: Choose one audience

Who do you want to take notice of your work?

Examples:

- Patients
- Clinicians
- Policymakers
- Researchers
- Community organizations
- Caretakers

“This infographic is for _____ who need to understand _____ so that they can _____.”

Same evidence, different infographic

The same finding can change by audience:

- **Patients:** “What does this mean for me?”
  - *plain language, practical steps, when to seek support*
- **Clinicians:** “Should this change my practice?”
  - *key findings, clinical relevance, implementation guidance*
- **Policymakers / leaders:** “Why should we act?”
  - *Scale of the problem, costs, access, equity, system impact*

Step 2: Define the Purpose

Each infographic will have a purpose that is determined by the nominated audience:

- **Provide new information** *(inform, persuade)*
- **Application of information** *(change behaviour, support decisions)*

“After seeing this infographic, the audience should be able to _____”

Step 3: Write the takeaway sentence

A topic is not the same as a message

E.g.,

- Topic: Exercise and low back pain
- Message: Staying active can support recovery, even when symptoms fluctuate.

“After seeing this infographic, my audience should understand that _____”

8-minute pause

1. Who is the audience? *Try and be specific.*

1. What is the purpose? *What should this audience understand, decide, or do differently after seeing the infographic?*

1. Write one takeaway sentence using this structure:

“After seeing this infographic, the audience should understand that…”

Picking Favourites

Infographics are an exercise in prioritization, not compression.

Not all of the details of your paper, study, project, etc, need (or should) be included.

Identify the pieces people need to know to understand the significance of your takeaway message.

From Abstract to Infographic: A comparison

Background: University students often reduce sleep during exam periods in an effort to increase study time, but poor sleep may undermine focus, mood, and academic confidence.

Objective: This fictional study examined whether sleep duration, bedtime consistency, and common evening habits were associated with student-reported stress and focus during final exams.

Methods: A total of 286 undergraduate students completed a seven-day sleep diary during the final exam period. Students reported nightly sleep duration, bedtime, caffeine use, evening phone use, and next-day stress and focus ratings.

Results: Students who reported **at least seven hours of sleep on five or more nights** had higher average focus scores than students who slept less consistently. Students with **bedtimes that varied by more than two hours** reported higher stress, even when total study time was similar. The most common barriers to sleep were **late-night phone use, late caffeine, and unplanned study sessions.**

Conclusion: These findings suggest that **protecting sleep during exams may support focus and reduce stress**. Student-facing communication should emphasize **small, realistic routines** rather than simply telling students to "sleep more."

The 3-5 point rule:

Depending on the audience of your infographic, and the complexity of the idea you are getting across, you should generally aim for:

Your takeaway message + 3-5 supporting points

Common Infographic Structures

- Process
- Timeline
- Comparison
- Problem - solution
- Key findings
- Decision-support

Choosing the right structure

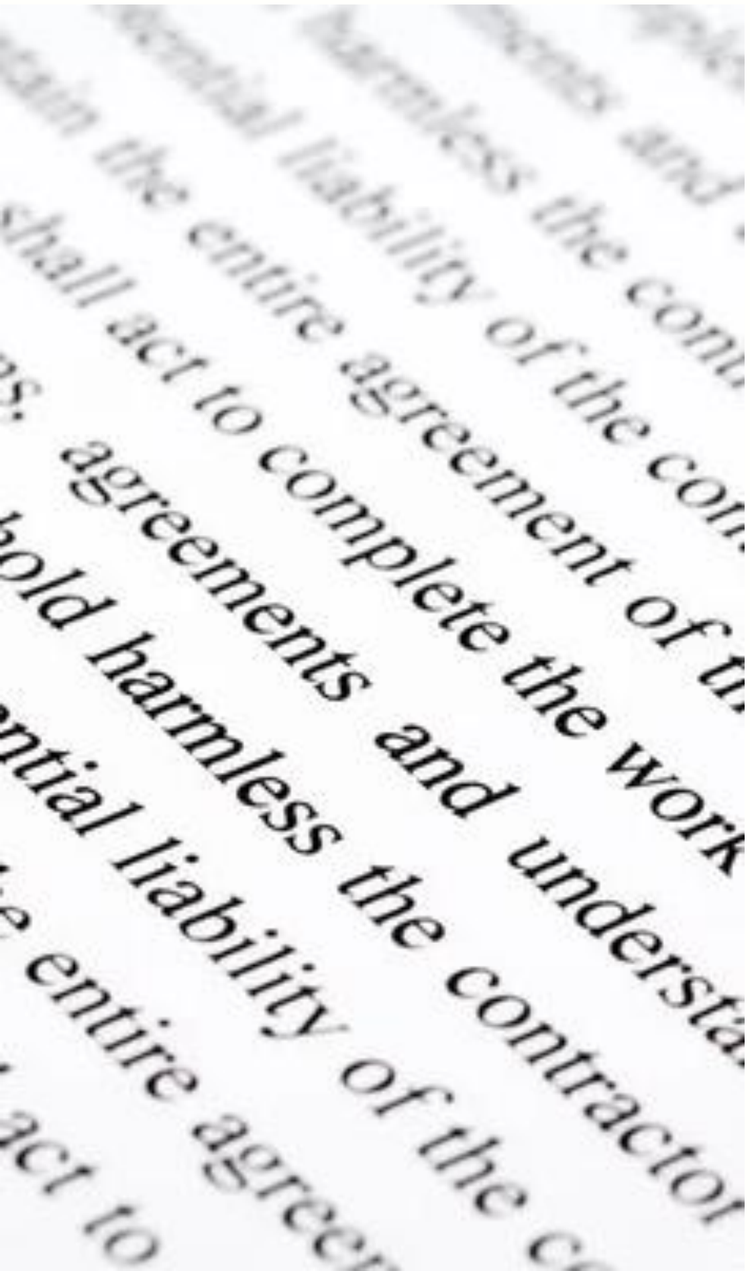
Matching your structure to your communication goal.

Visual Hierarchy:
telling the eye where to look

- size
- contrast
- spacing
- placement

Layout and Alignment

- Snap points
- Columns
- Sections
- Whitespace



Text:
less is more

- Plain language
- Short headings
- **No** manuscript-style sentences
- Acronyms **where appropriate**

Icons, images, and graphs

- Visuals to clarify meaning, not to decorate or fill space
- Graphs should have takeaway titles
- Avoid visuals that introduce unintended assumptions
- Significance of visual aids should be contextualized, if not obvious.

Accessibility is not optional

- Font size
- Contrast
- Colour blindness
- Alt text
- Reading Level
- AODA
- Open-Access

Sleep and Academic Variables in Postsecondary Students

WHY THIS MATTERS!

Finals are TOUGH!
Sleep suffers.
Stress rises.
Focus drops.

BACKGROUND

Sleep is a complex biopsychosocial behaviour that may influence student experiences during high-demand academic periods. During final examinations, students often alter sleep routines in response to perceived workload, deadline proximity, anticipated performance expectations, and study-related anxiety.

TOP STRESSORS

- Exams
- Workload
- Time pressure
- Uncertainty
- Comparison

Stress reduces sleep quality!

COMMON SLEEP DISRUPTORS

- Late-night phone use
- Late caffeine intake
- Unplanned studying
- Inconsistent bedtimes
- Worry & rumination

METHODS

7-DAY DIARY

A sample of 286 undergraduate students completed a seven-day sleep diary during the final exam period. Measures included nightly sleep duration, bedtime variability, caffeine consumption, evening phone use, unplanned study sessions, next-day stress, next-day focus, and academic confidence.

WHAT WE MEASURED

Sleep Duration	Bedtime Variability	Caffeine Intake
Evening Phone Use	Unplanned Study Sessions	Next-Day Stress
Next-Day Focus	Academic Confidence	All recorded daily for 7 days!

POOR SLEEP = MORE STRESS LESS FOCUS LOWER CONFIDENCE

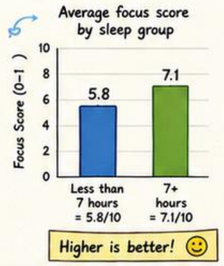
Good sleep fuels learning, memory, and mood!

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Consistency > Quantity
- Small habits add up
- Plan your nights!
- Protect your sleep to protect your grades

RESULTS

1. Students sleeping 7+ hours on five or more nights had higher average focus scores.
2. Bedtime variability greater than two hours was associated with higher stress.
3. Late-night phone use, late caffeine, and unplanned studying were the most commonly reported barriers to sleep.



Higher is better!

"STUDENT VOICES

"I pull all-nighters and then can't focus."

My phone keeps me up way too late."

Caffeine helps me study but hurts my sleep."

CONCLUSION

Sleep duration and bedtime consistency may be important correlates of student well-being and focus during examination periods, although additional longitudinal and experimental research is required.

WHAT CAN STUDENTS DO?

- Aim for 7+ hours most nights
- Keep bed & wake times consistent
- Limit caffeine after 2 p.m.
- Put phones away before bed
- Plan study time (avoid all-nighters)
- Use breaks & self-care strategies

SLEEP HYGIENE TIPS

- Keep a dark, cool, quiet room
- Avoid screens 60 min before bed
- Wind down with a relaxing routine
- Exercise during the day
- Don't forget naps (20–30 min)

Time management is sleep management!

COFFEE

TO-DO:
1. STUDY
2. REVIEW
3. PRACTICE

YOU GOT THIS!

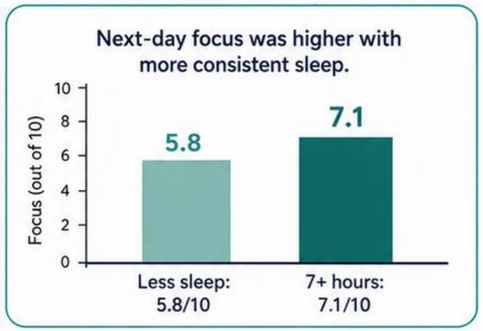
Fictional teaching example.

Better exam weeks start before midnight

Small sleep routines may help students feel more focused and less stressed during exams.

1 Sleep 7+ hours when you can

Students who slept 7+ hours on most nights reported better focus the next day.



2 Keep bedtime consistent

Large bedtime shifts were linked with higher stress, even when study time was similar.

3 Remove the common sleep blockers

- Late phone use
- Late caffeine
- Unplanned study sessions

Try this tonight

- Pick a study stop time
- Charge your phone away from bed
- Plan tomorrow's first task before sleeping

Protecting sleep is not wasted study time.
It is part of studying well.

Fictional teaching example based on a sample abstract.

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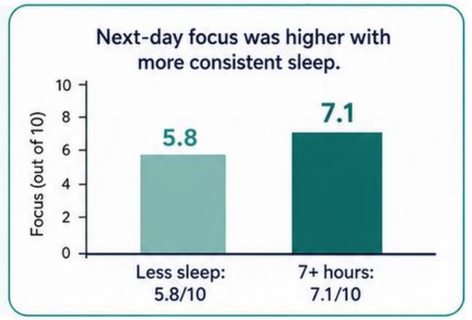

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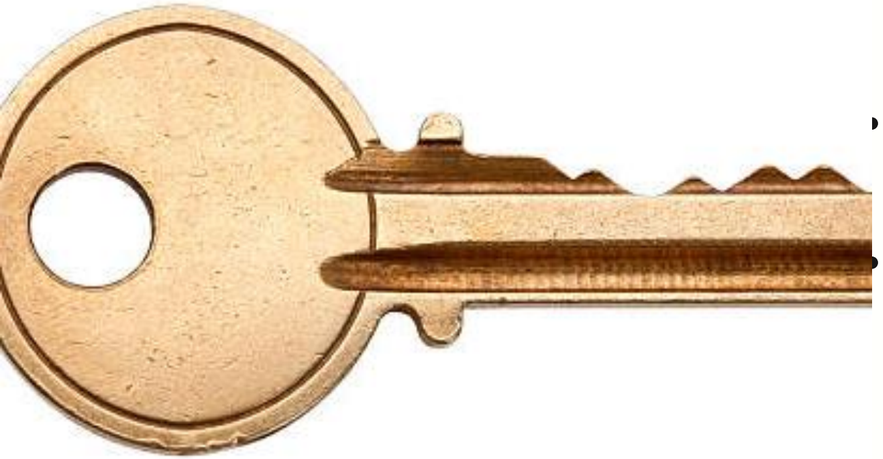
Key takeaway - your infographic planning checklist



- Who is this for?
- What should they understand, decide, or do after seeing it?
- What is the one-sentence takeaway?
- What are the three to five supporting points?
- What structure best fits the message *(process, timeline, comparison, problem-solution, key findings, or decision-support tool)?*
- What can be removed?
- Is it readable and accessible?
- Is it properly sourced?

Questions?