A GOOD VISUAL CAN REALLY MAKE A PAPER, OR PRESENTATION COME ALIVE!

BUT WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT USING A VISUAL JUST FOR THE SAKE OF IT. WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A WELL-CHOSEN VISUAL.

GIVING CONTEXT HIGHLIGHTING DIFFERENCES

STARRING
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GUEST STARRING
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THIS COMIC IS PART OF A LARGER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS TO AID AND ENHANCE RESEARCH COMMUNICATION SKILLS. THIS COMIC, & OTHER RESOURCES LIKE IT, ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT: GRADX.MIT.EDU

BROUGHT TO YOU BY MIT Office of Graduate Education
Visuals help the audience see your point more readily, and help you convey something more efficiently than the verbal message alone.

In particular, let's look at one type of visual - the list.
A long flat list of related items can be hard to remember and quite boring. Especially if the presenter goes through each and every item.

I.e. you have to read every item in a list to understand how the items are related to each other.

Can we make the information in a list of related items more efficiently accessible?
iOS Games: Revenue Streams

- Charge for app
- Have a free & a pro version
- Advertising
- In-app purchasing
- Sell something in the real world
- Subscription

Six Revenue Streams for iOS Games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to full version</th>
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Take, for example, an online communication course.

*Gradcommx is the course that was created in tandem with this comic.
SUPPOSE I WANTED TO GIVE CONTEXT BY BUILDING A "COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE" OF ALL THE ONLINE COURSES ON COMMUNICATION CURRENTLY OUT THERE.

INSTEAD OF JUST LISTING THEM-
-CAN I CREATE A LAYOUT THAT HIGHLIGHTS EASILY IDENTIFIABLE RELATIONSHIPS-
- SO THAT THE AUDIENCE READILY SEES WHERE THIS ONLINE COURSE FITS IN AND WHAT SETS IT APART-
-WITH JUST A GLANCE?
I COULD USE A TABLE

A TABLE MIGHT BE CONSIDERED COMMONPLACE, BUT ITS LAYOUT IS FAMILIAR.

- EVERYONE UNDERSTANDS HOW TO PARSE A TABLE.

Each row in the table represents an online course.

Each column represents a feature, property, or benefit.

If designed properly, the audience should readily see where this online course fits in.

-AND-

THE AUDIENCE SHOULD READILY SEE WHERE THIS ONLINE COURSE FITS IN.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Provider</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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*This table was generated using information from MOOC-List.com and is in no way an exhaustive survey of courses comparable to Gradcommx.
I COULD HAVE USED A VENN DIAGRAM BASED ON WHETHER A COURSE IS SELF-PACED OR LIVE.
These aren’t the only layouts. There are many possibilities—depending on what difference I want to highlight.

Whiteboard with instructor voiceover vs. case study of a graduate student.

None vs. textbook vs. comic book.

At the end of the day, I might pick the most discriminating layout—i.e., the one in which this course ends up in a class of its own.

In summary, a well-chosen layout should quickly establish what the landscape is.

And, more importantly—by showing relationships visually, you convey your point.

How your work differs from the rest.

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<table>
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Accessibility - MORE READILY -

AND HIGHLIGHT DIFFERENCES -

Accessibility  
Efficiency

-MORE EFFICIENTLY -

- THAN MERELY USING WORDS -

ALONE.