

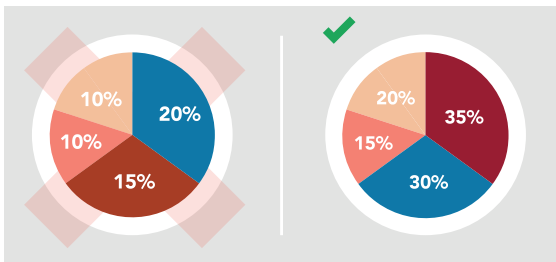
FIGURES LIE & Liars Figure

SPOT DECEIT IN CHARTS & GRAPHS IN THREE EASY STEPS

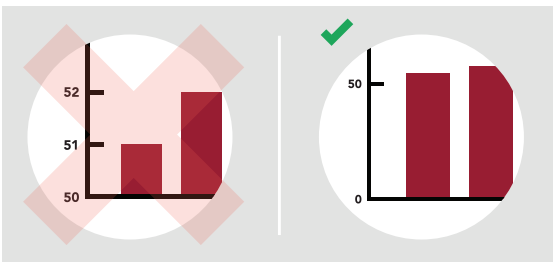
1. LOOK AT HOW THE DATA IS PRESENTED.

Sometimes visual cues are used to make data stand out that normally wouldn't.

Data must respect parts of a whole (=100%).



The vertical scale should start at zero.



Labels need to be clear and accurate.



NO ONE LIKES TO FEEL MANIPULATED.

Visualizations should be subject to the same scrutiny as any other content when creating or consuming media. Know what to look for in graphs, charts and infographics to keep the data real.



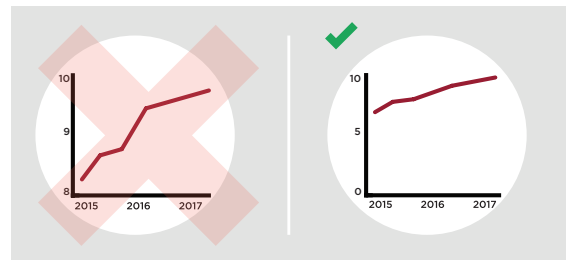
The Edward R. Murrow
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WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

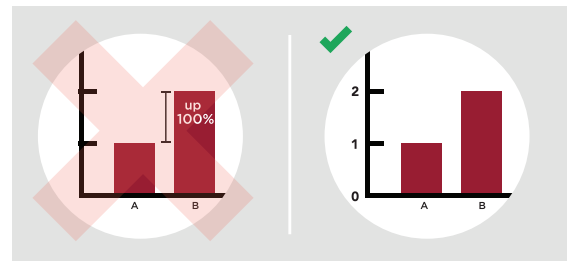
2. CHECK TO SEE HOW THE DATA IS ALTERED.

It's normal to neaten things up before making a chart, but data that has been cleaned excessively, with no explanation, is a sign that it's being misrepresented:

Data should NOT be manipulated to appear more significant.



Check raw numbers if the chart only shows statistics.



3. CHECK THE DATA SOURCE.

Is the data source listed, reliable and unbiased?

Usually trustworthy:



Government organizations



University research labs



Nonpartisan organizations

May be trustworthy, but proceed with caution:



Partisan organizations



For-profit companies



Advocacy groups