

Lightcast

Great brands are built with consistency, creativity, and coherence.

These guidelines are designed to help employees, brand ambassadors, designers, communicators, and agency partners to preserve and protect our brand expression.

How to use these guidelines

These guidelines outline the key elements of the Lightcast brand so that the diverse materials created that employees, brand ambassadors, and partners all look and sound consistent. Use this document as a reference and handbook when producing written or visual content on behalf of Lightcast.

Our Brand

PURPOSE, POSITION, AND MISSION
PRINCIPLES
WHO WE ARE
VOICE

Logo

TESSELL
PRIMARY LOCKUP
LOGOTYPE
LOGO COLOR
SIZING AND CLEARSPACE
ADDITIONAL LOCKUPS

Color

PRIMARY & SECONDARY COLORS
GRADIENTS
EXTENDED PALETTE
COLOR BALANCE
TONE COMBINATIONS

Typography

FONTS
USAGE
FONT ALTERNATIVES

Visual Language

OUR DESIGN STYLE
PHOTOGRAPHY
DATA
GRIDS

Data Visualization

KEY GOALS
TYPEFACES & COLOR
TEXT
STYLE

Writing & Citation Guide

WRITING GUIDE
CITATION GUIDE

Our Brand

Purpose, Position, and Mission

Principles

Who We Are

Voice

Our Purpose: Why does Lightcast exist?

To create a labor market that works for everyone.

Our Position: What role does Lightcast play in the market?

Lightcast is the universal standard for labor market intelligence.

Our Mission: What do we do to fulfill our purpose?

Lightcast unlocks new possibilities in the labor market.



Lightcast Principles

L

Live the mission

We genuinely care about the work we do and never lose sight of the human behind the data.

I

Innovation, inside and out

We take personal responsibility for finding new and better ways to do all things—large and small, internally and externally.

G

Give customers the unexpected

We aim to exceed customer expectations and seek opportunities to excite and delight with every interaction.

H

Hide nothing, own everything

We are transparent in our actions, own our mistakes, and remain humble in our approach.

T

Teamwork make the data work

We work together, respect our differences, play to our strengths, and celebrate our successes.



Company Boilerplate

Used in press releases and as an official company description (e.g., on a partner website)

Lightcast is a global leader in labor market intelligence, empowering smarter decisions for businesses, education institutions, and governments worldwide. With the world's most comprehensive database—spanning over 3 billion job postings, 1.2 billion career profiles, and 100+ government sources—Lightcast delivers unparalleled insight into skills, jobs, companies, professional profiles, and workforce trends across 165 countries. Our proprietary taxonomies, advanced AI, and expert guidance transform complex data into clear, actionable intelligence.

Recognized in TIME's 2026 America's Top WorkTech Companies and regularly featured in the NY Times, WSJ, Forbes, and CNBC, Lightcast is widely regarded as the go-to source with the leading data and definitive insights on AI, skills, and demographic shifts.

Lightcast has offices in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, New Zealand, and India. Learn more at lightcast.io

SHORT DESCRIPTIONS:

Lightcast, a labor insights company.

Lightcast is the global leader and universal standard for labor market intelligence—using data to help organizations make better workforce decisions.



Sector Boilerplates

These descriptions can be used in contexts that are specific to one of our main audiences—for example, describing Lightcast on an HR podcast, or on a handout at an education conference.

ENTERPRISE

Lightcast is the global leader and universal standard in labor market intelligence. By providing granular and comprehensive data, Lightcast empowers HR leaders, talent acquisition teams, and workforce strategists to make better decisions about skills, hiring, and development with unparalleled precision. Lightcast supports organizations around the world with best-in-class talent intelligence solutions, expert guidance, and data on 160+ countries, so that they can build a future-ready workforce. Visit lightcast.io for more.

EDUCATION

Lightcast is the global leader and universal standard in labor market intelligence. By providing granular and comprehensive data on jobs and skills, Lightcast empowers education institutions to optimize program offerings, connect students to in-demand careers, and communicate outcomes with confidence. Lightcast helps colleges, universities, and ed tech companies around the world provide learners with the skills they need for the careers they want—creating a labor market that works for everyone. Visit lightcast.io for more.

PUBLIC SECTOR

Lightcast is the global leader and universal standard in labor market intelligence. By delivering granular and comprehensive insight on workforce trends and regional benchmarks, Lightcast empowers government, economic development, and workforce leaders to make data-driven decisions that attract and retain businesses, connect workers to jobs, and create communities that thrive. Visit lightcast.io for more.



Messaging Pillars

These concepts are designed to be used in two ways:

First, they can stand alone as taglines, such as on our website or in client presentations, for a quick description of Lightcast.

Second, they are examples of the kinds of ideas that make up the Lightcast brand. When writing or designing something on behalf of the company, ask yourself if it your work is consistent with these messages. If not, it should be modified.

Lightcast delivers better data
for better decisions.

In an increasingly disrupted world of
work, Lightcast delivers clarity.

Lightcast is creating a job market
that works for everyone.



Voice and Tone

OUR VOICE IS

Straightforward

Straightforward because the world of work is complex, but Lightcast delivers clarity.

Warm

Warm because we are here to help our customers. This also differentiates us in the market—other data providers are colder than we are.

OUR VOICE IS NOT

- × Clinical
- × Political
- × Gimmicky
- × Elitist
- × Irreverent
- × Sarcastic

Instead of those, Lightcast is knowledgeable, trustworthy and helpful.



Logo

Tessell

Primary Lockup

Logotype

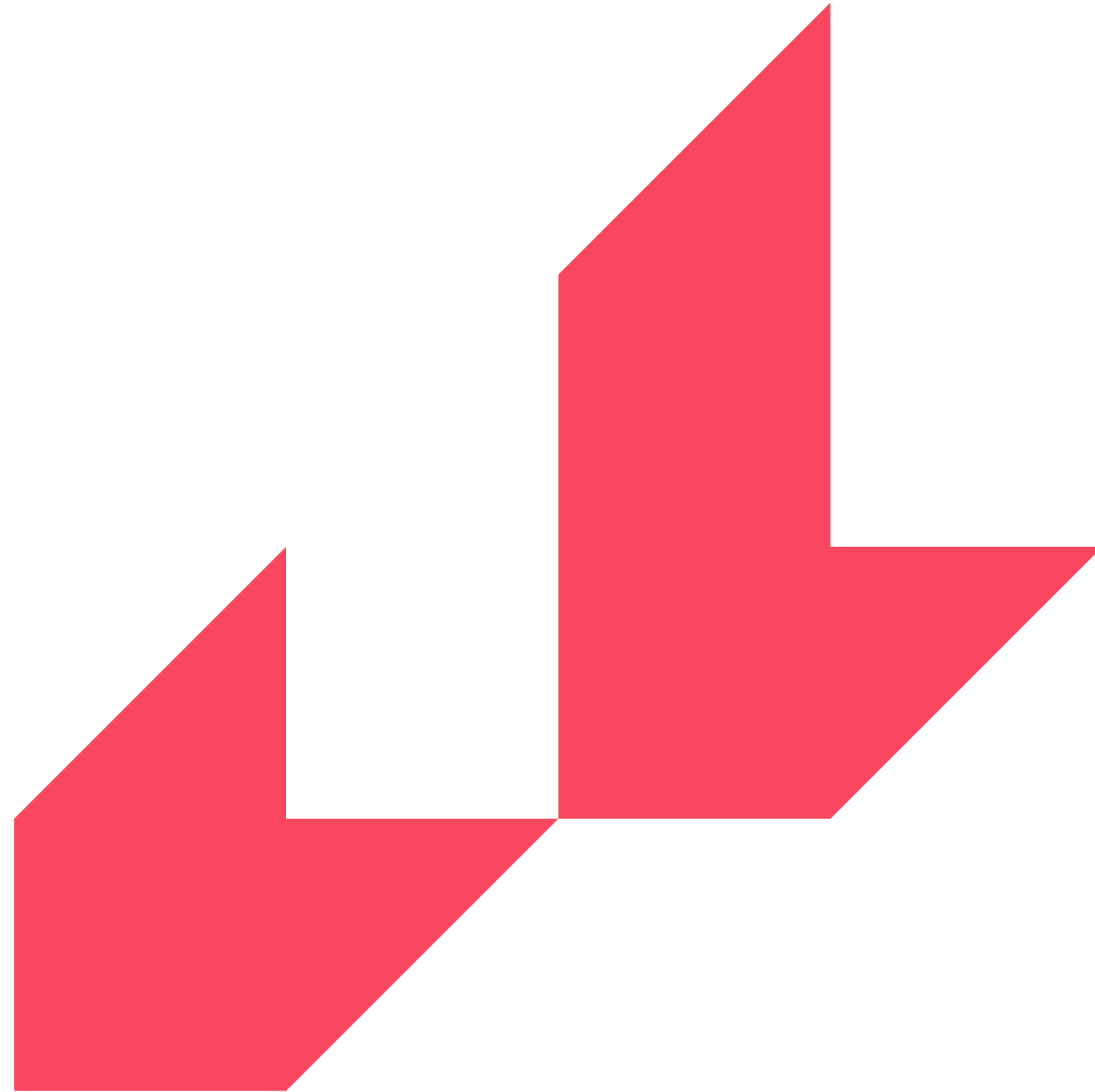
Logo Color

Sizing and Clearspace

Additional Lockups

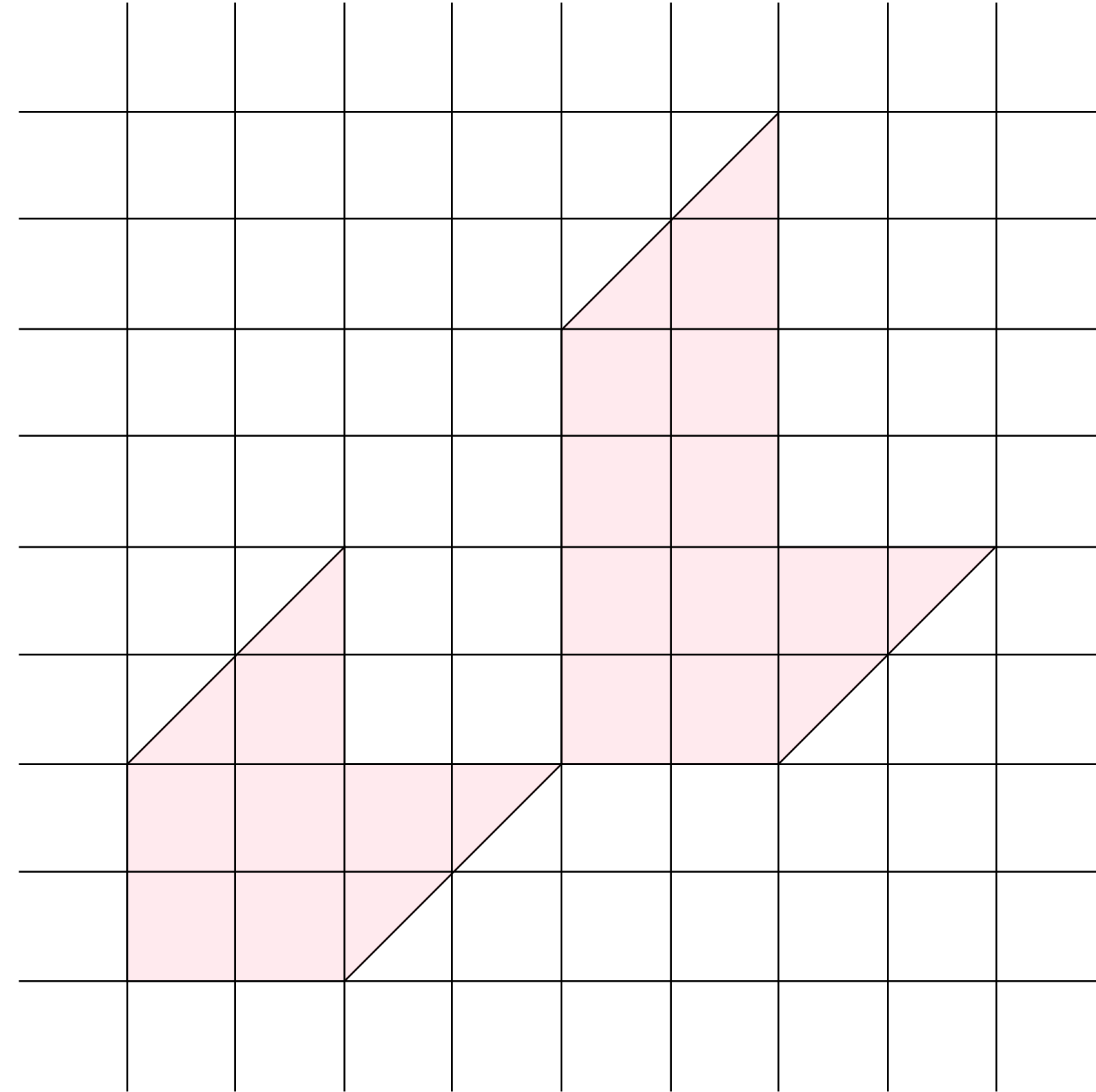


Our mark, the **Tessell**, is a symbol of progress. The two repeating shapes indicate partnership as well as growth, pointing to prosperity. Progress is the process, prosperity is the destination.



Our mark is built in an 8x8 grid of squares, with 0°, 90°, and 45° angles that reveal two repeating polygons. The second polygon is taller, which symbolizes the idea of progress.

The Tessell should always appear as a cohesive unit, and should not be separated into multiple pieces.



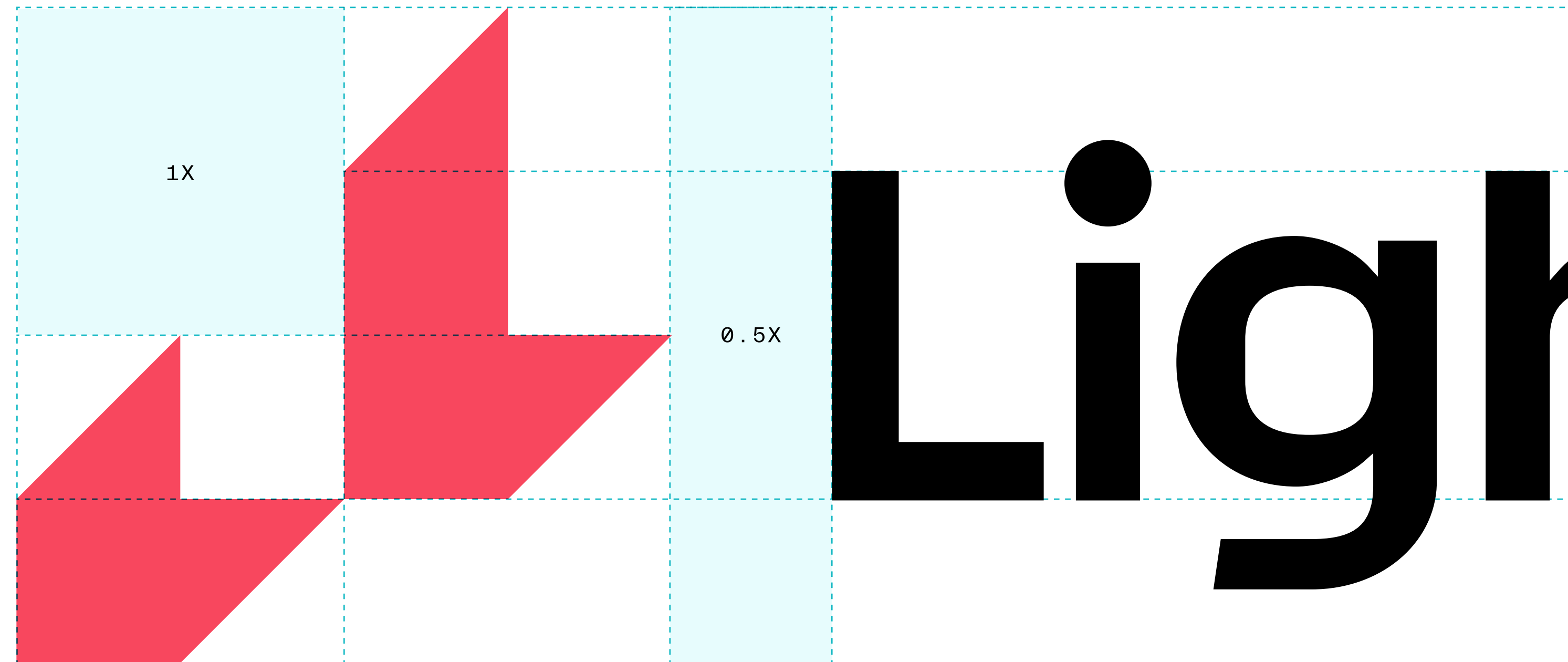
Our primary logo and brand expression is the lockup of the Tessell and the Logotype. The space and size relationship has been carefully considered and should not be altered.



The space and size relationship between the elements of the lockup is derived from size of the Tessell.


X = 1/4 Tessell

The distance between the mark and logotype is 0.5x. The baseline of the Logotype aligns to the bottom of the second polygon in the Tessell. And the top of the Logotype aligns to the point in the second polygon where the 45° angle begins.



Our logotype has been carefully constructed to feel technical, but still full of personality.

It should not be used as an element on its own. It should always appear locked up with the mark.



Lightcast

When used within text, our name should appear in the same font, color and size as the surrounding text. It may not be emphasized by underlining, increasing its size or setting the font appearance to bold or italic.

Our name should be set in Title case, with the “L” capitalized. However the “c” in Lightcast should never be capitalized.

When our name is typed out in a sentence, it should look like this: Lightcast.

Incorrect use in text



LightCast

Do not capitalize the “c.”



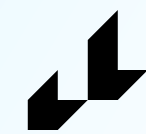
lightcast

Always capitalize the “L.”



The logo lockup is available in four colorways: Red + Black (primary version), Black, White, and Red + White. The Tessell is available in Red, Black, and White.

When applying the logo on color or photographic backgrounds, always select the most appropriate version of the logo, and use brand colors with maximum contrast for backgrounds.



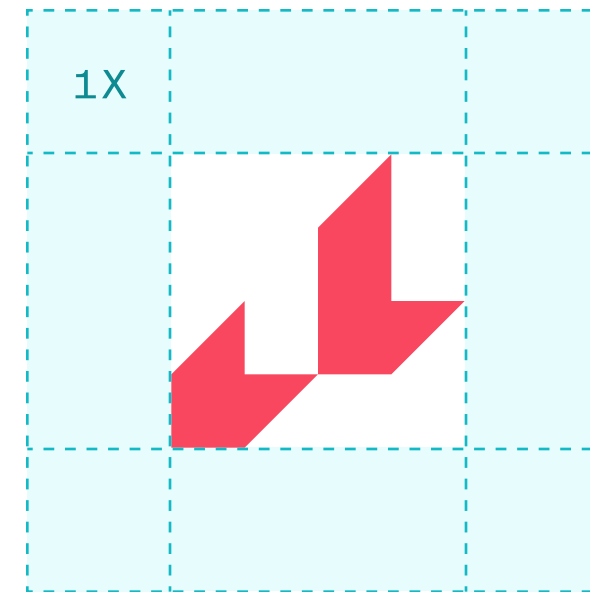
When creating signage in the real world, opt for maximum contrast and simplicity. In this case, the White lockup is best due to the high legibility and likelihood of consistent execution.



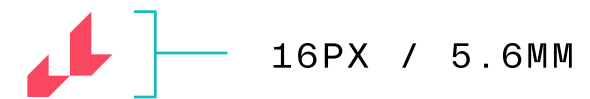
Always allow for clearspace around the Tessell and Logotype. X is 1/4 the size of the mark, and that clearspace should be applied on every side.

For minimum sizing, the mark and logotype should not be smaller than 16px tall for digital applications, or 5.6mm in print applications.

Mark and Lockup Minimum Clearspace



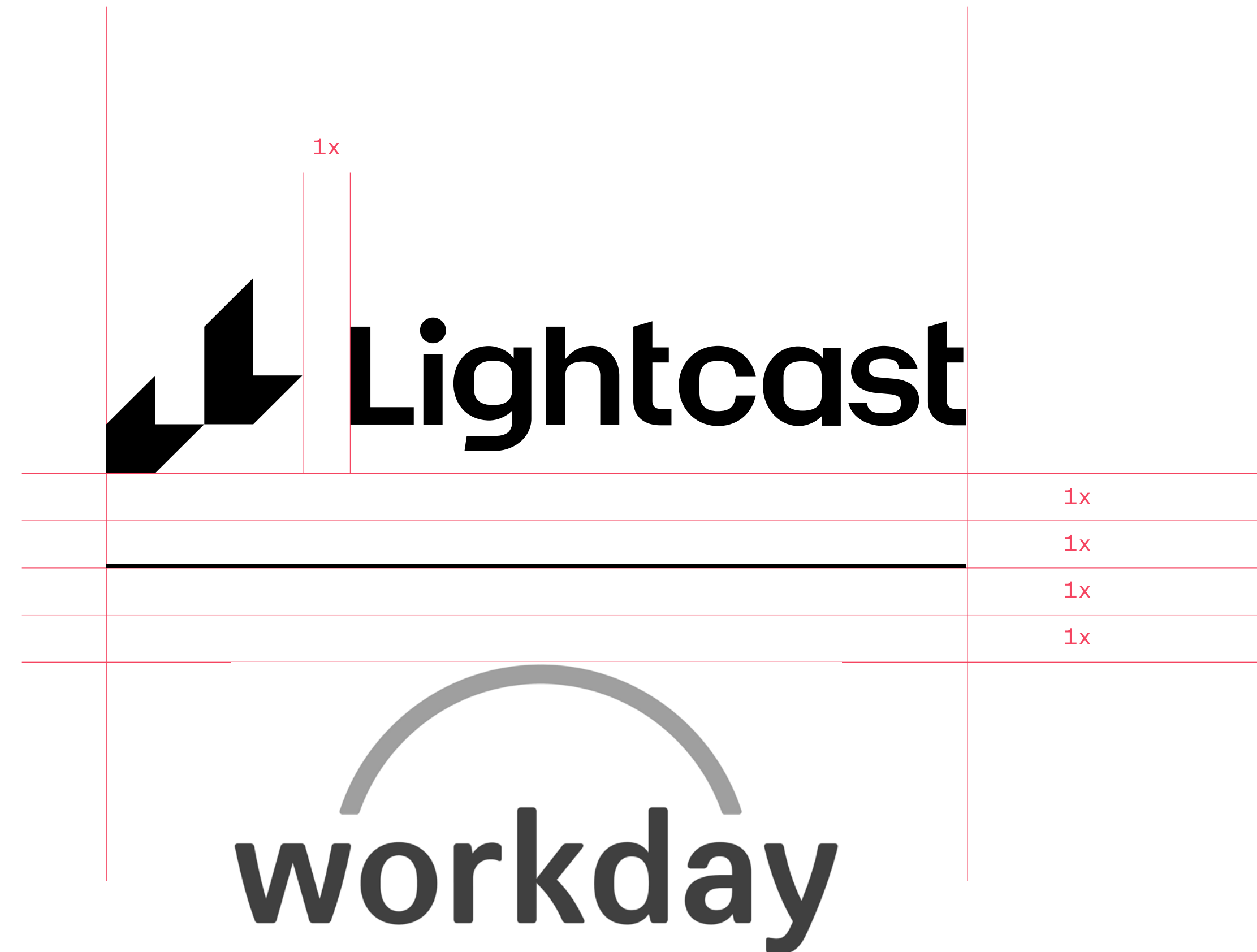
Mark and Lockup Minimum Size (not to scale)





PARTNER LOCKUPS

When the Lightcast logo and a partner logo are used together, they should both be all black or all white, and both should be given equal visual weight (visual weight is not synonymous with size; consider how the bold SAP logo above needs less real estate than the fully spelled-out Lightcast wordmark). The horizontal lockup should be used in most cases, but the stacked orientation is also available when space is limited.



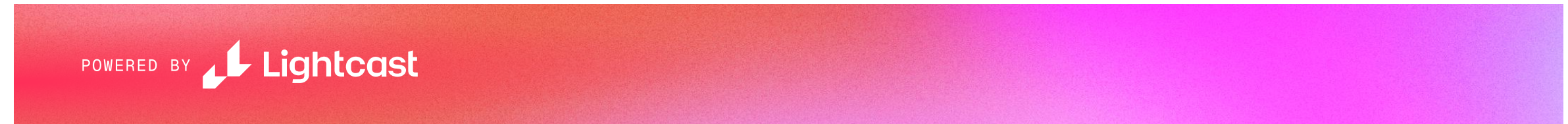
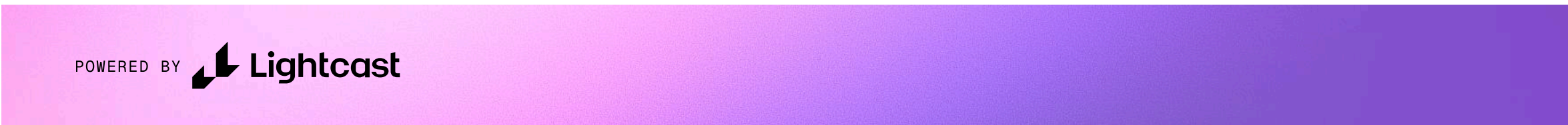
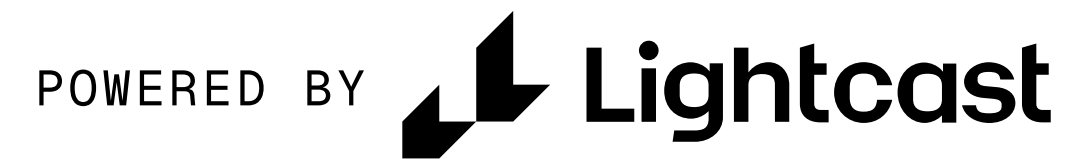
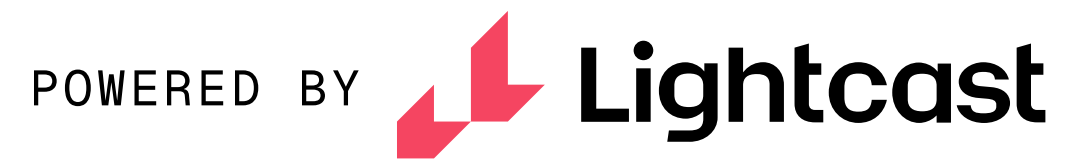
PARTNER LOCKUP CONSTRUCTION

In the horizontal lockup, a vertical bar separates the logos. This bar should be equal in height to the Lightcast logo, and should be spaced between the logos at a distance twice that of the distance between the Tessell and the wordmark.

Similarly, in the stacked lockup, the separating bar should be equal in width to the Lightcast logo, and should be spaced between the logos at a vertical distance twice that of the horizontal distance between the Tessell and the wordmark.

POWERED BY LIGHTCAST LOCKUP

Please refer to these “Powered by Lightcast” logo lockups and sample banners for guidance on proper attribution. [Download link](#)



Color

Brand Palette

Gradients

Extended Palette

Color Balance

Tone Combinations

COLOR

BRAND PALETTE

The Lightcast color palette is made up of 4 primary colors: Aubergine, Sailor Red, White, and Amethyst.

A secondary set of light colors and grays is used to support these main colors, while more saturated tones are available in the accent colors.

Note the balance and hierarchy within the brand palette. Sailor Red, Aubergine, Amethyst, and White should be used most prominently, and the secondary and accent colors should be used sparingly and with intention.

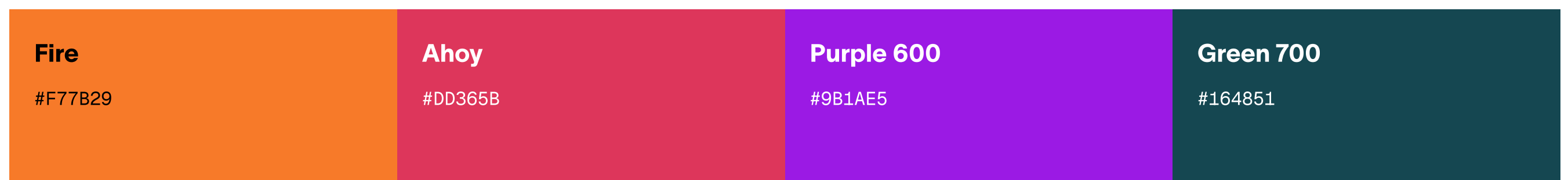
PRIMARY
COLORS



SECONDARY
COLORS



ACCENT
COLORS



COLOR

EXTENDED PALETTE

For UI components and data visuals, refer to this table of expanded colors. This palette is created using the Primary and Secondary palettes to establish hues. Darker and lighter shades have been added.

| | 900 | 800 | 700 | 600 | 500 | 400 | 300 | 200 | 100 |
|---------|----------------------|-----------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| GRAYS | #000000 Black | #232121 | #454545 | #676767 | #9D9D9D Overcast | #C7C5C5 | #DAD9D9 | #EBE9E9 | #F7F7F7 |
| REDS | #2D0B1E Aubergine | #520C39 Plum | #A51D4A | #DD365B Ahoy | #F54562 Sailor Red | #FF8FA2 | #FFB6C2 | #FFD8DF | #FFEEF1 |
| PURPLES | #400B63 | #66119C | #8416C5 | #9B1AE5 | #C75EFB Amethyst | #D974FF | #F1A5FF | #FED1F8 | #FCE9FF |
| BLUES | #0B1A36 | #193468 | #284E9A | #3A6ACD | #4F86FB Sapphire | #82ABFF | #B0CAFF | #D8E6FF | #F3F7FF |
| GREENS | #071D1D | #0E3838 | #165151 | #1F6A6A | #469C9C Turquoise | #69B9B9 | #9ED6D6 | #D1EDED | #E5FFFF |
| YELLOWS | #855000 | #B97B00 | #DBA501 | #FAC600 | #FFDF61 Tuscany | #FFEB99 | #FFF0B2 | #FFF5CC | #FFFBEA |
| ORANGES | #801811 | #982713 | #C1431C | #DE5E23 | #F77B29 Fire | #FF934B | #FFAD72 | #FFD1AD | #FFE6D2 |

COLOR

COMBINATIONS

When pairing Lightcast colors together, stick to the primary and secondary colors, and use these approved combinations as a guide.

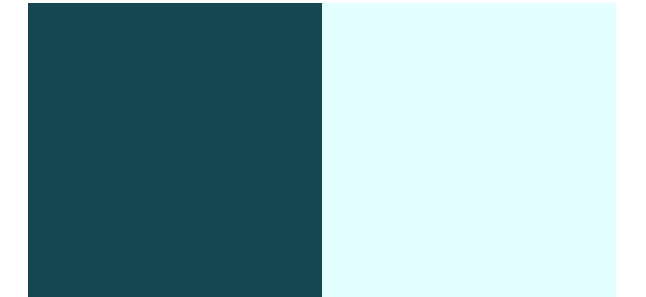
AUBERGINE PURPLE 200



AUBERGINE SAILOR RED



GREEN 700 SKY



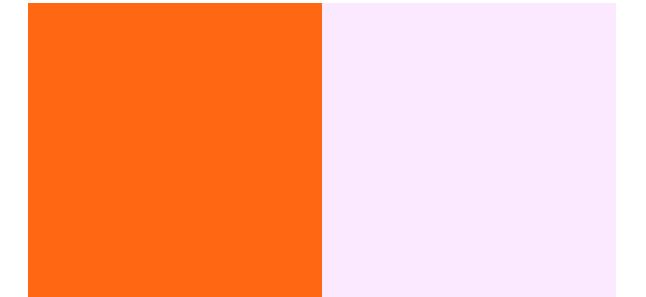
PURPLE 600 PURPLE 200



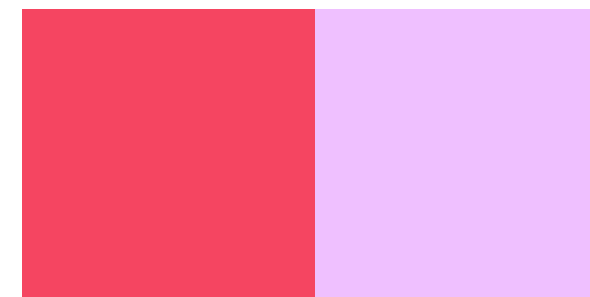
GRAY 800 GRAY 100



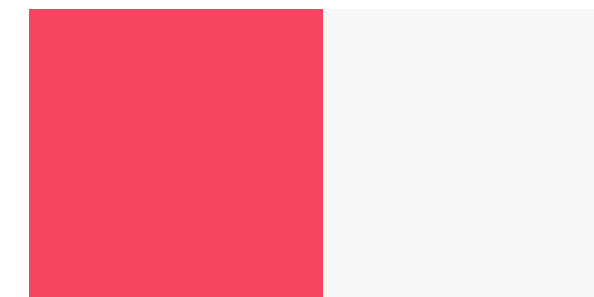
FIRE PURPLE 100



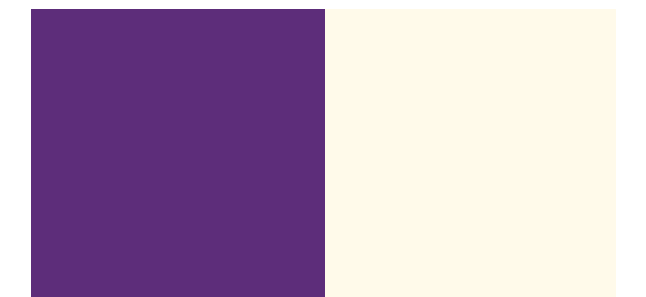
SAILOR RED PURPLE 200



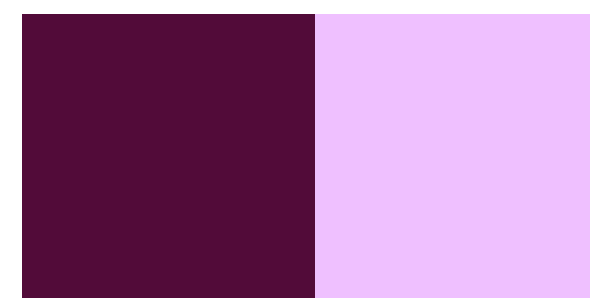
SAILOR RED GRAY 100



PURPLE 800 YELLOW 100



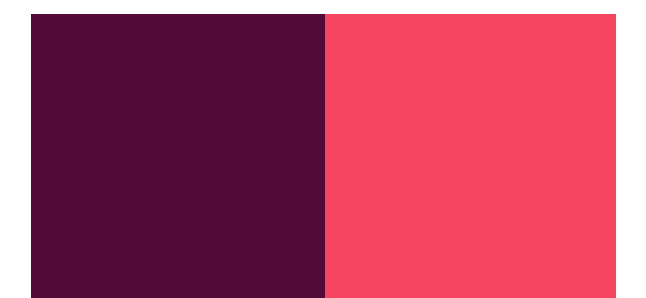
PLUM PURPLE 200



PLUM GRAY 100



PLUM SAILOR RED



Typography

Fonts

Usage

Alternatives

Our brand identity system relies on two type families: Lausanne and Geist Mono.

For display purposes, headlines, and otherwise more top-line messaging, Lausanne should be used in either 400 or 600 weight.

For data or small details, Geist Mono should be used in Regular, or Bold. It's usually best used in all caps, but it can also be used in sentence case.

Lausanne

600

326pt

Lausanne

Geist Mono

REGULAR CAPS

304pt

GEIST

Lausanne has many weights and styles; however, only 400 and 600 ought to be used in both regular and italic styles.

Geist Mono has two weights and two styles that can be utilized in the system.

Lausanne

Light ³⁰⁰

Regular ⁴⁰⁰

SemiBold ⁶⁰⁰

Bold ⁷⁰⁰

~~Light Italic ³⁰⁰~~

Italic ⁴⁰⁰

SemiBold Italic ⁶⁰⁰

~~*Bold Italic ⁷⁰⁰*~~

Geist Mono

REGULAR

MEDIUM

SEMIBOLD

In general, larger type is set with tighter letter-spacing, and line height ranging from 0.8 to 1 or 1.2.

Medium-sized headlines and body copy will have more open letter-spacing and line height.

Clear, actionable insight

Lausanne 600

104pt | 104pt
-0.4em

Labor market data to help your institution,
organization, or community thrive.

Lausanne 400

36pt | 46pt
-0.2em

About Us

Lausanne 700

20pt | 32pt
-0.2em

The world's most comprehensive and complex labor market data,
delivered in simple, easy-to-understand tools.

Lausanne 300

20pt | 32pt

Geist Mono

14pt | 20pt
Uppercase

When applications call for it, such as email clients, slide presentations, and other media where our typefaces cannot be embedded, use Geist instead of Lausanne to keep a consistent look. If Geist is not available, Arial may be used.

Geist Mono should be available on all platforms, but IBM Plex Mono may be used as a fallback.

Lausanne

600

64pt

-0.2em

Clear, actionable insight

Geist Sans

Semibold

64pt

-0.3em

Clear, actionable insight



Visual Language

Our Design style

Photocharts

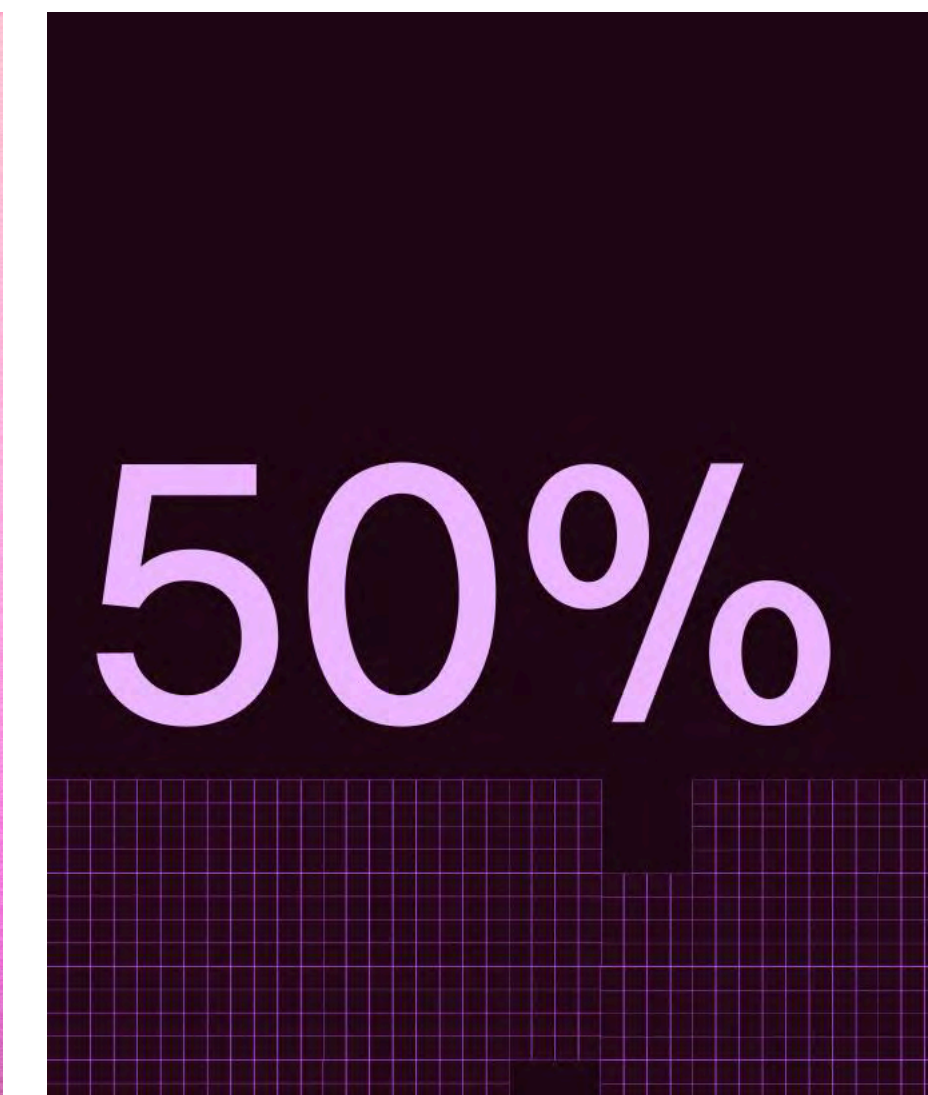
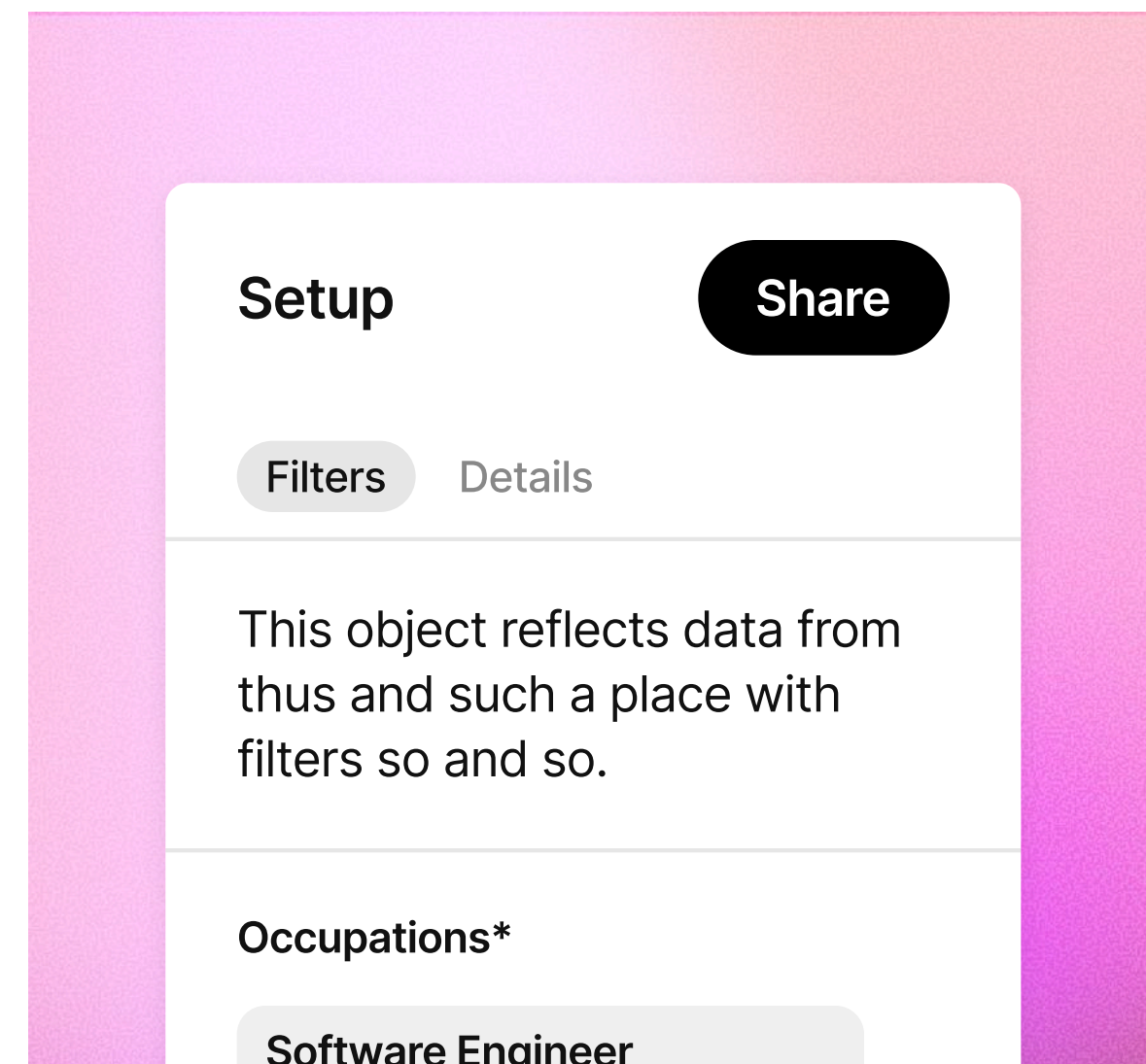
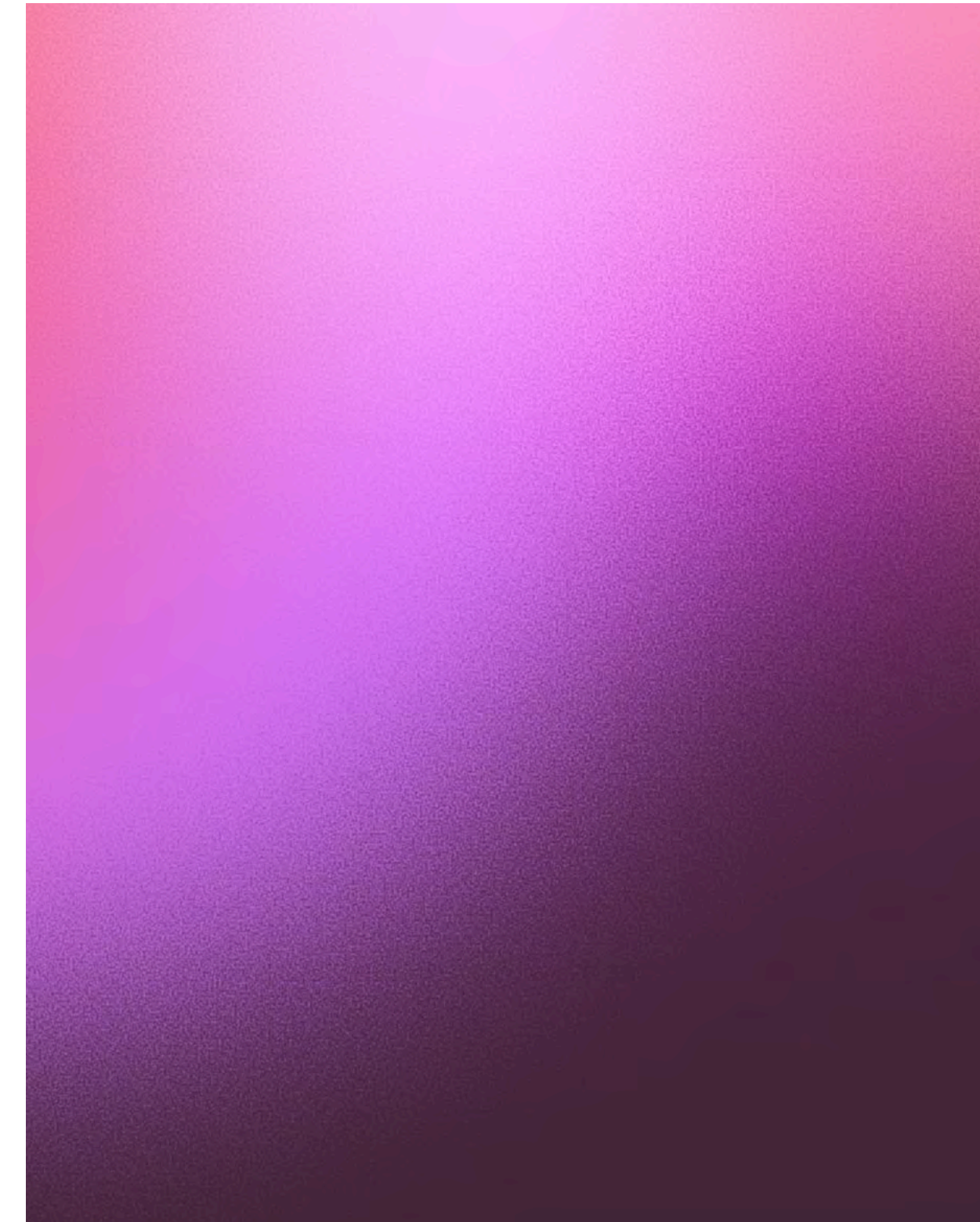
Patterns

Product Mockups

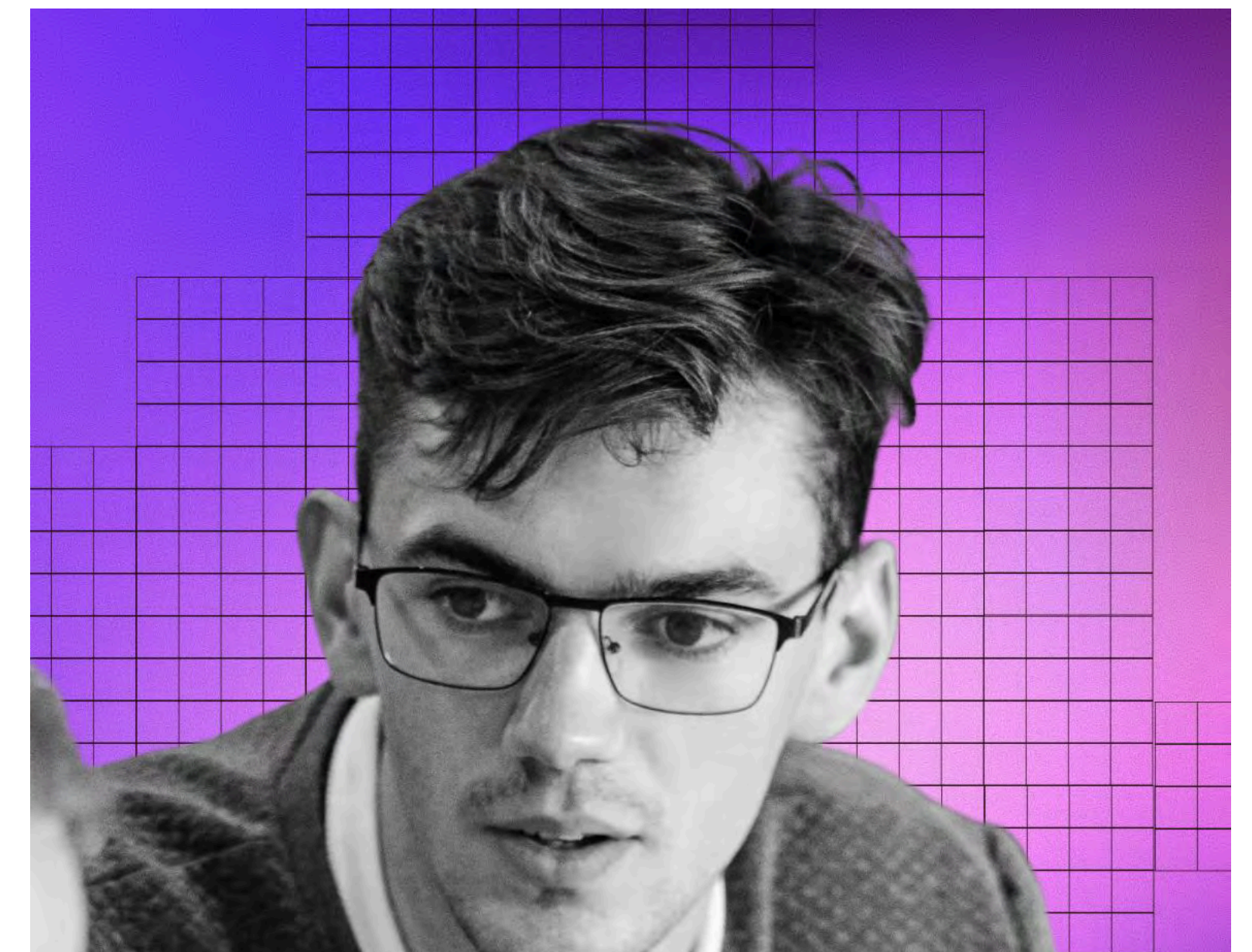
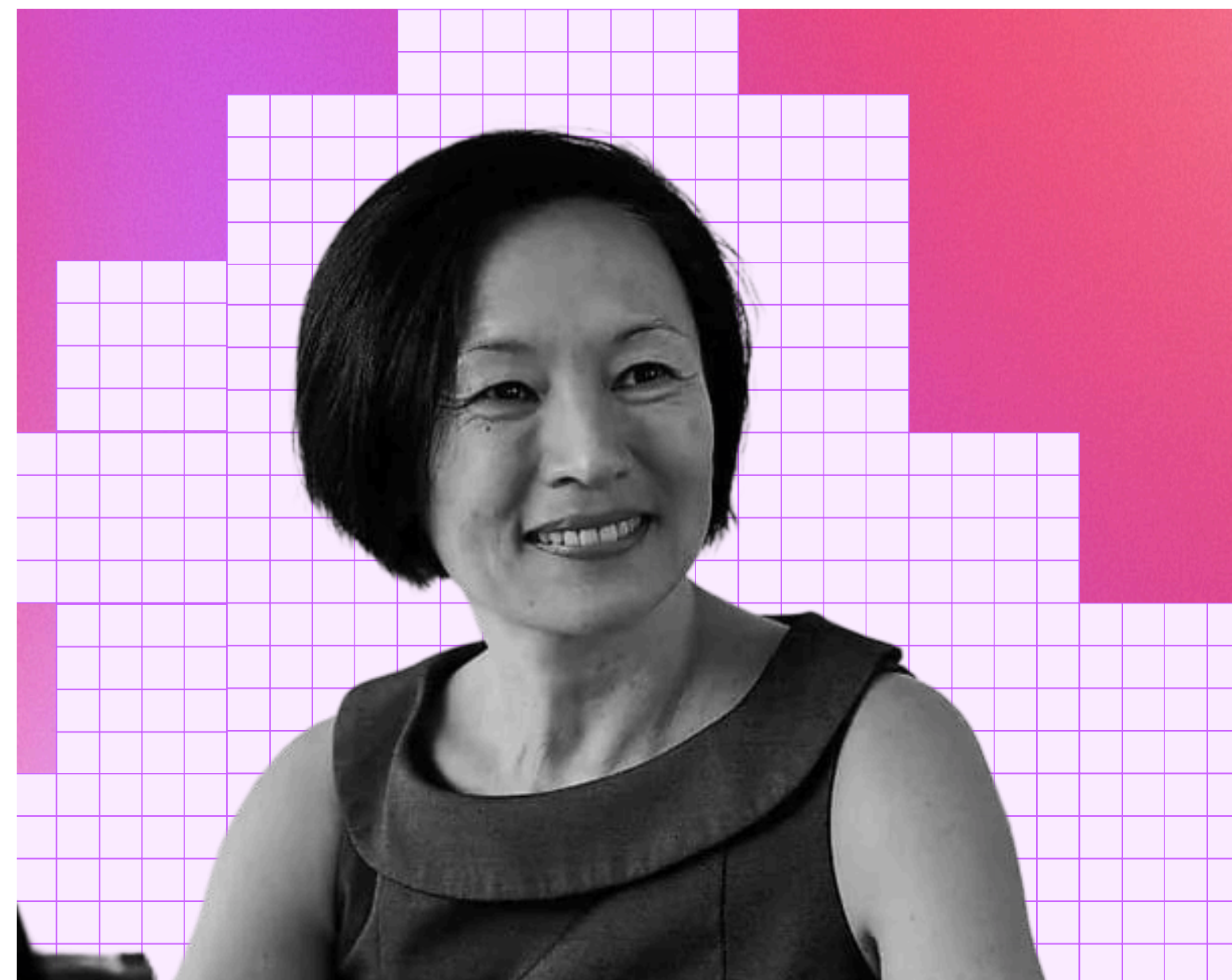
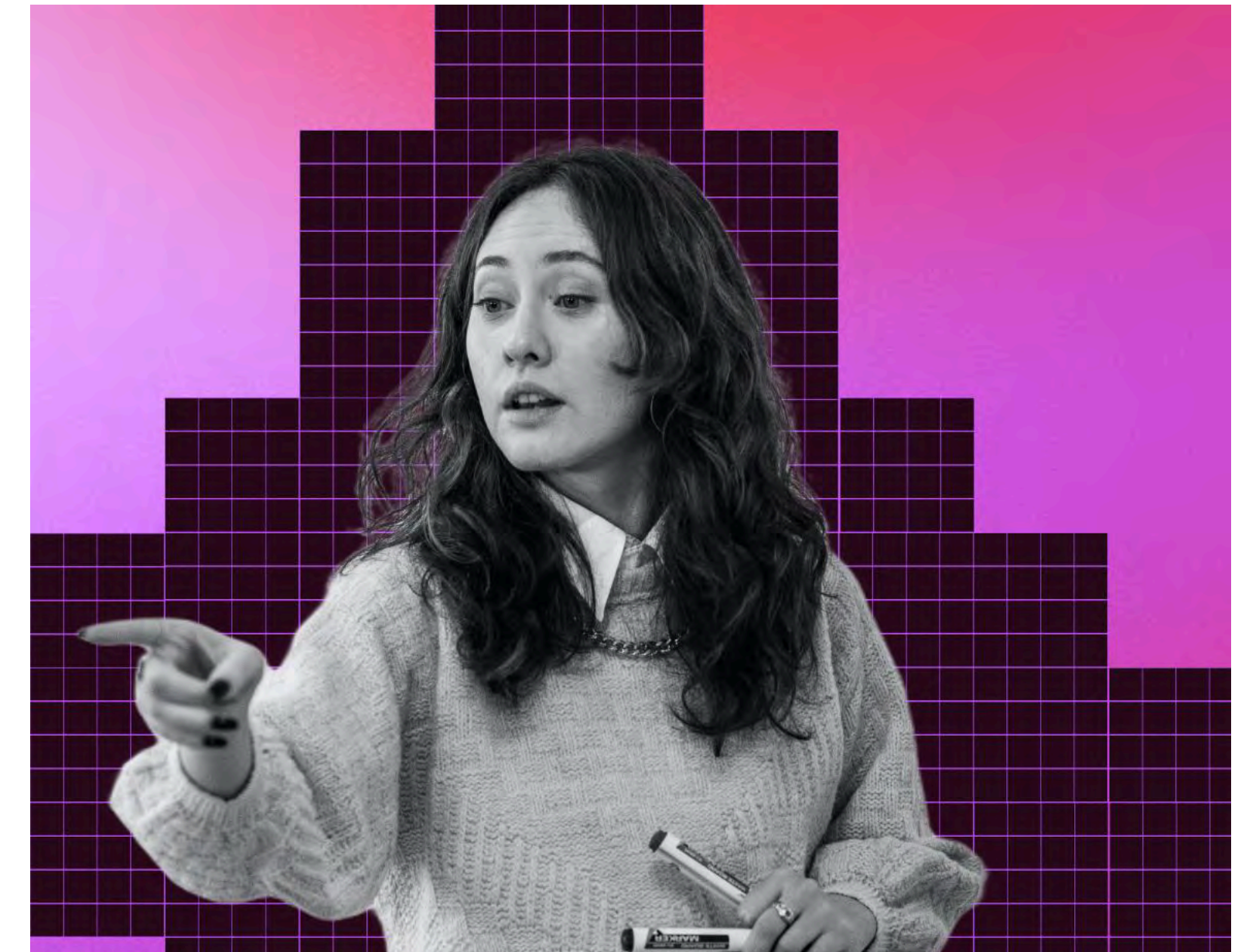
VISUAL LANGUAGE

DESIGN STYLE

The Lightcast design style combines data imagery and graphics with photography of people in natural work environments. Through the use of precise grids, vibrant colors, bright gradients, bold stats, and detailed views of our products, we show the connection of data and people.



Our photo chart style combines a flexible graph element with black and white photography. An additional hand-drawn chart element may also be included on the graph.





1. Begin with a photograph of a person in their work or study environment. Lighting should be natural and not overly processed, and the subject should not be camera aware.



2. Convert the photo to black & white, and remove the background. The subject should then be placed on a brand color or glow background.



3. Apply the grid graphic behind the subject, and trace cleanly on the lines, a squared off outline around the subject, leaving enough room for the grid to be clearly seen extending behind.



4. Remove additional grid lines, and add hand-drawn data element if a pop of color and interest is needed. These hand-drawn elements should represent real data on the grid lines.

A Photochart can also be made by using the grid to crop an image.

The graph element may be used on its own in designs.



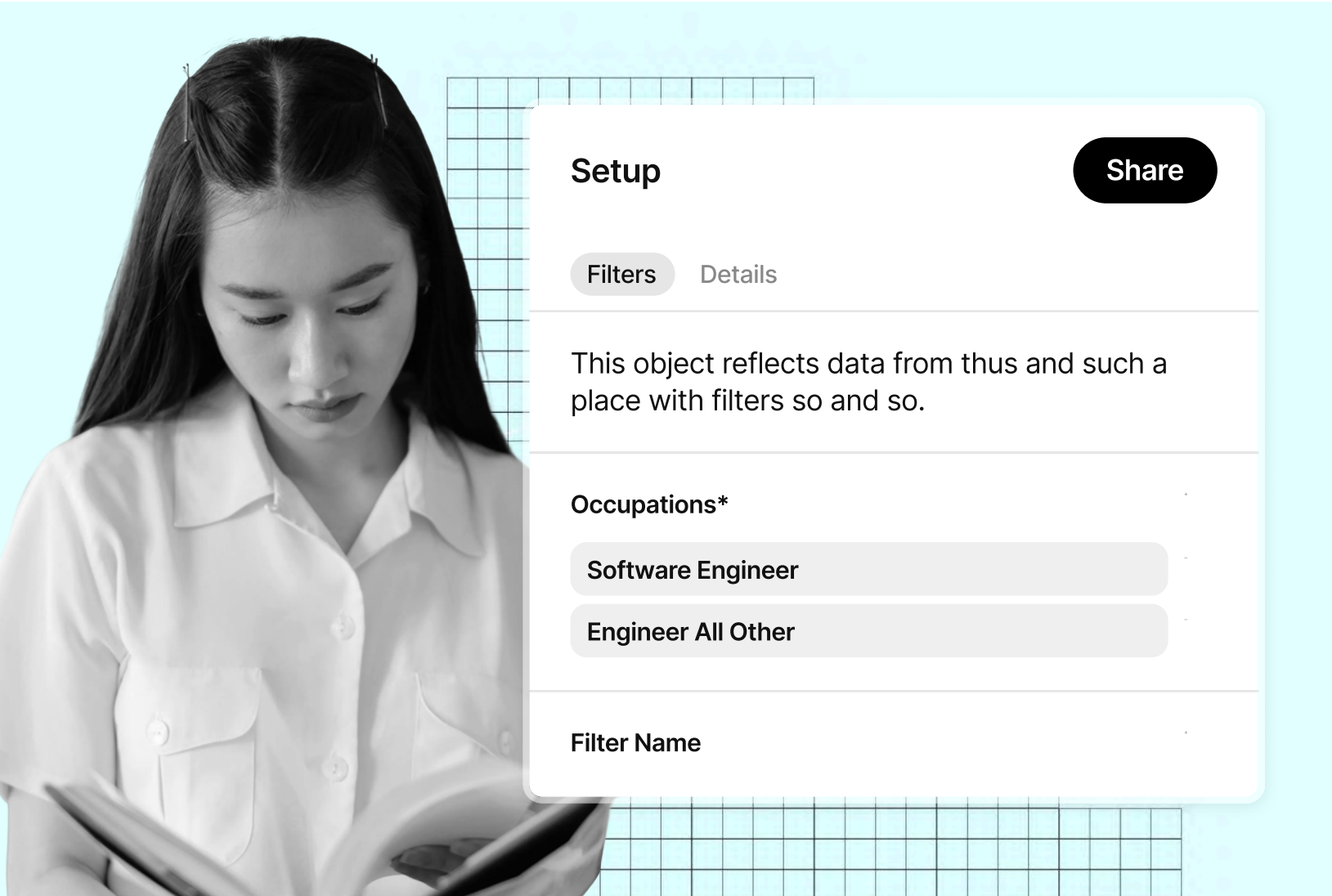
Let's Talk Data

Lightcast blends trusted data with clear, approachable design — bringing meaning and warmth to every decision you make. Talk to the Data Pros at Lightcast and get direct access to the global standard in labor market intelligence.

Get Started

Learn More

Interface elements may be combined with Photocharts in applications where our products are featured.

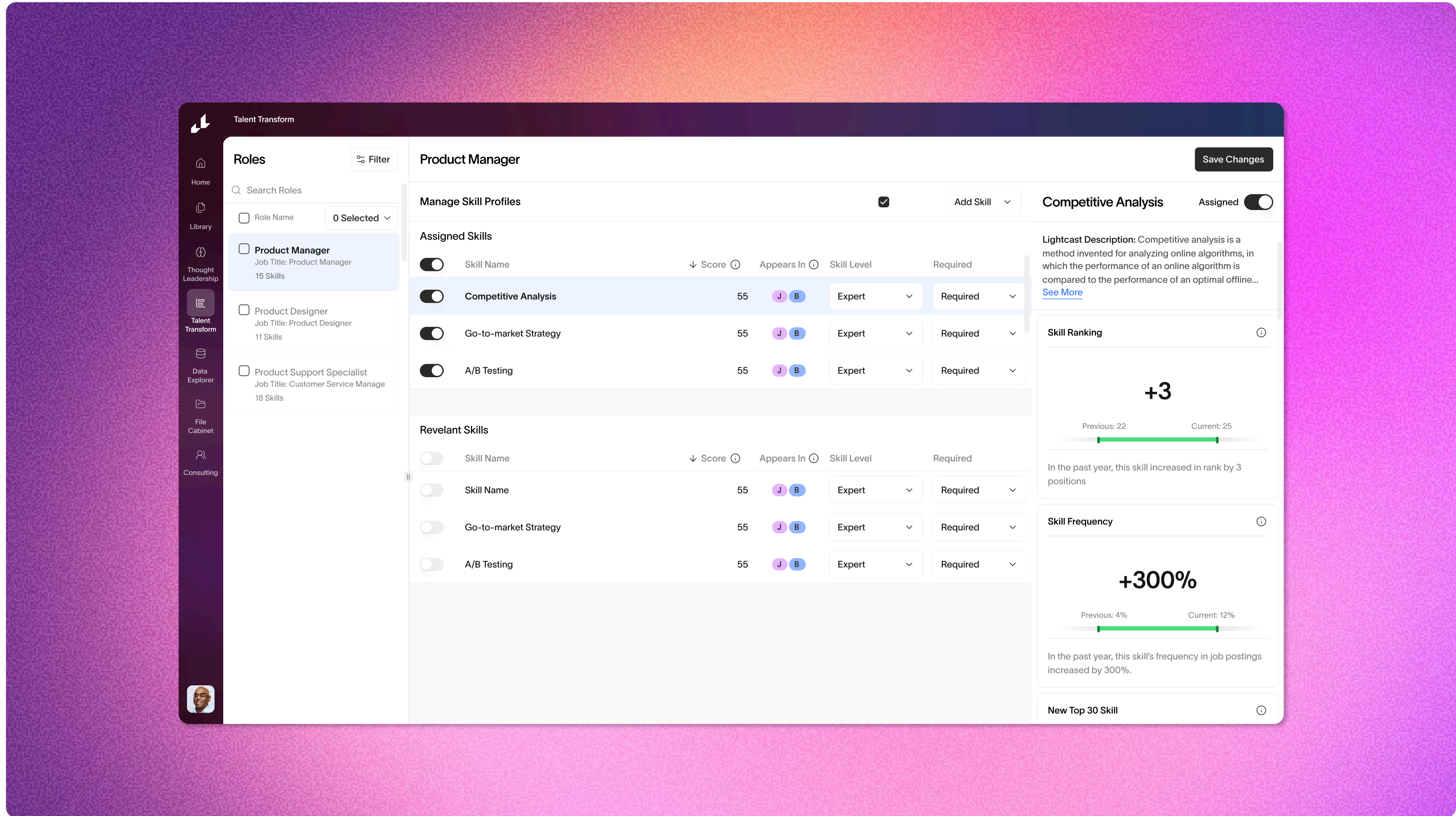


The image shows a woman with long dark hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, looking down at a tablet device. A semi-transparent white UI overlay is positioned on the right side of the image. The overlay has a 'Setup' title and a 'Share' button. Below the title are two tabs: 'Filters' (selected) and 'Details'. A text block reads: 'This object reflects data from thus and such a place with filters so and so.' Below this is a section titled 'Occupations*' with two filter options: 'Software Engineer' and 'Engineer All Other'. At the bottom of the overlay is a 'Filter Name' label.

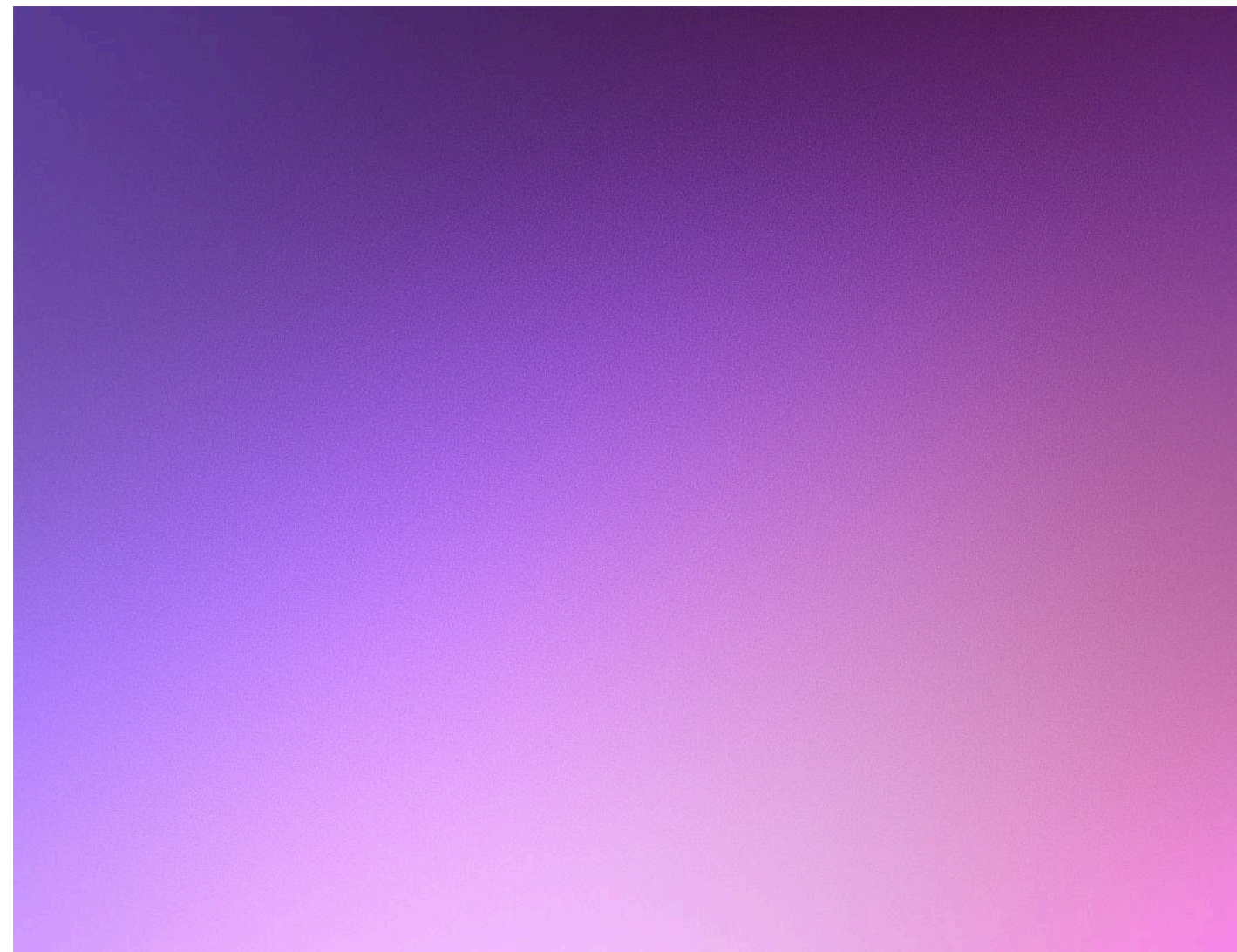
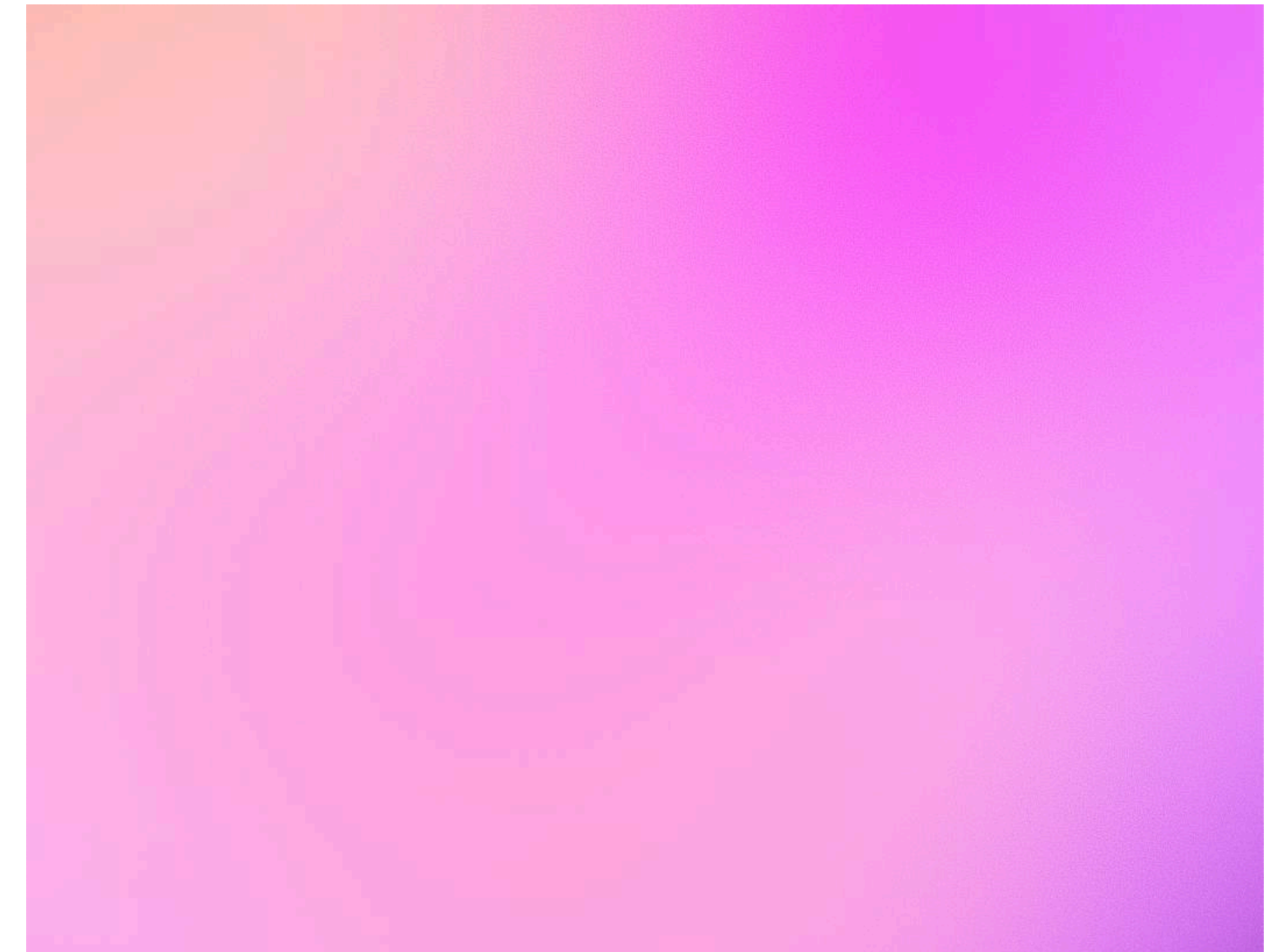
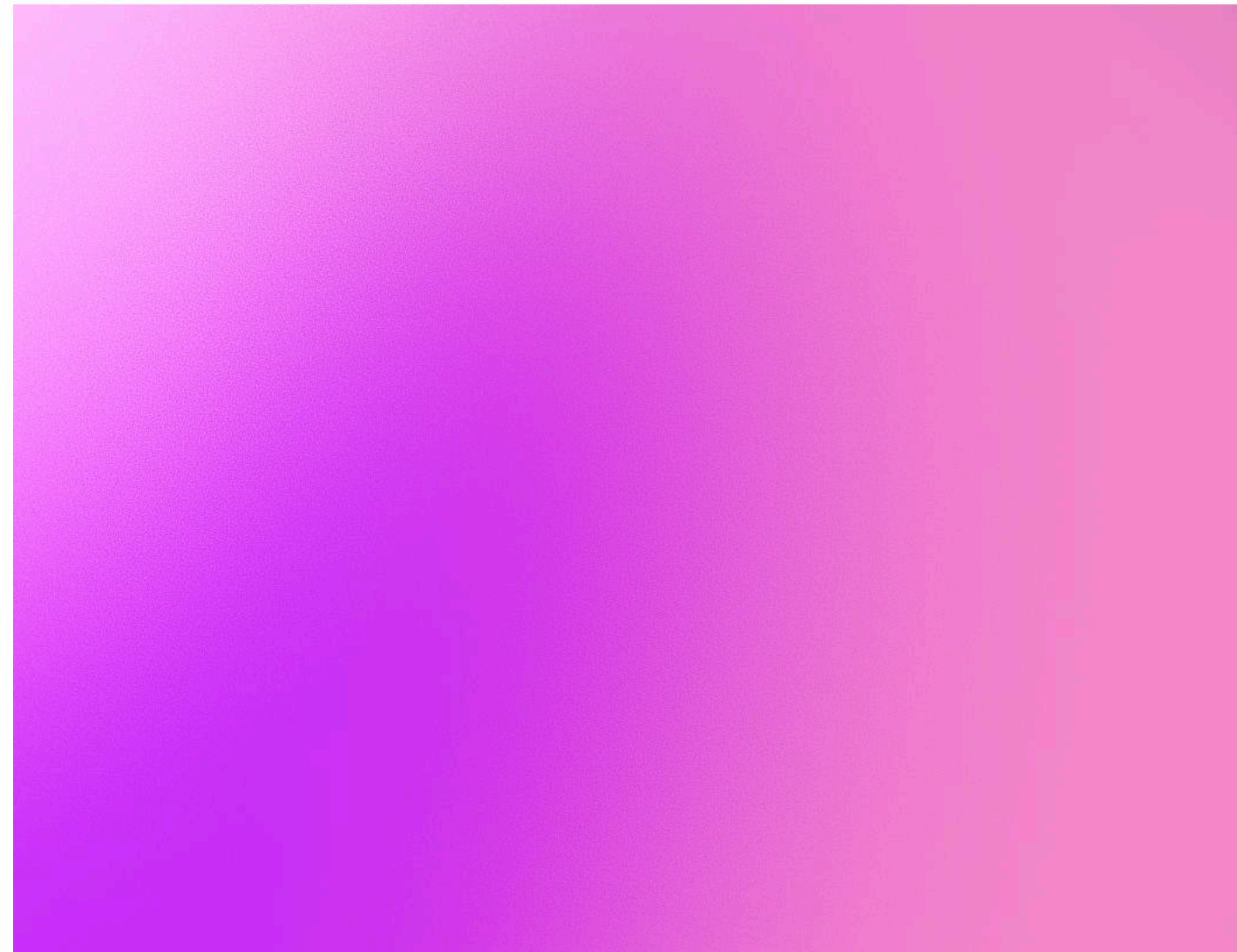
Education

Scale your business confidently with more experts that can teach more customers your craft.

Product mockups may also be displayed over our gradient glows.



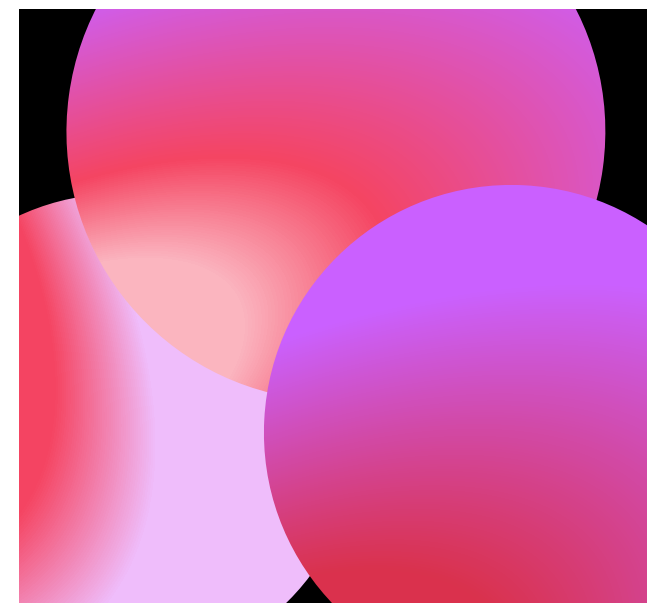
The gradient glow is an additional element that adds flexibility to the Lightcast visual language alongside the primary and secondary palettes. It should be used as an accent in spaces where it does not overwhelm other visual elements.





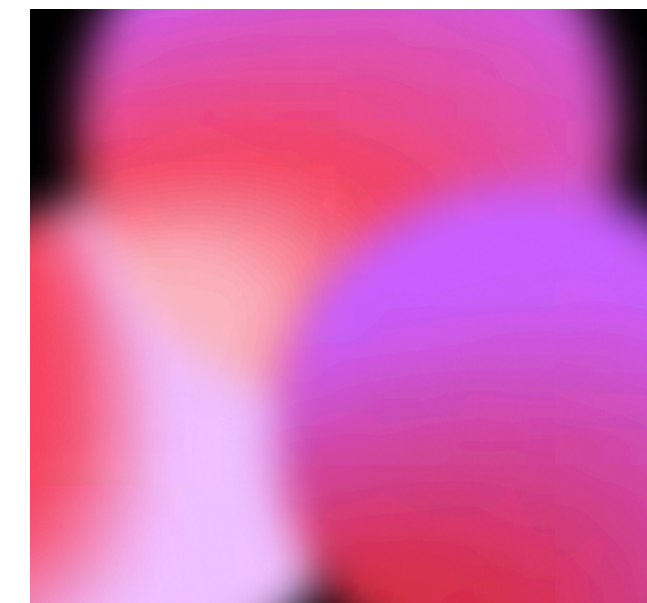
Step 1

Create the base layers and shape. The form can be any amorphous shape.



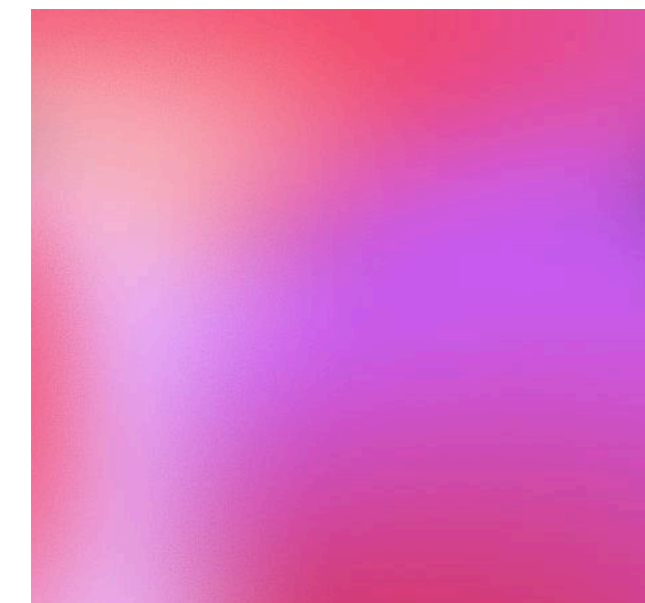
Step 2

Apply a layer blur to the layers such that the shape is unrecognizable, but not too dull.



Step 3

Arrange and resize the shapes until there is a smooth transition from each color. Finally, add a texture layer with an Overlay blend mode to create texture



For Lightcast-branded headshots, remove the background from the photo, convert to black and white, and add a background in one of the following styles:

Light Gradient: Purple 200 to Blue 200, progressing from the bottom left to top right.

Dark Gradient: Blue 600 to Plum (bottom left to top right).

Light Solid: Green 100

Dark Solid: Plum

LIGHT GRADIENT

Blue 200
#B0CAFF



Purple 200
#FED1F8

DARK GRADIENT

Plum
#520C39



Blue 600
#3A6ACD

Green 100
#E5FFFF



LIGHT SOLID

Plum
#520C39



DARK SOLID

Data Visualization

Key Goals

Typefaces & Colors

Text

Style

Good Data Visualization is Essential for Building Trust and Recognizability for the Lightcast Brand

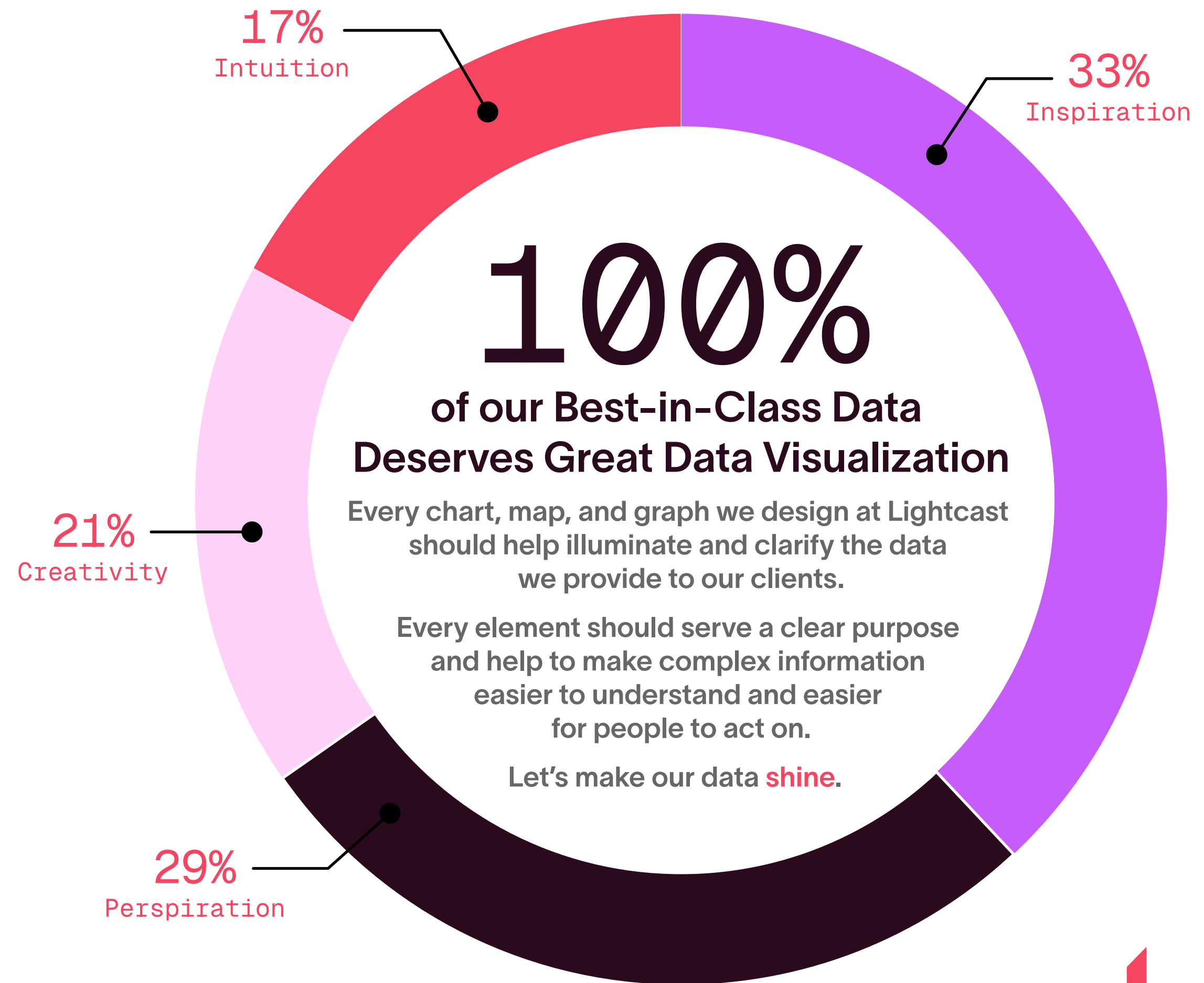
Lightcast isn't just a data company. Lightcast is a company that transforms data—the "raw material" of numbers and isolated points of information—into actionable insights. But in order to make our data actionable, we first have to make it understandable, which is what good data visualization ("data viz") does.

Data viz is a kind of metaphor, giving concrete shape to abstract information. The primary goal of good data viz is to clearly and honestly translate complex information into an easy-to-grasp format—whether that's lines on a graph, bubbles along an axis, areas on a map, or icons in a grid.

Our visuals should be instantly identifiable as Lightcast data and graphically consistent across all our public-facing channels—from our website, to our reports, to our social media posts, to our tools. In short, our data viz should strive to be:

1. Understandable: clear and as simple as the data allows
2. Honest: truthful, avoiding exaggerated or misleading visuals
3. Actionable: provides useful insights for building prosperity
4. Recognizable: easily identifiable as Lightcast data

The following guidelines should help us achieve these four key goals for our data viz.



Source: Lightcast, 2026

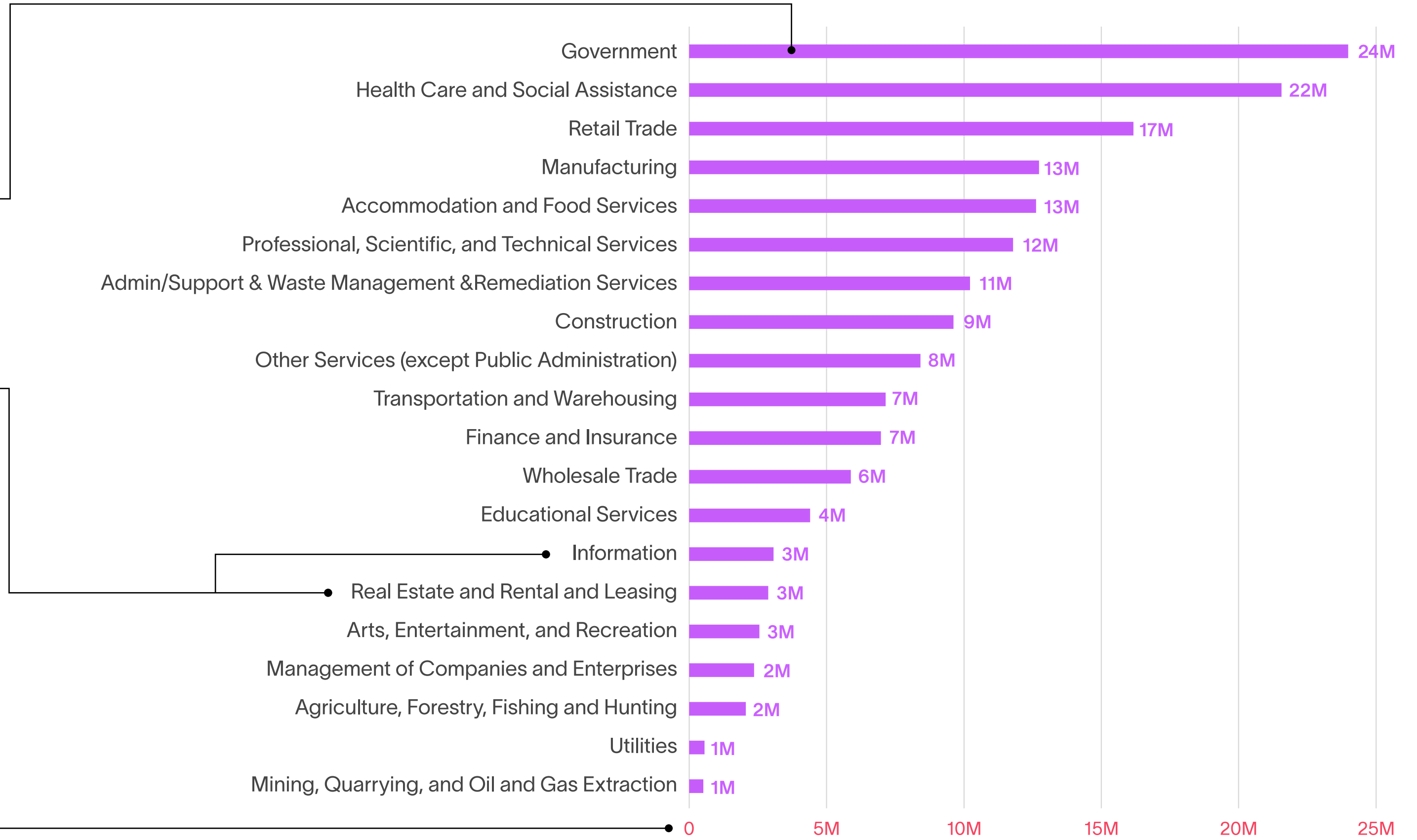
Anatomy of a Chart

TYPEFACES & COLORS:

1. Title in Lausanne 600 (or Arial Bold) in Sailor Red.
2. Subtitle in Lausanne 600 (or Arial Bold) in Gray D40.
3. Source/footnote, in lower left, in Geist Mono Regular, in Gray D40, no period.
4. Bars/columns in Amethyst or other appropriate brand color. Additional colors (a max of 6 total) only as needed.
NOTE: Change colors in the chart *ONLY* if you need to distinguish between different categories of data. (If you wanted to label high-tech and non-tech industries in different colors on this bar chart, for example.)
5. Longer, non-numerical labels in Lausanne 300, Gray D60.
6. Numerical labels in Lausanne 300.
 - Numerical labels should be Sailor Red on the X and Y axes.
 - Numerical labels on the data itself should match the color of the data. (Donut charts are one possible exception.)
7. Keep Sailor Red for titles and labels *ONLY*, except for a highlighted element (see map pin example).
Do not use Sailor Red to color the data itself.
8. Tessell (not full lockup) in lower right.

Government was the Industry that Posted the Most Job Openings.

Health Care and Retail Trade round out the top three with Manufacturing not far behind.



Source: Lightcast, 2022

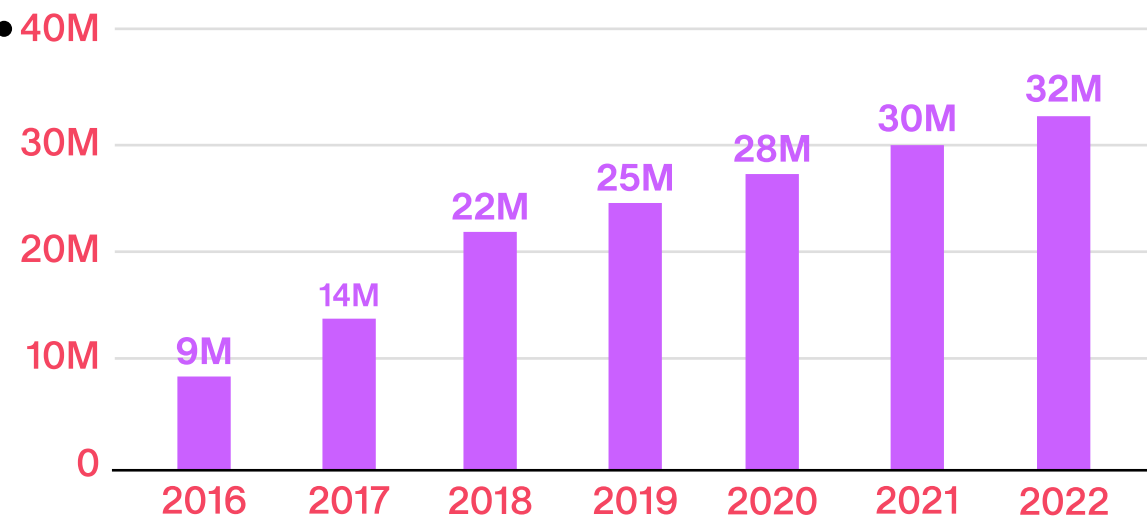


TEXT ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS:

- Except for widely recognized acronyms (USA, COVID), always spell out terms on the first reference. Then use the acronym on subsequent references when appropriate: (“Labor Force Participation Rate” first, then “LFPR”).
- Clean abbreviations with no periods: US, UK, DC, PhD (not U.S., U.K., D.C., Ph.D.). Times are an exception to the rule: a.m. and p.m. take periods and are lowercase.
- Write out numbers under 1 million whenever space permits (4,500, not 4.5K). For numbers of 1 million or higher, abbreviations of M (millions), B (billions), etc., are best.

These Sectors Have Expanded to Employ 32 Million Americans in 2022

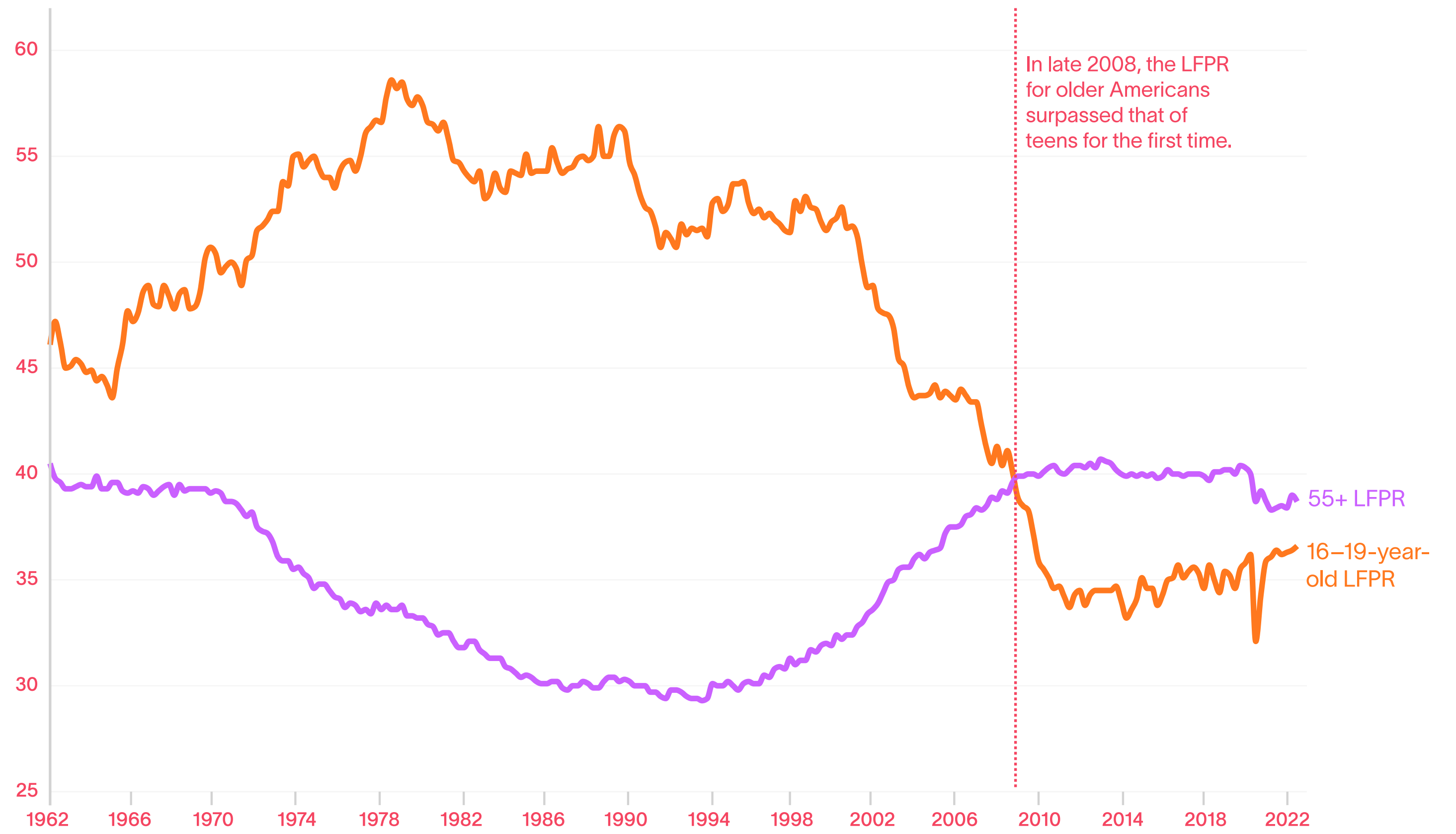
The number has more than tripled since 2016.



Source: BLS, Lightcast analysis, 2022

Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for Teens and Older Adults

For decades, the US LFPR trend lines for teens and older adults have roughly mirrored each other.



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Lightcast Analysis, 2022
Rates shown are quarterly averages

Data Viz Dos and Don'ts:

DO: REMEMBER BASIC DESIGN AND UX PRINCIPLES

- Even with lots of complex data, the principles of good design—color, balance, contrast, etc.—still apply.
- White space is your friend, so give your charts some breathing room. (Dashboards and software are prone to crowding. Don't cram too much data into one place.)

DO: TELL CLEAR STORY

- Ensure that your data viz helps provide clear takeaways and aligns with your overall narrative.
- Make key points stand out by using visual contrast.
- Limit data points to what's relevant and valuable.

DO: MAKE YOUR TITLE AND SUBTITLE COMPELLING

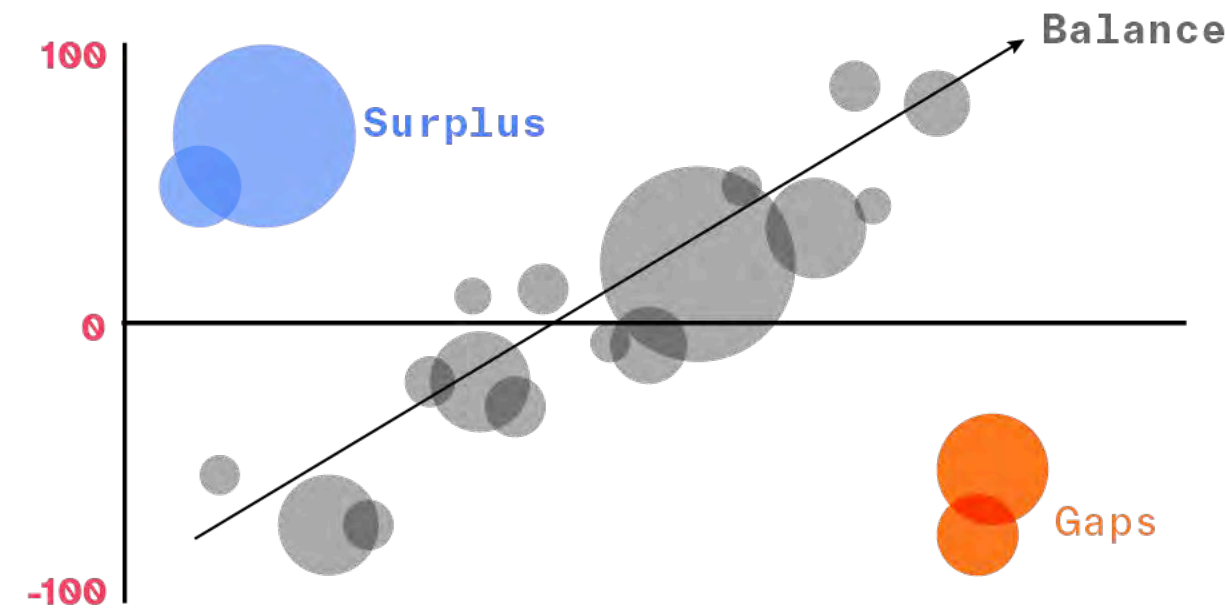
- Your chart title should add value and generate interest—not just restate the obvious.

For example, on the map on the right, instead of using the boring title: "The Top Five States", try "Number One New Jersey Stands Out as the Only Top-Ranked Eastern State." This adds information, piques interest and makes the reader ask questions: "Why? How'd they do it?"

- Not every chart needs a subtitle, but include one if it adds clarity and value.

Highlight What Matters

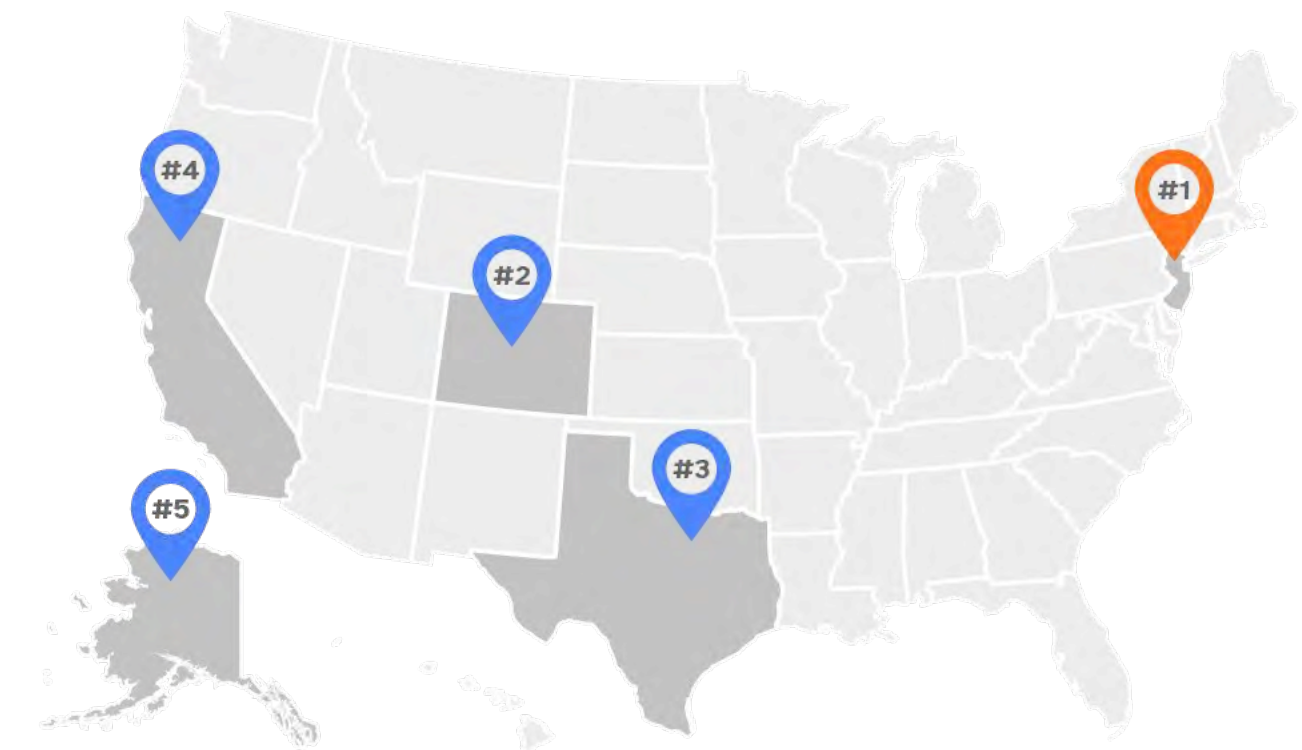
This chart uses color contrast to draw the viewer's eye to the surplus and the gap, which indicates that those data points are the most important elements for the narrative.



Source: Lightcast, 2022

Simplify the Data to Tell a Clearer Story

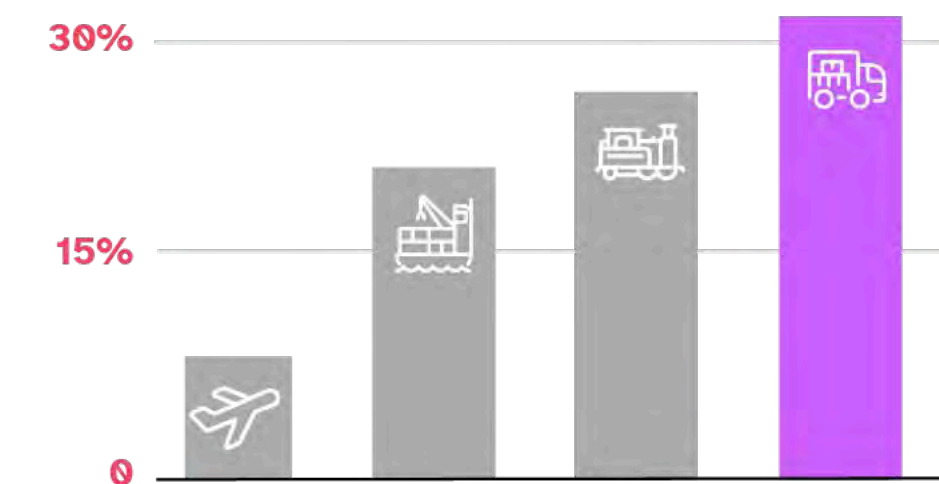
If only the top 5 states are relevant to the story, limit the visual to those 5 instead of cluttering it with all 50.



Source: BLS, Lightcast analysis, 2022

It May Not Be Worth 1,000 Words, But a Picture Can Easily Replace a Dozen

Icons can help tell a story more clearly and effectively on certain simple charts—but limit them to a handful.

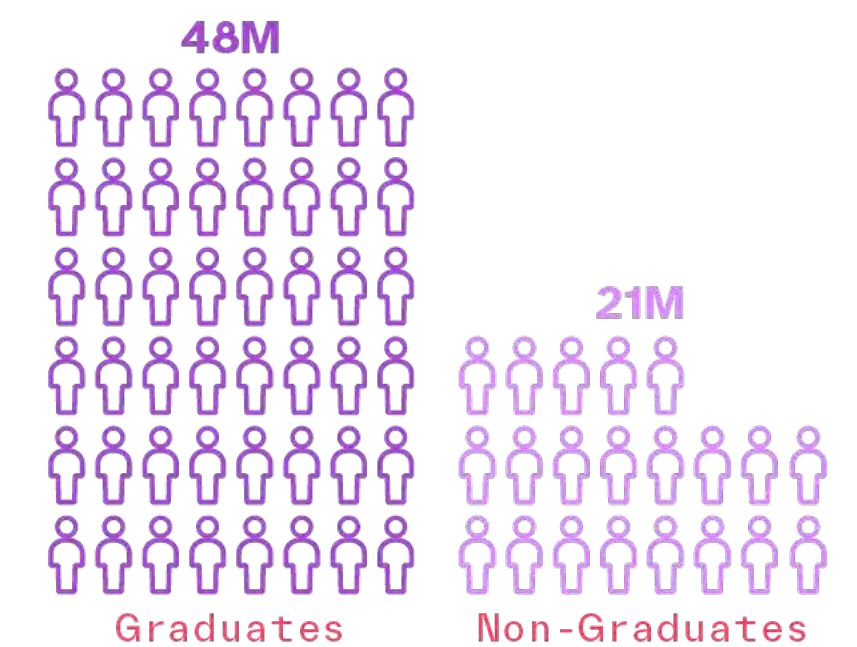


Source: Lightcast, 2022

Consider an Infographic for Very Simple Charts

Infographics can serve as a more engaging data storytelling alternative to standard charts—especially for simple data points or comparisons. But as with icons, use sparingly and only if it adds value.

These Occupations Employ More than Twice as Many College Graduates as Non-Graduates.



Source: Lightcast, 2022

DO: SELECT A CHART TYPE THAT MAKES THE DATA EASIEST TO UNDERSTAND

- Some data can be represented using a variety of different chart types—or even no chart at all. Select the one that is most clear, simple, and intuitive.
- Break up complex data sets into smaller sets. If you have data for hundreds of countries, consider dividing the data into multiple charts by continent or category.
- Use donut charts (for percentages only) instead of pies. The segment lengths of a donut are easier to interpret.
- If your chart is not using percentages that add up to 100%, opt for a bar or column chart instead.

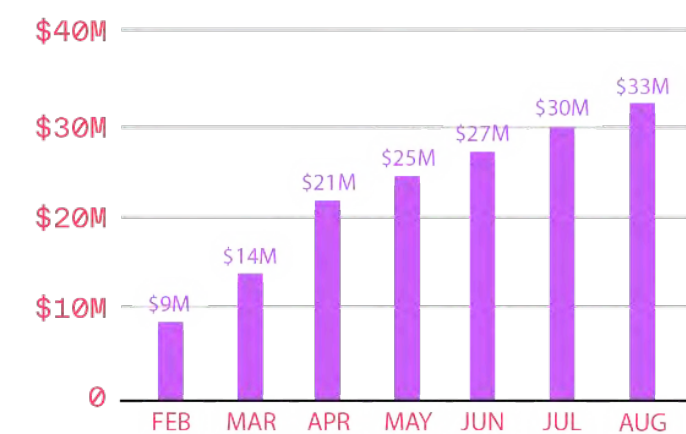
DO: SORT AND ORGANIZE THE DATA

- Sort the data from largest to smallest (or, in certain cases, from most to least relevant).
- Organize the sorted data top to bottom on a bar chart, left to right on a column chart, and clockwise from the top on a donut chart.

Do You Need a Chart? Or Will a Callout Do the Job?

If the monthly earnings data is important to the narrative, then the column chart on the left works well. But if the main point is the overall growth since the start of the year, then a simple infographic or callout is the clearer, simpler choice.

Earnings Have Risen by \$24M Since January of 2023.



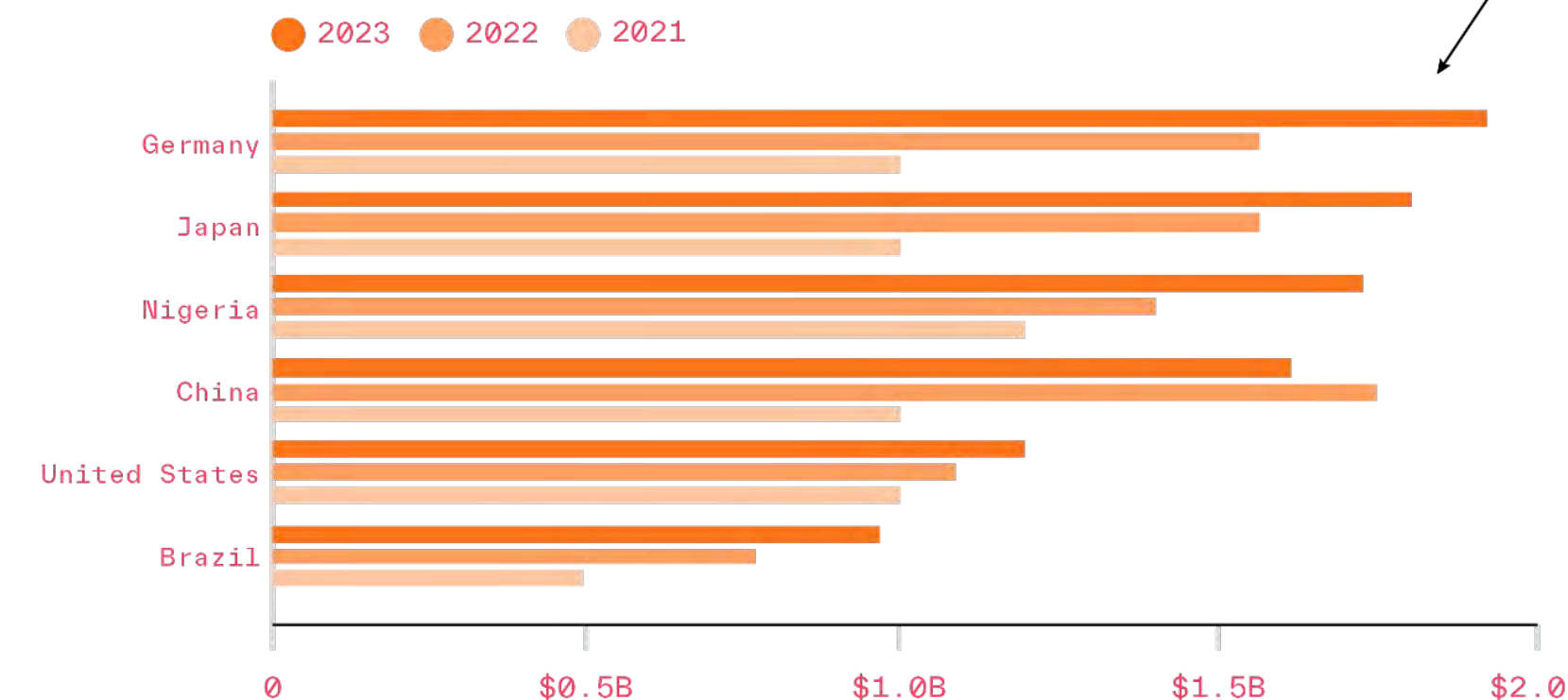
Source: Lightcast, 2023



Source: Lightcast, 2023

Sort Data from Large to Small and by What's Most Relevant

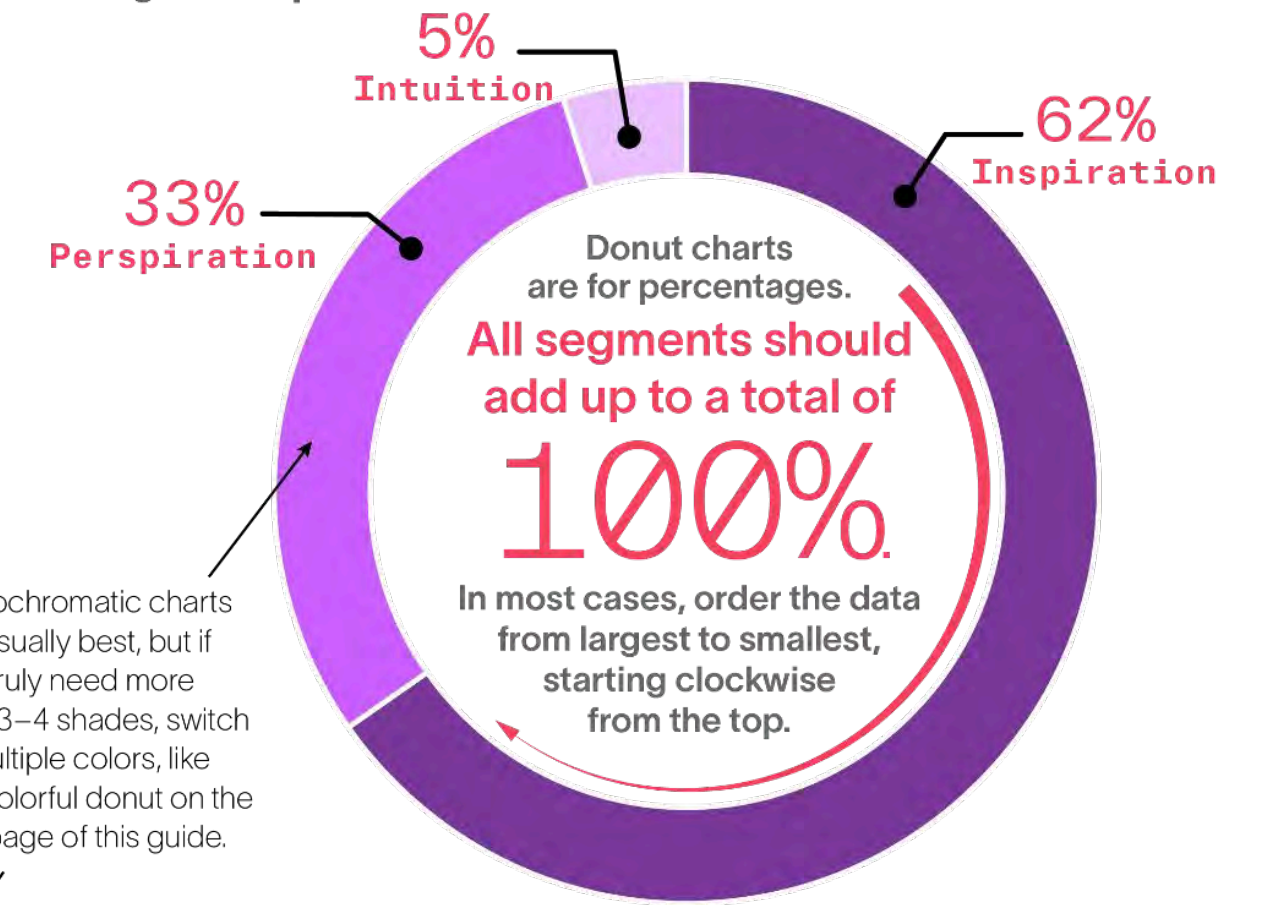
In this example, the most recent year is the most relevant, so the data is sorted largest to smallest according to 2023 data, with 2023 in the darkest shade.



Source: Lightcast, 2023

Lightcast Serves Up Donuts, Not Pies

This isn't just a matter of taste. The segment length of a donut chart is actually easier for the human eye to decipher than the wedges of a pie.



Monochromatic charts are usually best, but if you truly need more than 3–4 shades, switch to multiple colors, like the colorful donut on the first page of this guide.

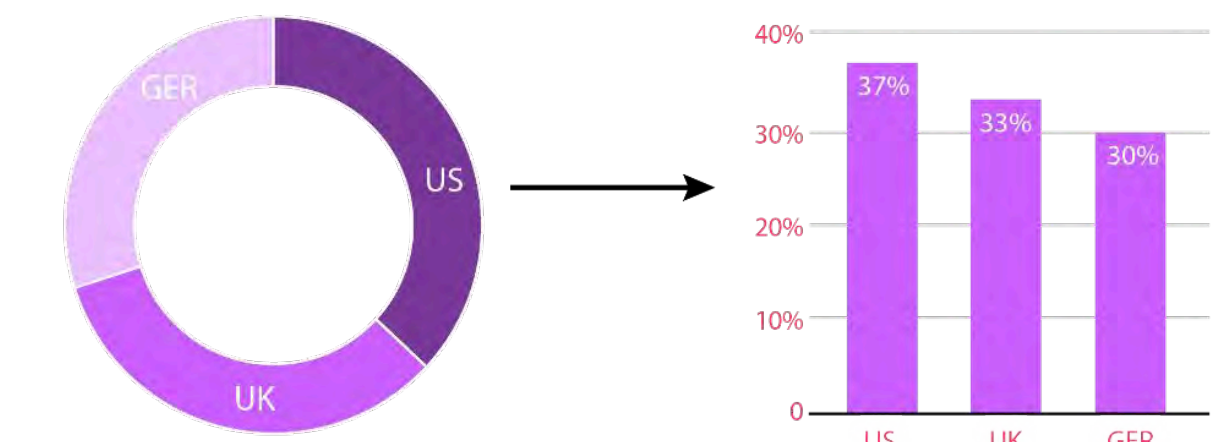
Source: Lightcast, 2022

Why Bars Are Often Better than Donuts

Bar length is easier to spot in most situations. Use bars when:

- The data is not in percentages that add up to 100%
- You have more than a few percentage segments to depict
- The percentages are close in number and hard to distinguish

Which segment is biggest? Bars make it easier to tell.



Source: Lightcast, 2023

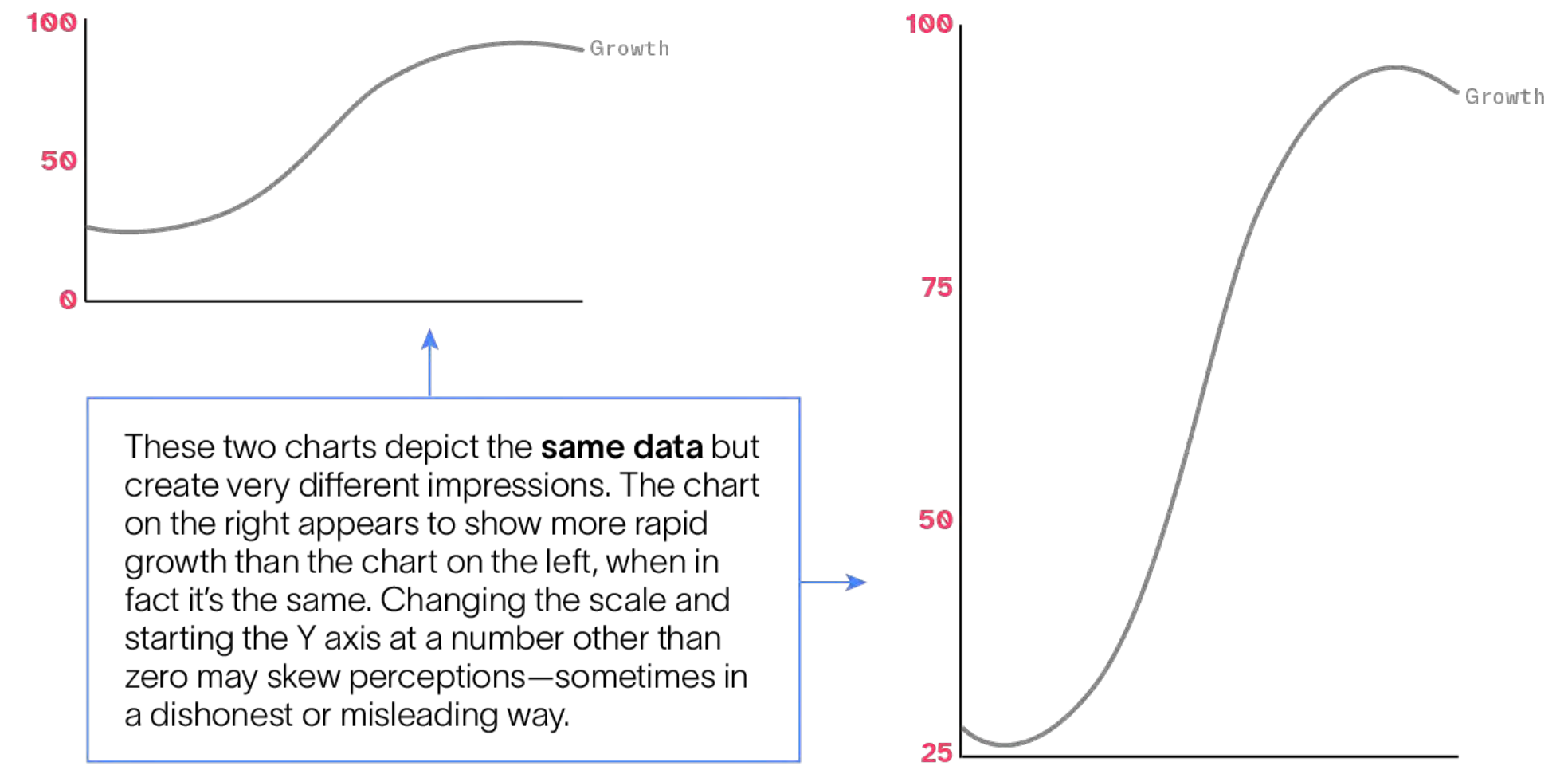
DO: USE ACCURATE AND HONEST SCALES/COMPARISONS

- For donut charts make sure that all percentages add up to 100% and that each segment is accurately sized as a percentage.
- For line charts, start your axis at zero when possible.
- Data in bar and column plots must **always** start at zero.
- Use a single scale across all axes for comparing data. (Dual-axis charts have their place, but they are also notorious for creating misleading comparisons, so proceed with extreme caution.)
- Use the same color ramp, axis scale, date range, and so on for comparing two or more sets of data.
- Be very intentional about sizing your charts. Stretching a chart vertically or horizontally will affect a viewer's perception of the data.

Data visualization has the power to shape public opinion, drive policy, and affect lives, so use this power responsibly and honestly.

Same data, different perceptions

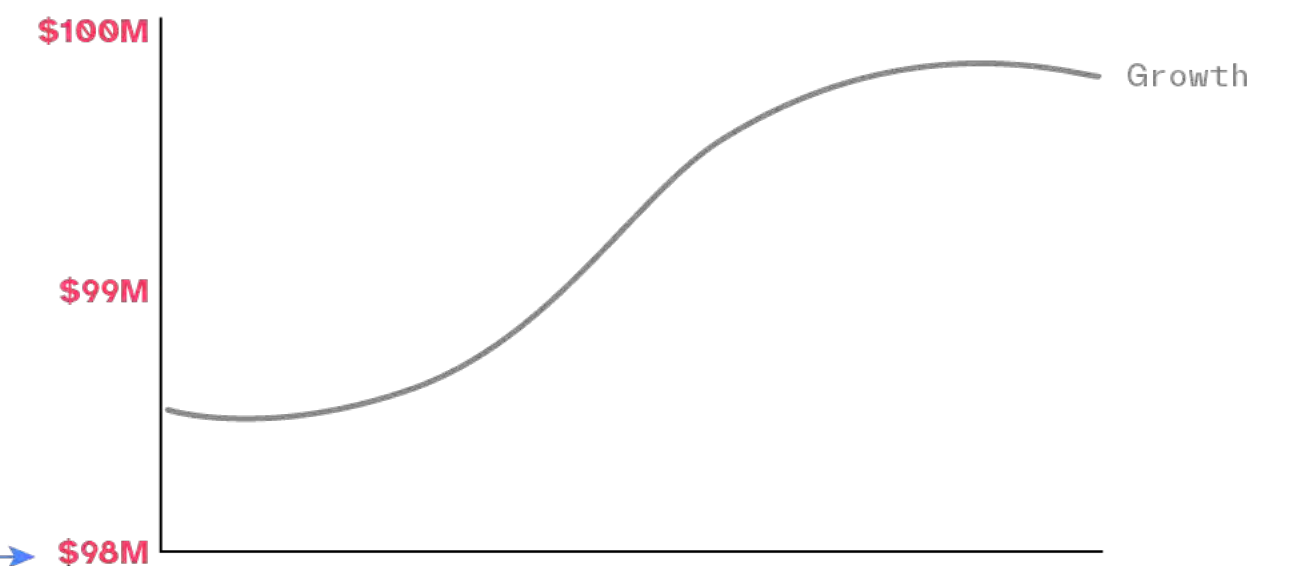
Make sure your charts and graphs start at zero when possible and are scaled/colored/labeled similarly across multiple charts of similar data.



Know when to break the rules

Sometimes starting at zero makes subtle changes too hard to see. In that case, shift the axis for clarity's sake—not for deception.

Starting at zero may not make sense on a chart that shows relatively minor change.

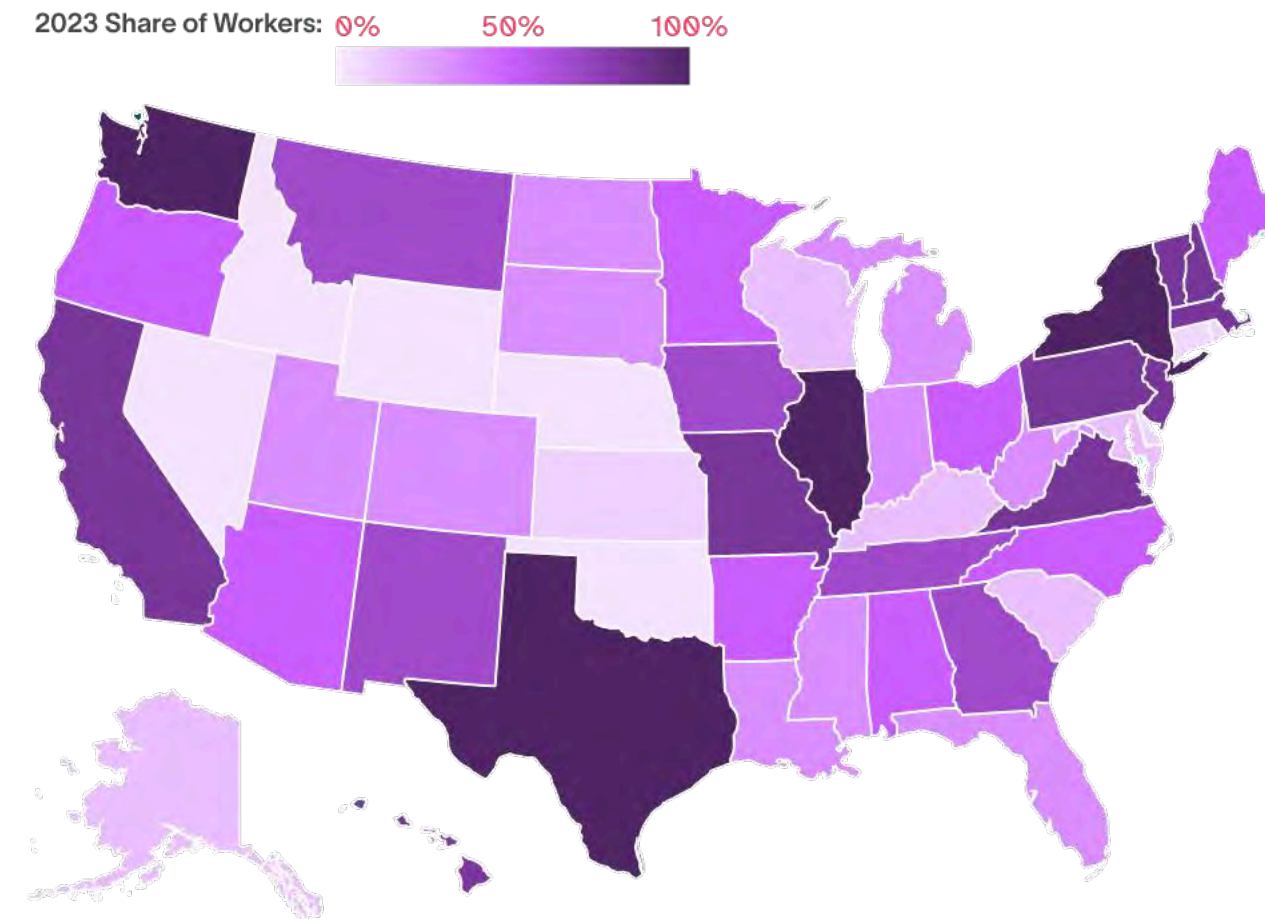


DO: KEEP MAPS UNDERSTANDABLE

- Stick to white or gray outlines, that provide adequate contrast to the fill color(s).
- For regions within regions—such as counties within states—vary the outline thickness to distinguish between types of region.
- Use colored outlines only in limited circumstances (a rollover highlight on an interactive map, for example)
- Limit colors to the same ones recommended on other types of charts (no red regions!).
- Avoid red/blue color combinations since they have strong political associations, especially on a map.
- In addition to colors showing a range of data, individual labels and callouts might be needed on the map itself. **Data for each region should be included on interactive maps whenever possible.**
- Include a legend with a color ramp (either binned or gradient) for most heat maps and choropleths. But for less complex maps, a few labels added directly onto the map itself may work better.

Data Ranging from Lower to Higher Numbers Works Well with a Dark-to-Light Color Ramp

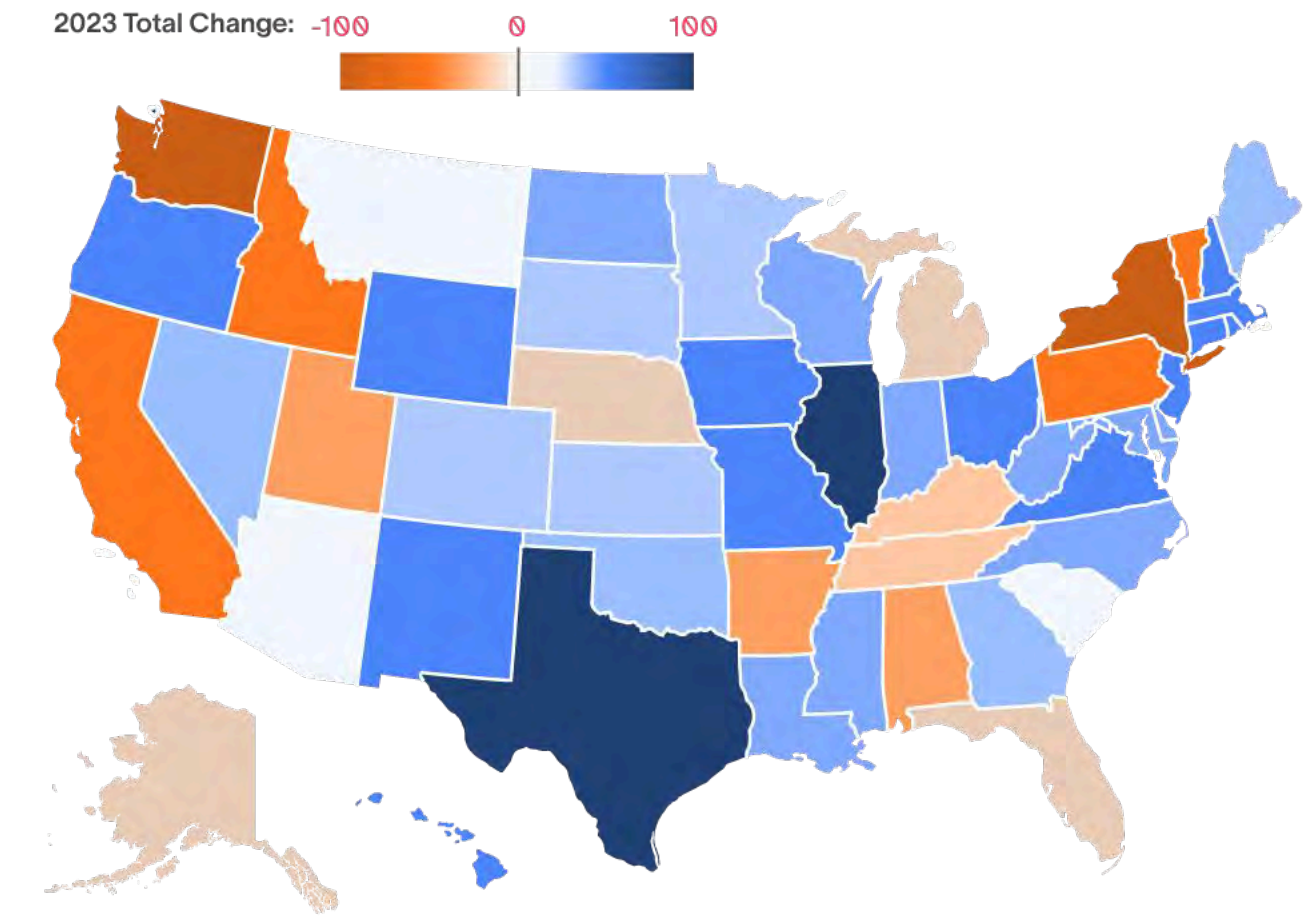
Keep the range of dark to light values easy to distinguish, however.



Source: Lightcast, 2022

Some Data (Especially Showing Negative to Positive Numbers) Requires a Diverging Color Ramp

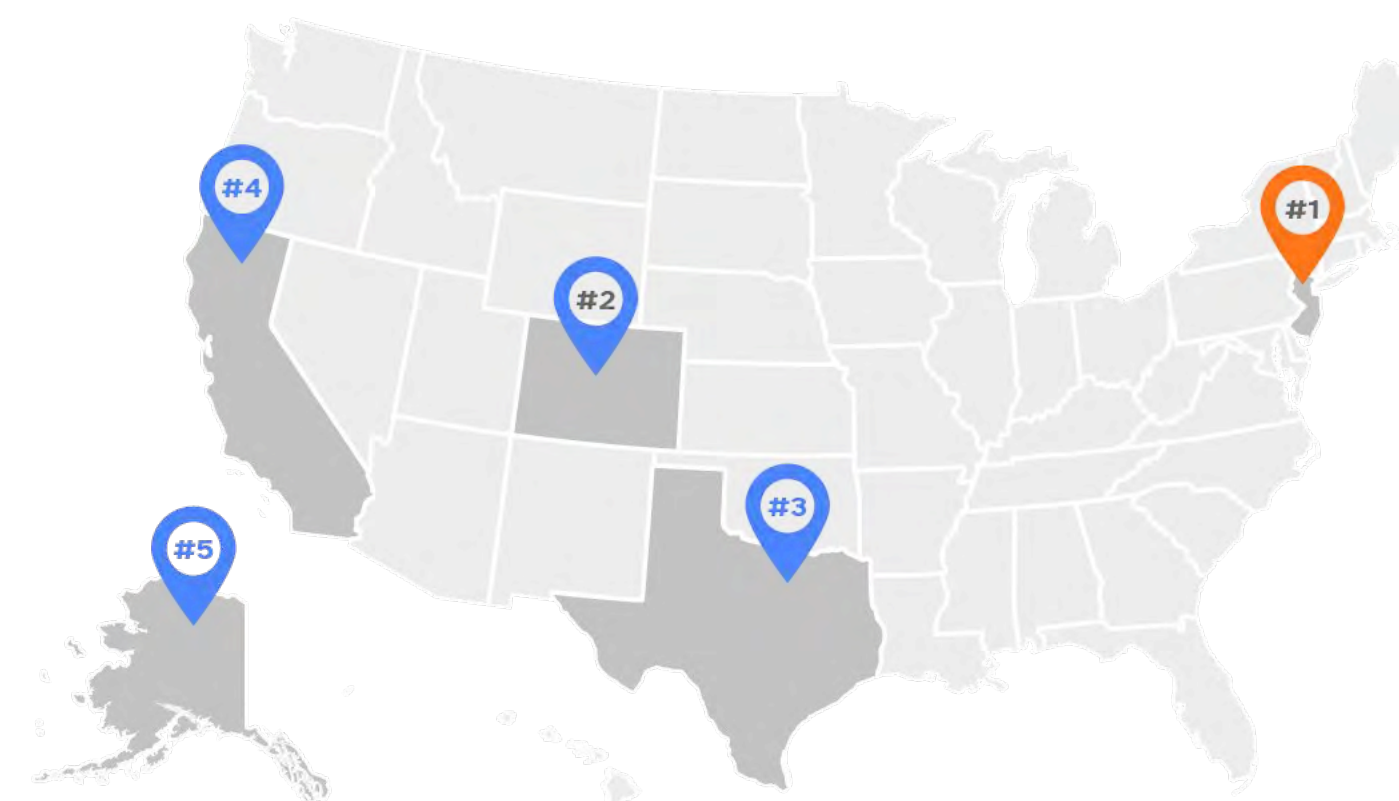
Orange = decline, gray = little/no change, and turquoise = growth.



Source: Lightcast, 2022

Remember: Not Every Region Requires Data Every Time

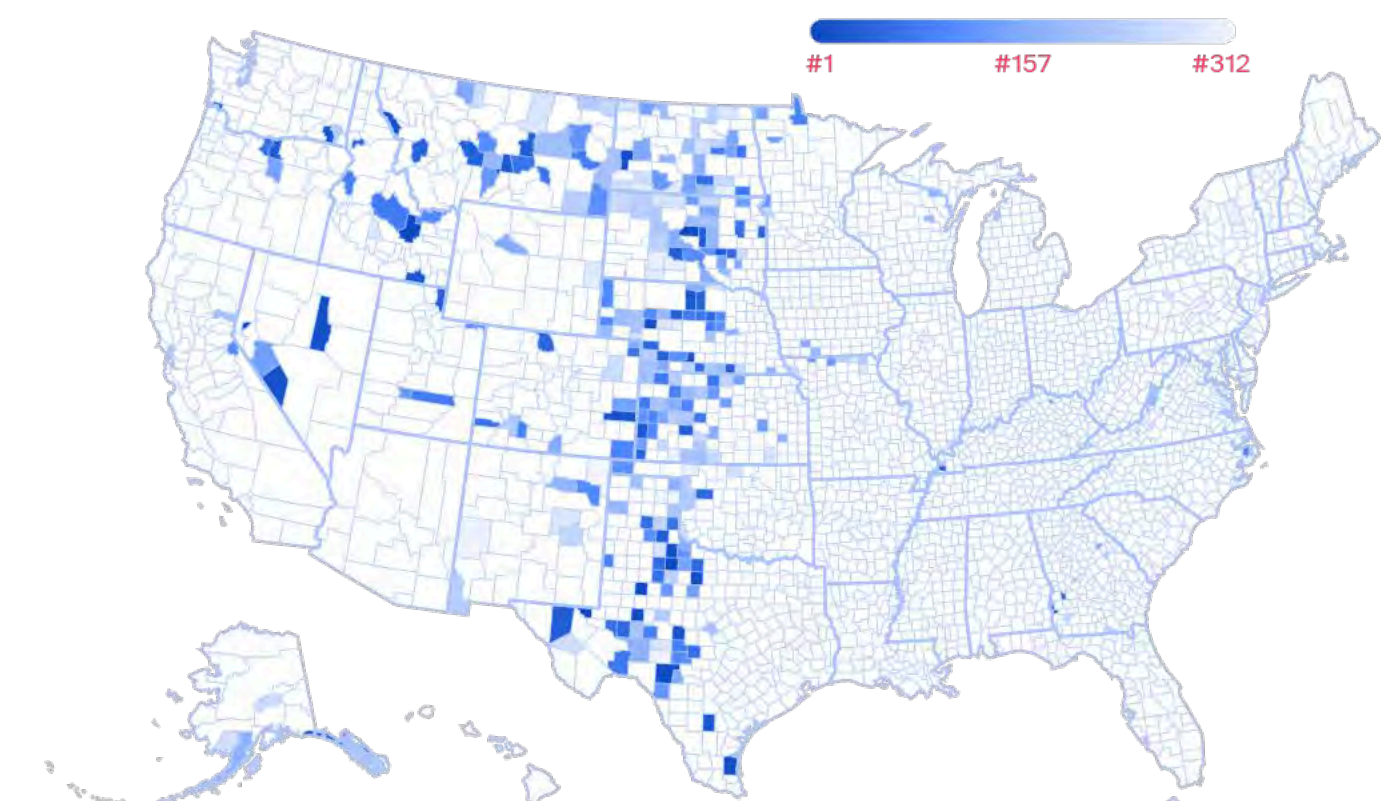
It's sometimes best to simplify the data and label or color only the regions that matter to the narrative or takeaways. This map tells a story about just the top five states.



Source: Lightcast, 2022

Very Complex Maps May Need Special Treatment

White borders with colored fill can cause confusion on a complex map. Use colors with good contrast, and adjust border thickness for each type of region (state vs county in this case).



Source: Lightcast, 2022

DO: DECLUTTER YOUR TABLE

- Generally reserve tables for complex sets of data that require multiple columns. Otherwise consider a more engaging visualization like a chart or map.
- Tables tend to be the least eye-catching and most content-heavy type of data presentation, but resist the temptation to make them overly fancy. With lots of different types of data represented in a single figure, tables need to get the job done clearly and simply.
- Remember color connotations. Gray background fills work best for highlighting information in a judgment-neutral way. Orange shades can be used to show declines, while turquoise/blue can indicate growth/increase.
- Keep grid lines to a minimum. Vertical lines are rarely necessary. Horizontal dividers are useful for separating sections, but should not be used to separate each row. Instead, use indents and text weight (bold, light, etc) for hierarchy as needed.
- Text styles for tables are as follows:
 - Titles and row/column headers are in Lausanne 600/Arial Bold.
 - Remaining text is in Lausanne 300/Arial Bold.
 - First column and category columns align left.
 - The remaining/numeric columns align right (on the ones case).
 - Every number in a column should have the same number of decimal points (ideally no more than 1 decimal point unless 2+ are required for clarity). *Example: 6.0 and 2.5, not 6 and 2.49.*

This Table Requires No Colored Fields, No Vertical Lines, and No Nonsense

Note that the left hand column is aligned left, with indents to show subcategories, while the other numerical columns align right. Gray fills are used to draw attention to the most important data.

| | Labor income (thousands) | Non-labor income (thousands) | Total income (thousands) | Sales (thousands) | Jobs supported |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Initial effect | \$104,524 | \$0 | \$104,524 | \$182,606 | 1,496 |
| Multiplier effect | | | | | |
| Direct effect | \$17,875 | \$10,141 | \$28,016 | \$54,751 | 226 |
| Indirect effect | \$5,680 | \$2,649 | \$8,329 | \$16,688 | 70 |
| Induced effect | \$34,932 | \$30,743 | \$65,676 | \$111,041 | 687 |
| Total multiplier effect | \$58,488 | \$43,533 | \$102,020 | \$182,479 | 983 |
| Gross impact (initial + multiplier) | \$163,011 | \$43,533 | \$206,544 | \$365,085 | 2,479 |
| Less alternative uses of funds | -\$17,698 | -\$17,080 | -\$34,778 | -\$52,439 | -396 |
| Net impact | \$145,313 | \$26,453 | \$171,766 | \$312,646 | 2,084 |

Source: Lightcast impact model, 2022

This Table Focuses on County N

The rest of the data is simply providing some comparison/context, but is less important. It's fine to use colored text for negatives.

| Region | Female | Latinx | Black |
|----------|--------|--------|-------|
| County A | 15% | 7% | 3% |
| County B | 21% | 7% | 5% |
| County C | 47% | 7% | 5% |
| County D | 48% | 5% | 1% |
| County E | 68% | 5% | 3% |
| County F | 35% | 11% | 6% |
| County G | 76% | 8% | 9% |
| County I | 4% | 14% | 2% |
| County J | 22% | 10% | 9% |
| County K | 61% | 5% | 3% |
| County L | 26% | 19% | 7% |
| County M | 71% | 6% | 6% |
| County N | 43% | 11% | 6% |
| County O | 9% | -15% | 5% |
| County P | 24% | -15% | -10% |
| County Q | -74% | 8% | 5% |
| County R | -50% | 8% | 5% |
| County S | -58% | -12% | -9% |

Source: Lightcast, 2022

Colored Heat Maps Reveal Overall Patterns

These colors showing percentages reveal clear patterns of growth/decline. Bold text or heavier lines can be used to call out a specific row of data.

| Region | Female | Latinx | Black |
|----------|--------|--------|-------|
| County A | 15% | 7% | 3% |
| County B | 21% | 7% | 5% |
| County C | 47% | 7% | 5% |
| County D | 48% | 5% | 1% |
| County E | 68% | 5% | 3% |
| County F | 35% | 11% | 6% |
| County G | 76% | 8% | 9% |
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| County N | 43% | 11% | 6% |
| County O | 9% | -15% | 5% |
| County P | 24% | -15% | -10% |
| County Q | -74% | 8% | 5% |
| County R | -50% | 8% | 5% |
| County S | -58% | -12% | -9% |

Source: Lightcast, 2022

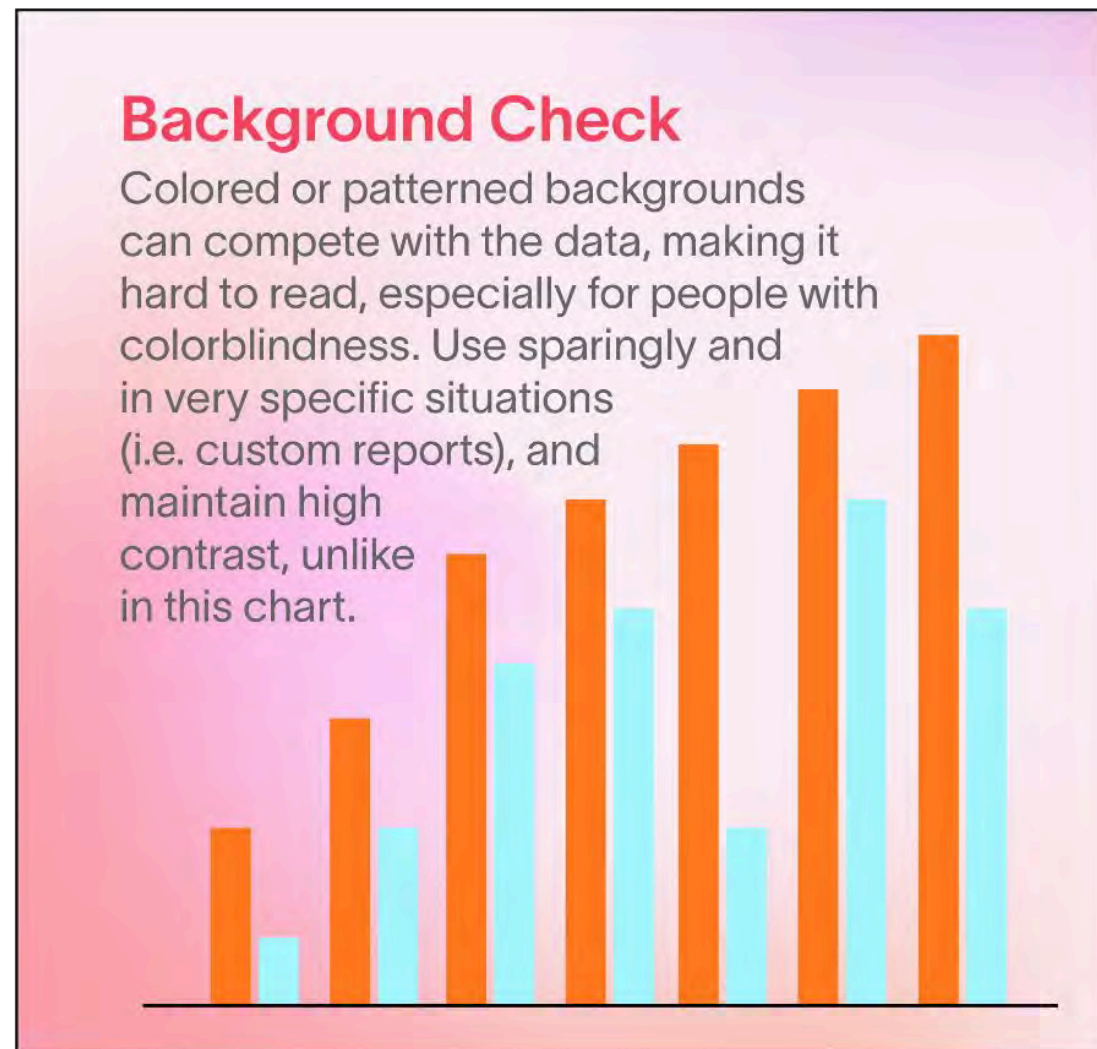
DON'T: LET YOUR DESIGN UNDERMINE CLARITY

Just because you can, doesn't mean you should. We have powerful design tools at our fingertips, but fancy special effects usually come at the cost of clarity or readability.

When it comes to data viz, choose function before fun.

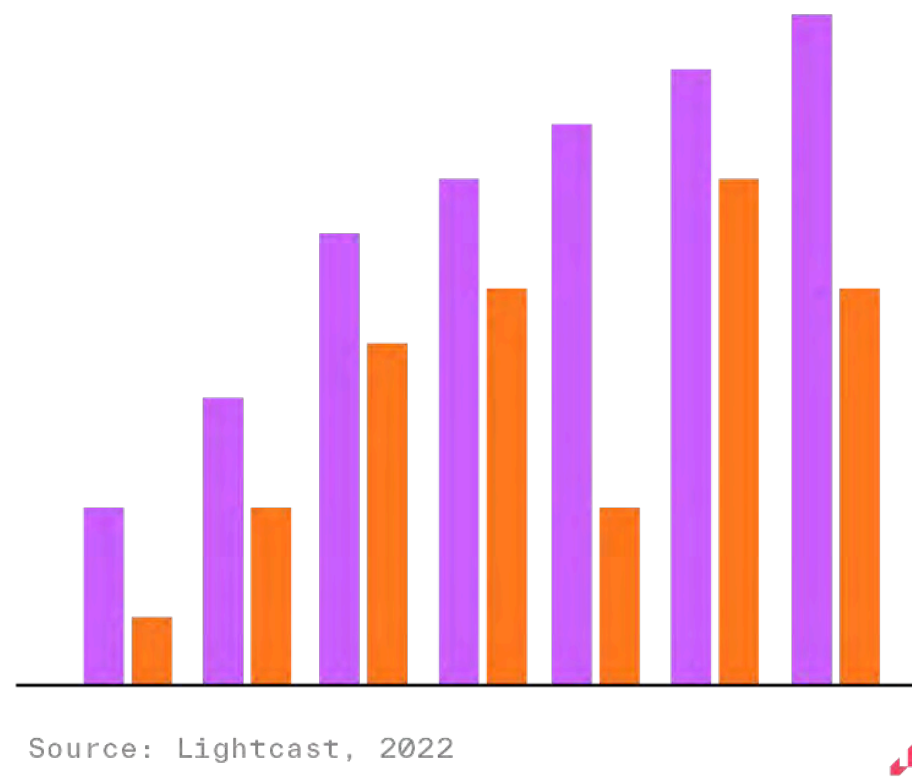
Background Check

Colored or patterned backgrounds can compete with the data, making it hard to read, especially for people with colorblindness. Use sparingly and in very specific situations (i.e. custom reports), and maintain high contrast, unlike in this chart.



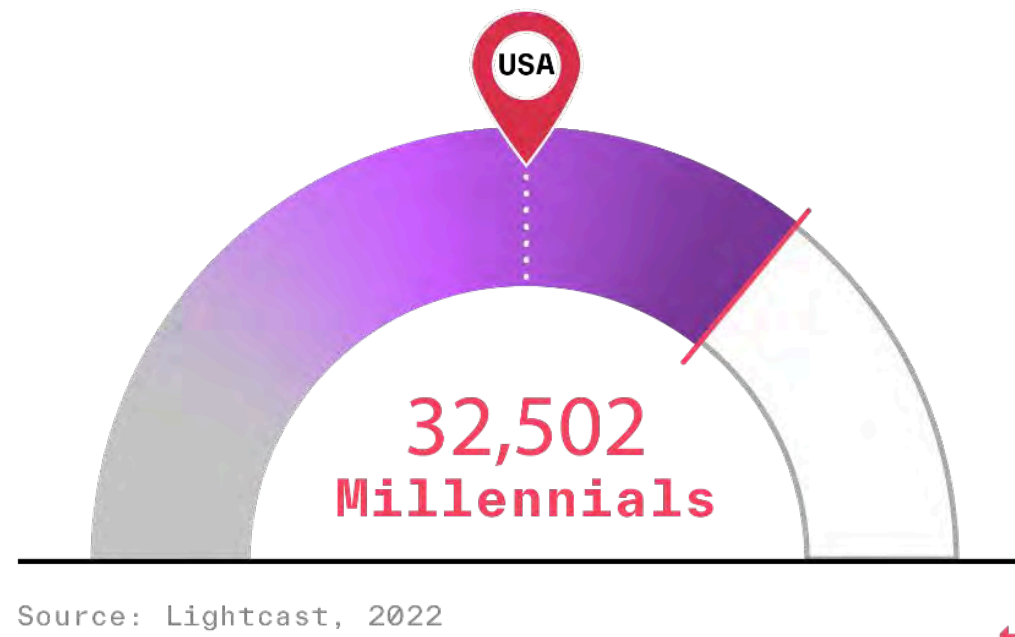
Keep the Data on Solid Ground

Stick to solid-colored, 2-dimensional elements as much as possible.



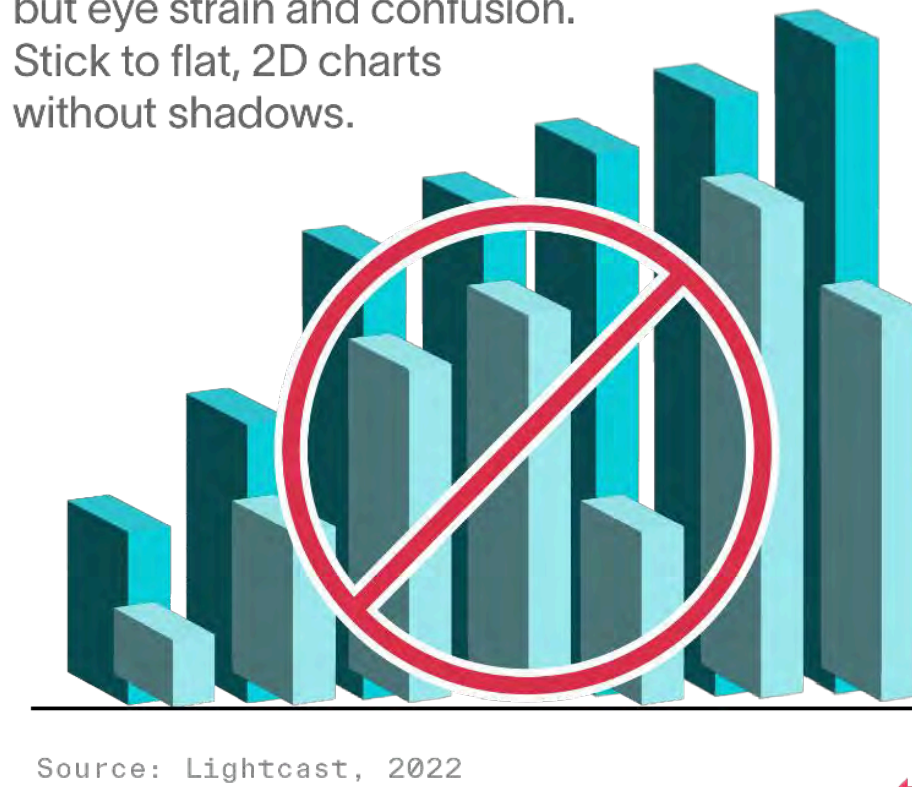
Gradients Should Illuminate the Data

Never use gradients just to be "fun." Gradients imply some kind of gradual alteration in concentration, trajectory, or intensity, as in this example.



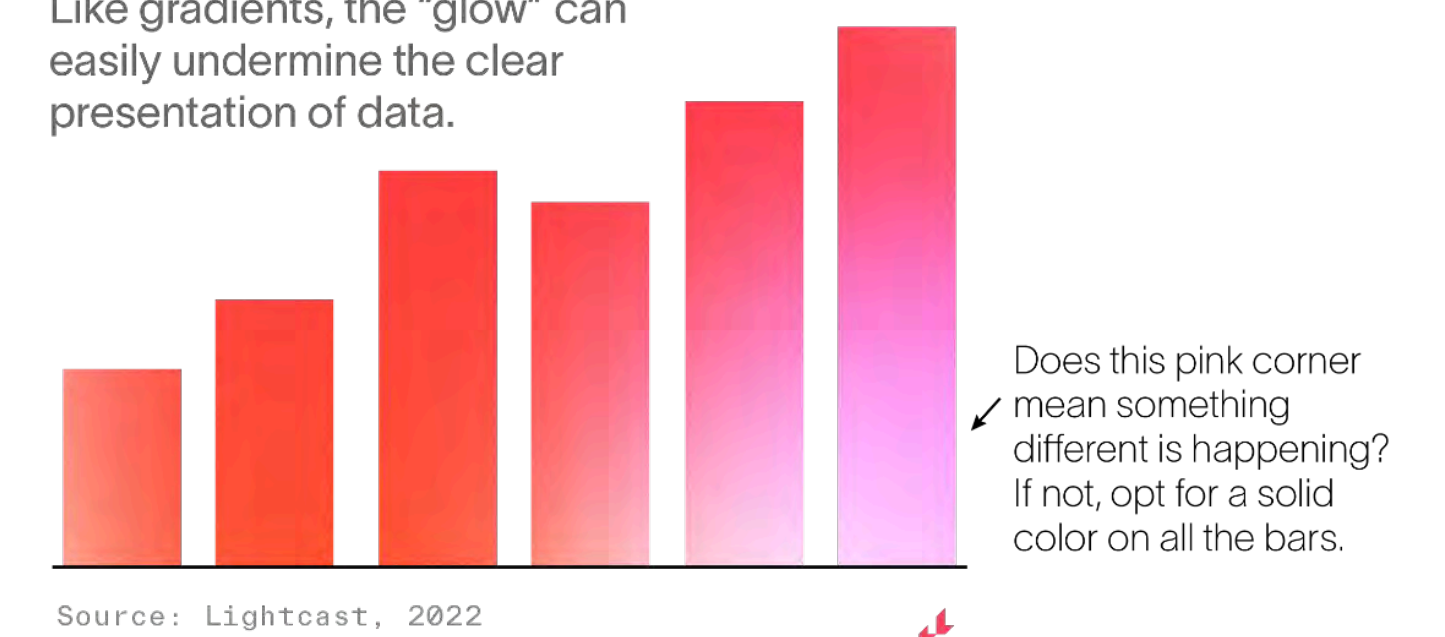
3D is 2 Bad

Never, ever, under pain of banishment, use 3D elements. They distort the data and add nothing but eye strain and confusion. Stick to flat, 2D charts without shadows.



The "Glow" Might Need to Go

The Lightcast "glow" is great next to a chart, but unless your chart is extremely simple, avoid using it as part of your data visualization. Like gradients, the "glow" can easily undermine the clear presentation of data.



DON'T: SHOW TOO MUCH DATA AT ONCE

- More than six lines and colors starts to create tangled confusion and readability issues.
- If you need more than six lines, it's better to break up the data into separate charts.
- Instead of a complex color key, direct label your lines or bars whenever possible.

DON'T: USE DASHED OR DOTTED LINES IN PLACE OF A SECONDARY COLOR

- Dashed or dotted lines imply uncertainty or future projections, so save them for when showing data that has not yet been confirmed.

DON'T: USE RED FOR DATA BARS, LINES, ETC.

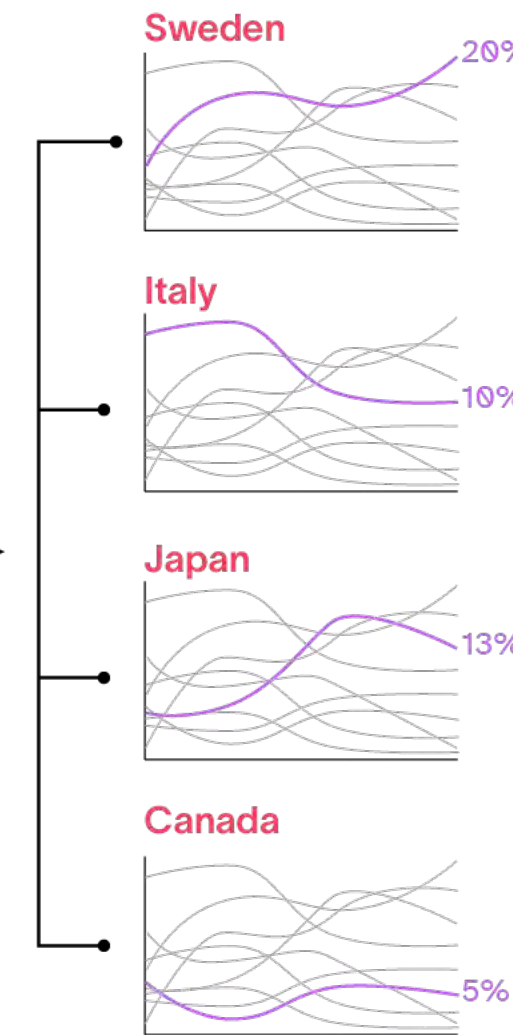
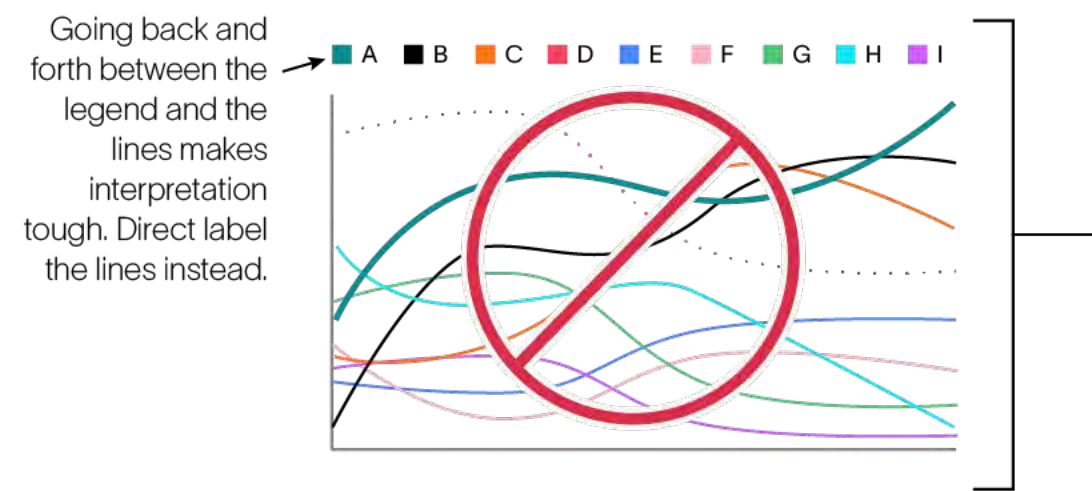
- Avoid red lines, bars, segments, etc., since red can imply decline, warning, or alert. "In the red," "seeing red," and "red alert" are commonly understood connotations. **Save red for titles, labels, and callouts.**

DON'T: USE OUTLINES AS A SECONDARY COLOR

- Outlines imply that something is missing.
- Outlines can also be misread as two thinner lines, which may confuse people.

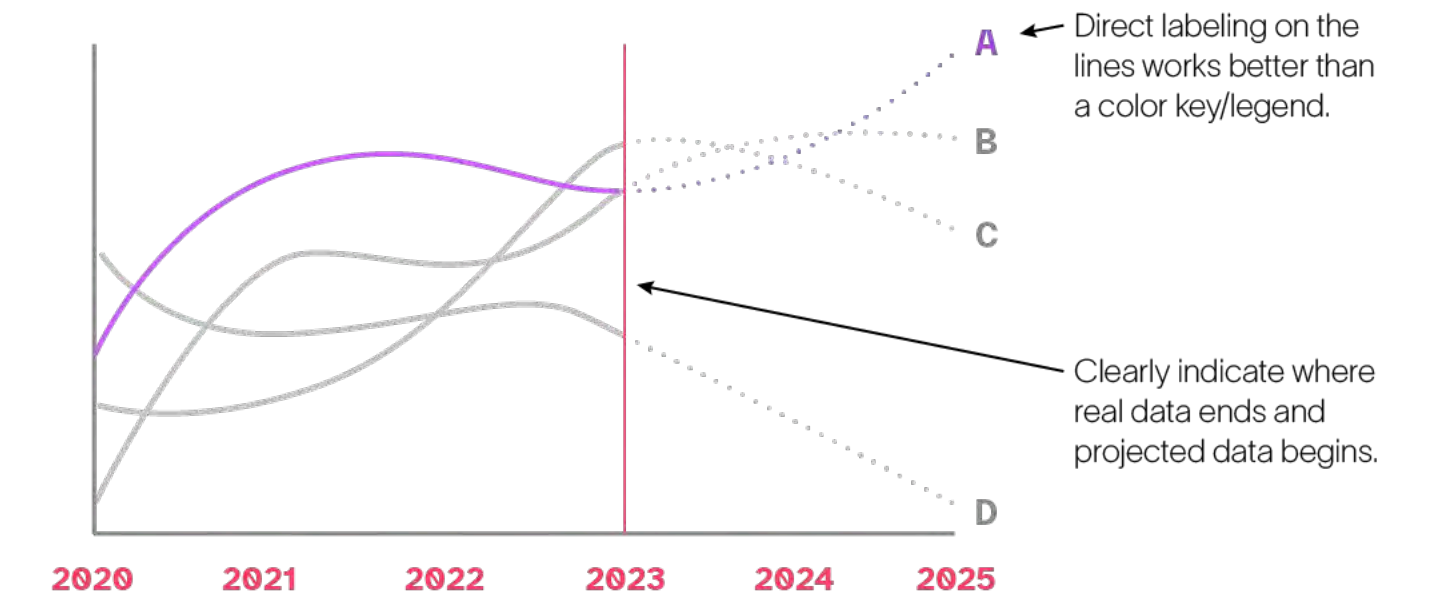
Untangle the Spaghetti

If you need more than six colors or lines, split up the data into more than one chart or gray out the less relevant lines. Too many lines and colors is confusing and not color-blindness friendly.



Dots & Dashes

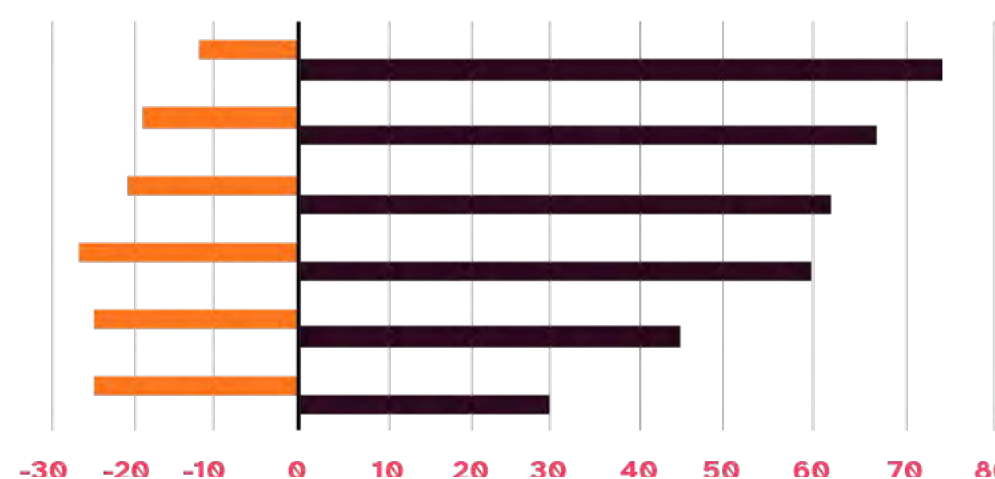
Avoid dashed and dotted lines—EXCEPT for future projections/uncertain numbers that are clearly marked as such. Otherwise, just use varied colors (but no more than ~six).



Red Alert

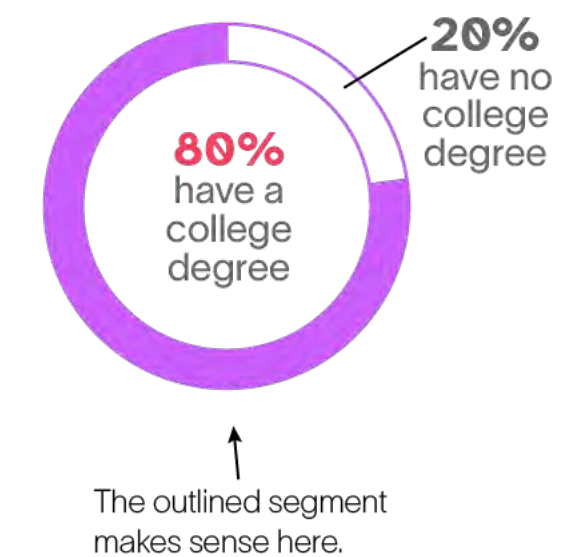
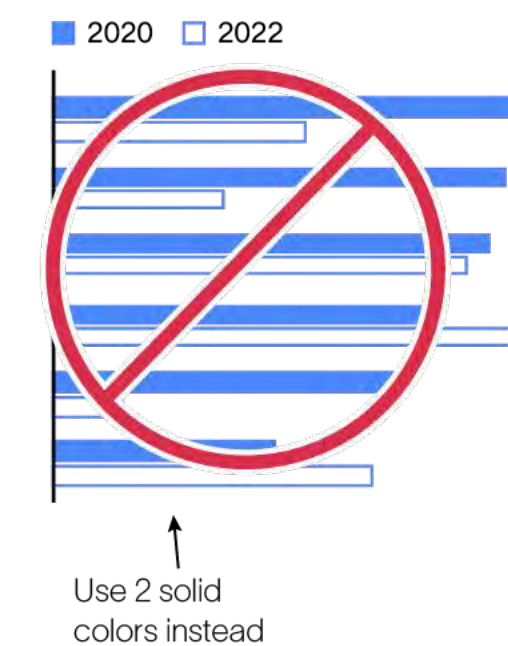
Avoid red as a color for data bars, lines, etc. Red often connotes alert, negative numbers, decline ("in the red") or danger, so use it for labels only.

Red *does* work well for accents, callouts, and labels, but if you simply need to add an additional color, avoid red. Try Fire (orange) instead.



Outlines

Avoid outlined elements unless something is present (solid) and missing (outlined).



DON'T: SHADE THE AREA UNDER A LINE CHART, BUT DO: SHADE THE AREA UNDER A DENSITY PLOT

- A line chart shows discrete points of data in relationship to one another over time, so people focus on the angle of the line—rising or falling.
- Filling in the area underneath the line (making an area chart) adds no additional information and can create confusion by indicating volume. This is especially bad if you shift the Y axis to something other than zero.
- Shading a **density plot** like the one below, however, is good. It may look like an area plot, but it's actually showing distributions of something rather than change over time. That's because the volume under the line actually matters. When showing the total distribution of something (the percent of people making a certain salary, for example), a shaded plot actually makes sense. The axis of density plot, just like a column or bar chart, should **always start at zero**.

An Annual Wage of \$82K to \$111K Adds the Most Workers

Beyond \$120,000, few additional workers will be added for this occupation.

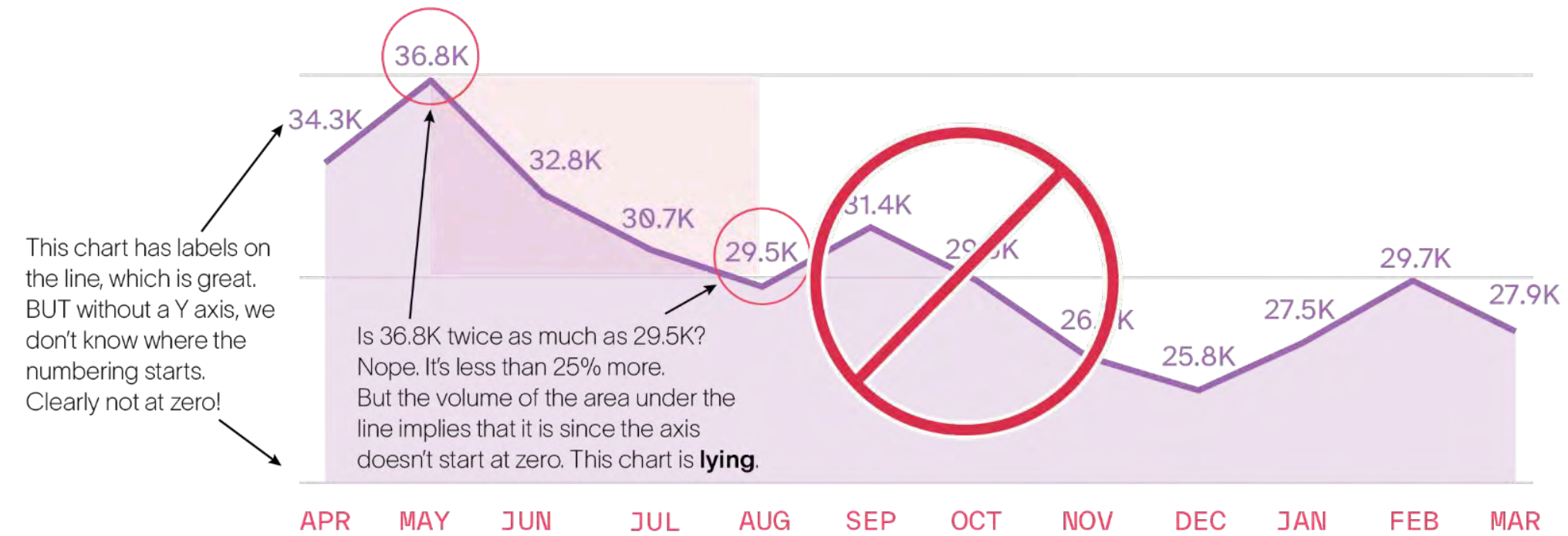


Use a Simple Line Chart

To show change over time, use a simple line chart. Adding shading to create an area chart instead of a simple line does not add any information. Instead, it creates a perception of total volume, which is misleading, as in the example below.

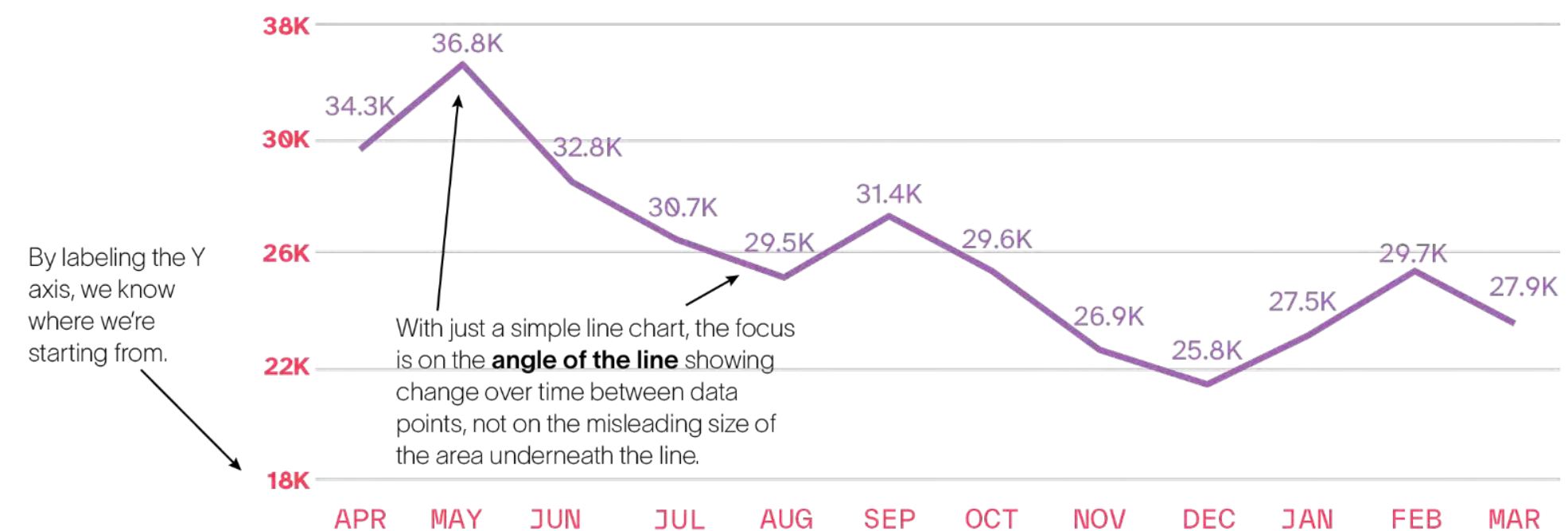
What Does Employer Hiring Demand Look Like?

Unique job postings for this occupation have fallen over the last 12 months.



What Does Employer Hiring Demand Look Like?

Unique job postings for this occupation have fallen over the last 12 months.



Remove the shading and label the Y axis for a more truthful chart.

Writing & Citation Guide

[Writing Guide](#)

[Citation Guide](#)

Writing Guide

This guide sets out general rules for style and consistency in copy created by Lightcast and intended for external audiences, such as marketing materials, reports, or presentations.

By default, and unless otherwise noted in these guidelines, Lightcast uses the Chicago Manual for style and format guidelines, and the Merriam-Webster dictionary for spelling.

As a global company, Lightcast operates in many countries where UK spelling and style is the standard. In these countries, use the style guides provided by The Economist or the UK government. In either case, be consistent: use American English or UK English, but don't mix the two.

Style and punctuation exist to provide clarity and consistency, but obviously what you write is much more important than how you punctuate it. When writing or presenting, simplicity is your friend. The classic writing guide that embodies this principle is Strunk and White's Elements of Style.



Writing Style Guide: Referring to Lightcast

When describing something identified with Lightcast, use our name as an adjective (e.g., "The Lightcast tool Skillabi.")

Avoid "Lightcast's." This promotes a cleaner overall feel and avoids the unpleasant hissing sound when spoken.

Correct:

- ✓ "the Lightcast approach"
- ✓ "The Rising Storm report from Lightcast"

Incorrect:

- × "Lightcast's approach"
- × To accomplish Lightcast's goals

Lightcast employees are "Lightcasters"

- ✓ Individuals are *part of* Lightcast
- × "We are Lightcast" is incorrect. Instead, "We are Lightcasters," or "We are part of Lightcast."

"Public sector" is preferred over "government" or "community" when referring to the market segment.



Abbreviations

Keep abbreviations clean with no periods: US, UK, DC, PhD (not U.S., U.K., D.C., Ph.D.)

Times are an exception to the rule: a.m. and p.m. take periods and are lowercase.

See also: Time, Date, and Place

Academic Degrees

These are possessive when spelled out (bachelor's degree, master's degree, associate's degree). The exception is the doctoral degree. Do not use periods when abbreviating degrees (BA, JD, PhD are all correct).

See also: Majors

Acronyms

Spell out the name on first reference, then use the acronym on subsequent references if appropriate. You may add the acronym in parentheses after the first reference if it improves clarity, i.e., Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). But this is not required.

Avoid the alphabet soup effect—too many acronyms makes copy hard to read. As long as the context is clear, it's perfectly acceptable to use "the association," "the company," or "the university" on second reference.

Some corporations have adopted their acronym as their official name (IBM, KFC). In these cases always use the acronym. The acronyms for some government agencies have become so famous (or their full names so cumbersome) that they can be used on first reference (FBI, NASA). This won't come up very often, so when in doubt, spell it out.

Do not use periods in acronyms.

AI

Is acceptable on first use. No need to include periods or the full term "artificial intelligence" to explain it.

Ampersand

Generally, the word "and" is preferred to the "&" symbol. However, ampersands may be used in headlines, tables, and in other cases where else space is at a premium. Ampersands should also be used when part of a company's formal name (e.g. Procter & Gamble).

APIs

Not "API's" (plural, not possessive).



Cities, states, provinces, and nations

As a global company, this gets complicated, but we generally follow these rules:

- When you are referring to a country alone or in a list, spell it out (“Lightcast has offices in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, India, and New Zealand.”).
- When you are referring to a state or province alone, spell it out (California rather than CA, New South Wales rather than NSW, Ontario rather than ON).
- When you are referring to cities, follow the Associated Press list of cities that are famous enough to stand alone without a state or country following them (with the exception of Moscow, Russia). For other cities, use the postal abbreviation for states.

Copyright

Our copyright notice includes the © symbol, the current year, and Lightcast, for example, © 2025 Lightcast.

On proprietary material for clients, the copyright should be © 2025 Lightcast – Proprietary and Confidential.

There is no legal necessity to go back and change copyrights on material that predates the rebrand or Emsi Burning Glass merger. All rights automatically pass to the new organization.

“Copyright” and the © symbol refer to published works. A website or research report falls under copyright. “Trademark” and the ™ and ® symbols refer to proprietary and identifying terms, like a logo or company name.

Cybersecurity is one word

Data

is treated as singular (“the data shows,” rather than “the data show”). This is to better match everyday speech. However, in more technical situations, it may be appropriate to treat data as a plural. This is acceptable provided one term is consistent throughout an entire document.

Dates

Vary based on audience (e.g., December 15 in the US but 15 December in the UK). In either case, the numeral stands alone (January 7, not 7th)

Emojis

Are not used in text, because we want to establish Lightcast as a trusted, mature voice.

Emsi Burning Glass

The former name of the company created when Burning Glass Technologies and Emsi merged in June 2021. Lightcast, our current name, should be used in all cases unless it is specifically necessary to refer to the company as it existed from June 2021 to June 2022.

Ethnic and Racial Groups

Uppercase when referring to demographic groups: Black, Hispanic, Latino, Asian, Native American, and so on. Do not hyphenate. The term “white” is lowercase in copy but may be uppercase for consistency in a table.

Black is preferred to African American. Hispanic, Latino, or Latinx are all acceptable, so follow the preference of the source or partner. As a global company, there are many additional demographic categories that may need consideration, so follow local best practices when those situations arise.

Headlines

Headlines are in title case. Online tools like [Title Case Converter](#) can do this for you (make sure you select “Chicago”), or the full guidelines are below:

- Capitalize all major words (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and conjunctions four letters or longer)
- Capitalize all verbs, even short ones: Am, Is, Are, Was, Be
- Lowercase the articles a, and, the
- Lowercase conjunctions that are fewer than four letters (and, but, for, or, nor)
- There is no period at the end of a headline.

Healthcare

is preferred to “health care,” but either is acceptable provided one use is consistent through the entire document.

Internet Terms

Follow the Chicago Manual:

- Email without a hyphen. Normally email addresses should be written as they are used. In cases where attracting spam is a concern, addresses may be spelled out to minimize the problem (e.g., jdoe (at) lightcast (dot) io).
- Use a hyphen when using “e” as a prefix (e-newsletter), unless it’s part of a formal product or company name (eHarmony, eBay).
- The term “internet” is lowercase.
- Programming languages, platforms, and apps are treated as proper names: Java, Python, C++, Unix, Wordpress, Tinder. HTML is acceptable in all references when referring to hypertext markup language.
- The term “website” is one word and is not capitalized.
- URLs: The initial http://www in a URL may be dropped in copy—lightcast.io is sufficient for our website.

Majors (Fields of Study)

Do not capitalize except when they are a proper name. A major in foreign languages or literature would not be capitalized, but a degree in English or French would.

Names

Since the use of names varies around the world, follow local conventions. For example, in East Asia it is common to capitalize the surname, since the given name and surname are not always in Western order.

Numerals and Numbers

Generally, numbers from zero to nine should be written out in copy, while 10 and above should be expressed in numerals, unless used in a percentage.

Do not begin a sentence with a numeral. You should either spell out the numeral ("Seventy-six" rather than "76") or rewrite the sentence.

In paragraph text, avoid "K" and "M" for thousand and million, but these are acceptable for charts, data visualization and graphics.

See also: Percentages

Occupations

Capitalize these when used as occupational categories (Retail Sales Assistant, Construction Supervisor, Mechanical Drafter) but do not use them as formal titles before a name. For example: "Demand for Software Developers is up 4% year over year."

Occupational groups are also capitalized (Office and Administrative Support, Business and Financial Operations). This follows the federal government's style on Standard Occupational Categories (SOCs).

Our proprietary Lightcast Occupation Taxonomy categories (LOT) should also be capitalized for consistency.

Percentages

Should always be expressed in numerals. The % sign is acceptable in all references when used with a specific number (8%). In other cases, spell out the word percent.

Phone Numbers

We use parentheses and spaces to separate numbers and include the international calling code. So for example:

+1 (617) 227 4800

+44 (0) 20 3239 3981

Pronouns

He, she, and they are all acceptable as singular pronouns, per the Chicago Manual. "They" and "their" is preferable to "he/she" or "his/her" when you are writing generically rather than about a specific person. ("A user can select their own password" rather than "A user can select his/her own password.")



Punctuation

- Use single (not double) space between sentences.
- Use a single space after a period.
- Use the Oxford (serial) comma in a series. We think it's useful, more intuitive, and easier to read.
- Use the em dash (—) within prose, without spaces.
- Use the en dash (–) to show time spans, year spans, etc., without a space on either side.
- Use a hyphen with a space on either side to attribute a block quote:
 - “Our mission is to unlock new possibilities in the labor market.”
- Timothy van den Broek , CEO, Lightcast

Resume

No accents over the vowels.

Skills

Not capitalized individually (“Many marketing roles now require data analytics;”). However, Skill Categories and Subcategories are capitalized (the Data Analytics skill category).

Lightcast uses the terms “category” and “subcategory” for skills groups; do not use “skill cluster” as formerly used in the legacy Burning Glass taxonomy.

Capitalize the Lightcast Skills Taxonomy.

Spelling

Refer to the Merriam-Webster dictionary for terms and spellings, especially if determining if a word is hyphenated, two words, or combined.

See also: Cybersecurity, Health care, Help desk

Time, Date, and Place

In external communications, use the time-date-place format: “The session will be at 3 p.m. October 31 at 232 N. Almon St.”

The terms a.m. and p.m. are abbreviated and take periods. When referring to time zones, omit the S or D referring to “standard” or “Daylight” time, e.g. “1 p.m. ET/10 a.m. PT.”

Trademarks

Trademarks need to be used consistently and correctly to maintain the owner’s legal rights. If a partner or client uses trademark symbols such as (™) or ®, we should follow suit in our copy.

“Lightcast” is a registered trademark and best practices would dictate using the ® symbol in first reference to the company in published material (not necessary in subsequent uses). Some legacy Lightcast products also carry a ™ symbol, which should be used when referring to them (e.g. “Labour Insight™”).

See also: Copyright

United Kingdom

Is how Lightcast refers to the country made up of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. UK may also be used as an acronym and where possible should be the preferred adjective (the UK government, the UK economy, etc). Avoid the term “Great Britain” because it excludes Northern Ireland.



Citation Guide

Ensure all references to Lightcast® follow our standard spelling: “Lightcast” (never “Light cast” or “LightCast”). All of the below are acceptable:

- according to Lightcast,
- according to Lightcast, a labor market analytics company,
- according to Lightcast Senior Economist John Smith,
- Data source: Lightcast

Graphics or citations to data directly pulled from Lightcast products should include the current year, e.g. “Copyright 2025 Lightcast,” or “© 2025 Lightcast.”

For internal or external graphs, portals, or iframes generated using Lightcast data (e.g. presentation decks, data dashboards or graphs, or in-product data displays), citations should read “powered by Lightcast” (or “powered by Lightcast data”) in close proximity to the data displayed. See “Additional Lockups” in the logo section.

In all cases, attribute Lightcast only, and do not attribute the name of the specific product the data is pulled from, such as “Analyst” or “Alumni Pathways.”

In all cases where Lightcast is cited in an electronic format, the citation should hyperlink to lightcast.io.

Always ensure legibility and a clear distinction between external products, other data sources, and Lightcast data.



How do I cite a Lightcast research report?

Use the standard citation guidelines relevant to your publication, such as MLA, APA, or Chicago style. Ensure that the title of the report, the year of the report, and “Lightcast” are clearly identified.

EXAMPLE :

“The Global Skills Marketplace: Using Remote Work to Solve the Talent Crisis.” Lightcast, 2023. lightcast.io/resources/research/global-remote-work-solutions

How do I cite Lightcast in press and media?

When Lightcast data or experts are quoted in text, attribute Lightcast within the context of the paragraph.

EXAMPLES :

- “According to Lightcast, a labor market analytics company, North American employers have increased remote workers from South America by 70% in the last three years.”
- “The latest report provides reason for optimism, according to Lightcast Senior Economist Ron Hetrick.”

For data visualizations, such as charts or graphs, provide a clear citation near the display that includes “Lightcast” and the date, e.g. “Data Source: [Lightcast](#), 2025.”

How do I cite Lightcast data that predates a rebrand/merger?

The two companies Emsi and Burning Glass Technologies merged in 2021, taking the name “Emsi Burning Glass.” In 2022, we rebranded to “Lightcast.”

Lightcast is our preferred citation in all circumstances, regardless of whether the relevant data predates the rebrand or merger.

- For example, if a client uses Analyst to pull data from 2018–2024, the citation should be to Lightcast even though the data includes years before the brand or was collected before the merger of Emsi and Burning Glass Technologies.
- A data series that covers a pre-merger or pre-rebrand period should also cite Lightcast, because the current company is still the one providing the historical data—so an analysis pulled from Analyst covering 2017–19 would be cited as “powered by Lightcast”).

The exceptions would involve data or research published before the rebrand that have not been updated or rebranded. In these cases, use the company name branded on the report (Emsi, Burning Glass Technologies, or Emsi Burning Glass), but include a callback to Lightcast where possible.

For example: “According to Rural’s Rise, a research report from Emsi Burning Glass (now Lightcast), salaries of jobs growing in rural areas are on average 20% higher than all jobs in those areas.”

