SHARPN

COURSE OUTLINE

# Charts that Make the Point

Clear, honest charts that people understand and believe. A one-day course.




## Why take this course?

Your documents rely on data, and your charts need to make the point. Too often they look like PowerPoint or Excel defaults, and readers have to work hard to see what matters. You want charts that are easy to understand and easy to believe. And you want to know how far AI can help.

## Learning objectives

- Understand why charts help people grasp data, and how the brain processes what it sees
- Pick the right chart type for the message
- Build four habits for charts: declutter, tidy, emphasise and add narrative
- Make sure your charts don't mislead, and avoid the common pitfalls
- Learn practical formatting in PowerPoint and Excel, so good charts take less time
- Know where AI earns its place, from finding the story to building the chart

## Course content

PART 1

### Why data visualisation works

- Why we use charts, and how they help your narrative
- Slow and fast thinking: how the brain processes what it sees
- The SHARPN habits framework, applied to data

PART 2

### Four habits for charts

- Decluttering to remove noise and focus on the data
- Tidying so charts are easier to interpret
- Emphasising key data points to clarify the conclusions
- Adding narrative so the data supports the story

ACTIVITY

Applying the four habits to a default chart

## Course content
continued

PART 3

### Chart craft

- Best practice for basic chart types, and why bar charts beat pies
- Making sure charts don't lie
- Using colour with intention, and matching Excel to your theme colours
- Data tables that highlight patterns
- Common mistakes, and how to avoid them
- Advanced formatting, and workflow tips for Excel and PowerPoint

ACTIVITY
Choosing and formatting the right chart for a set of data

PART 4

### Charts with AI

- Finding the meaning in the data
- Picking the right chart type for the message
- Creating and updating charts in your deck
- Building simple infographic-style data slides

ACTIVITY
Building and updating a chart in your deck with AI

## Training delivery

- Presentation, with plenty of before-and-after examples in your template
- Live demonstrations and follow-along worked examples
- Hands-on exercises, with worked solutions and 1:1 help from the trainer
- Group discussions

## How it runs

### Format
One day, in person or virtual. Virtual courses can run in any time zone.

### Group size
8 to 12, so everyone gets help during the exercises.

### Tailored to you
We adjust to your team's experience, chart types and template.

## What you'll get



Reusable AI prompts to help you build charts



A detailed handout, with extensive PDF notes and reusable tools: exercise files and worked solutions



60 minutes of 1:1 follow-up for each attendee, to use however they wish

## What you need

- Some PowerPoint and Excel experience. The course is for people who already make charts, but want them clearer and quicker to build.
- A laptop with PowerPoint and Excel, for the hands-on exercises.
- A paid AI tool (optional), to follow the AI exercises hands-on. Without one, you watch the demos and still do the rest.
- Two minutes for a short survey before the course.

## Bring this course to your team

Book a 20-minute call to talk through your team, your template and the charts you create.

**Steve Rowland**
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