
DECLUTTERING

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CLUTTER IS THE ENEMY!

- every element on a page adds **cognitive load**
- identify anything that isn't adding value and **remove**
- think of cognitive load as mental effort required to process information (lower is better)
- Tufte refers to the **data to ink ratio** – “the larger the share of a graphic’s ink devoted to data, the better”
- in *Resonate*, Duarte refers to this as “**maximizing the signal-to-noise ratio**” where the signal is the information or the story we want to communicate.

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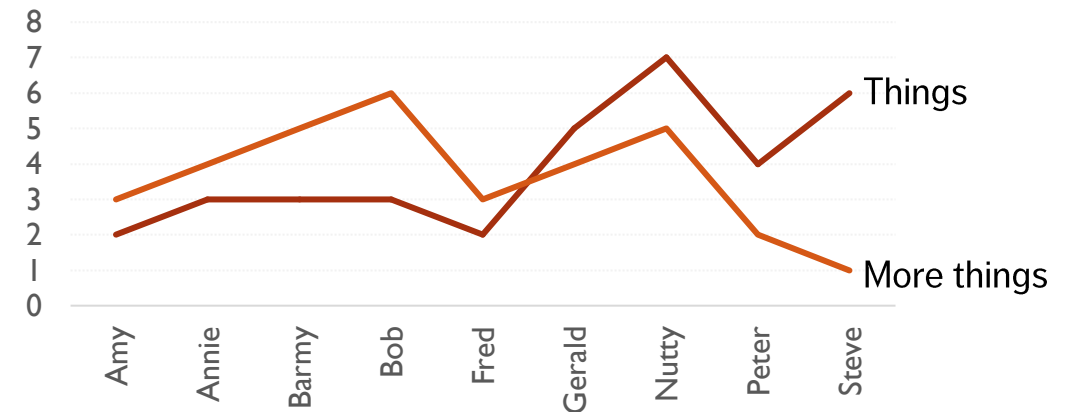
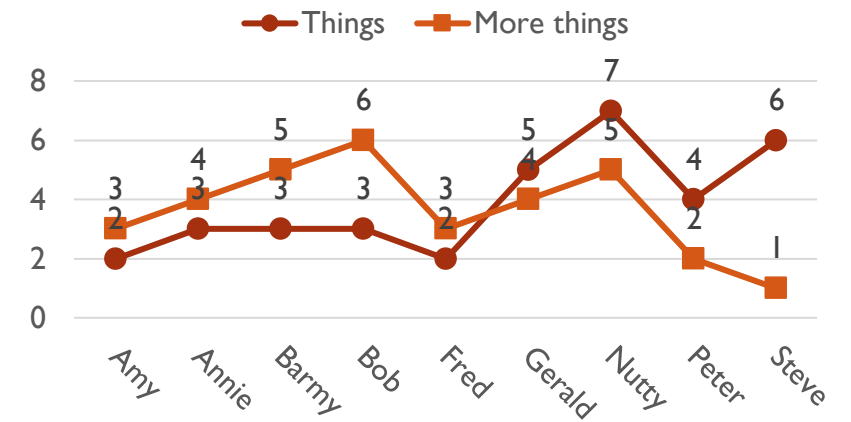
Use the **Gestalt Principles** to organize/highlight data in the chart (is this even a valid chart?)

Align all the elements (graphs, text, lines, titles, etc).

- DON'T rely on eye, use position boxes and values

Charts:

- remove border, gridlines, data markers
- clean up axis labels
- label data directly



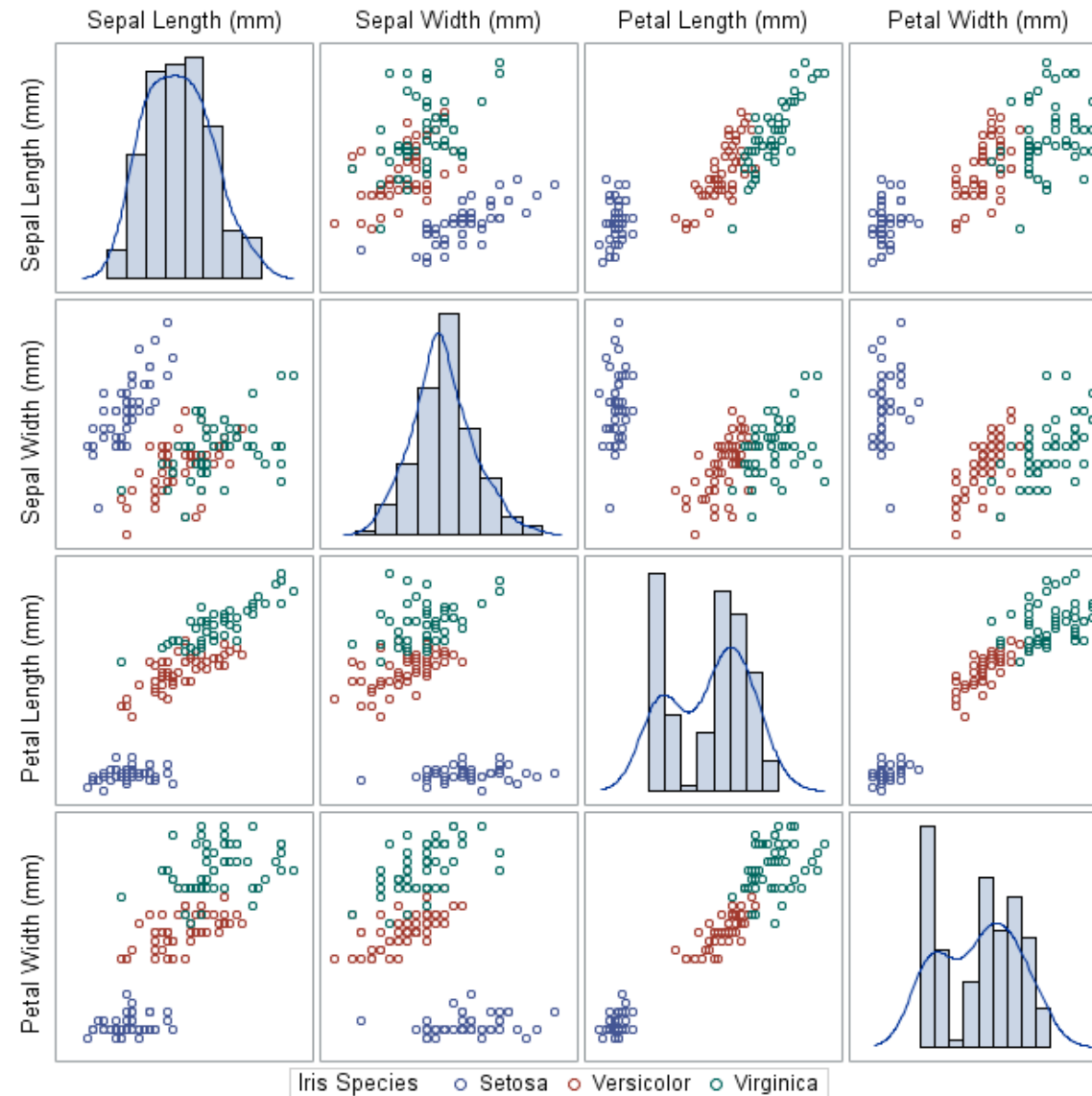
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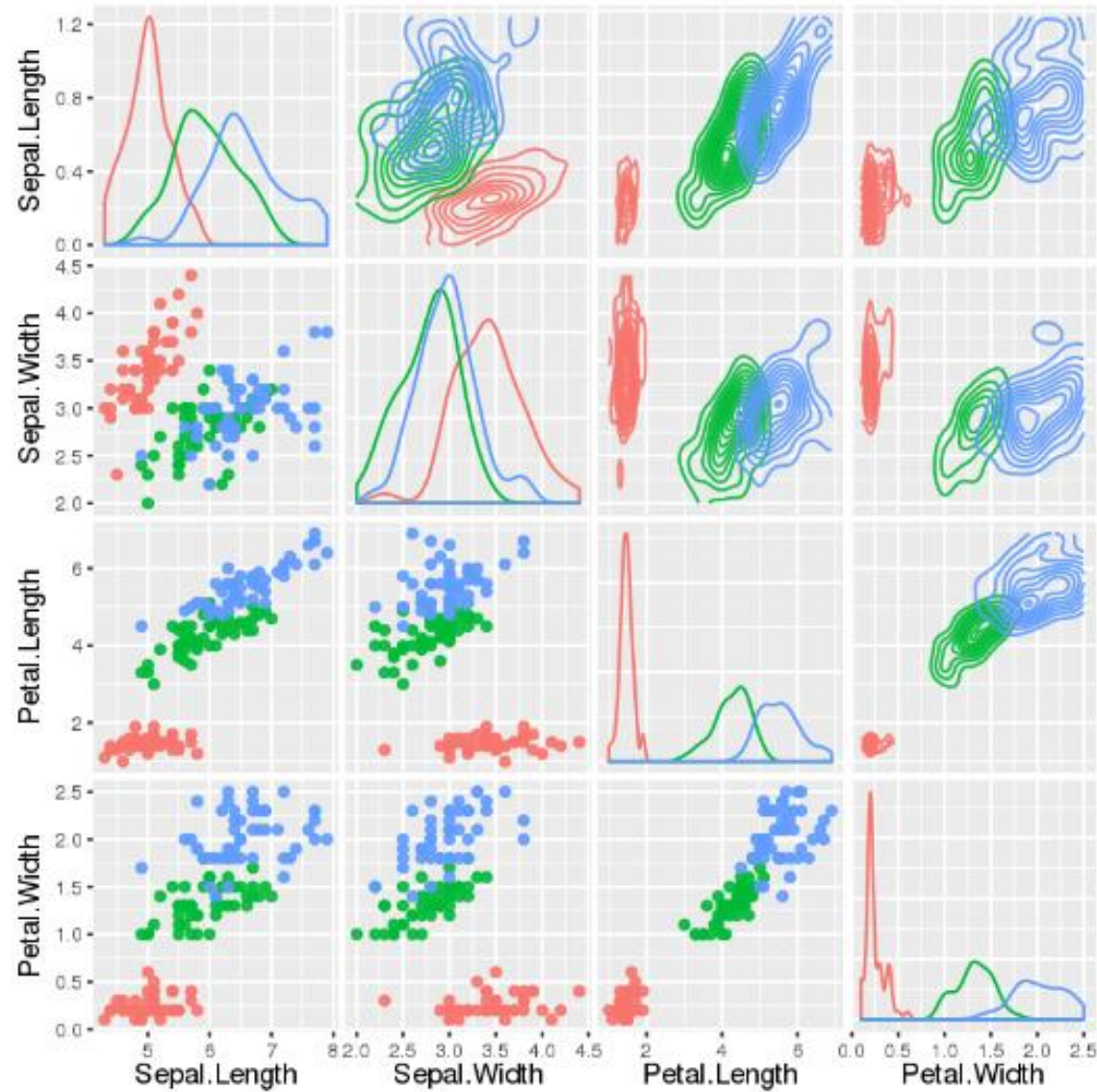
Use **consistent** font, font size, colour and alignment.

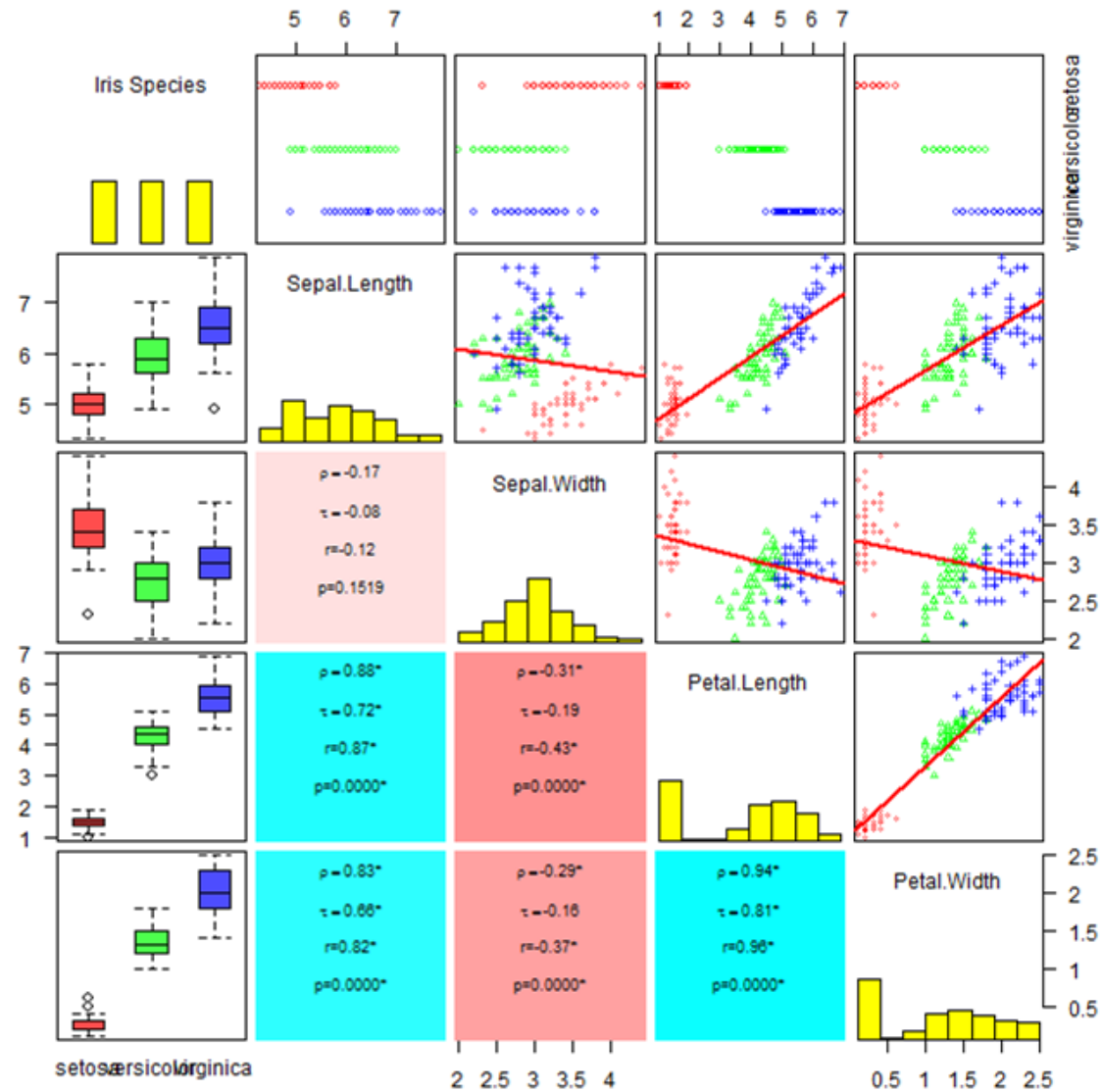
Don't rotate text to anything other than 0 or 90 degrees.

Use **white space**:

- margins should remain free of text and visuals
- don't stretch visuals to edge of page or too close to other visuals
- think of white space as a border



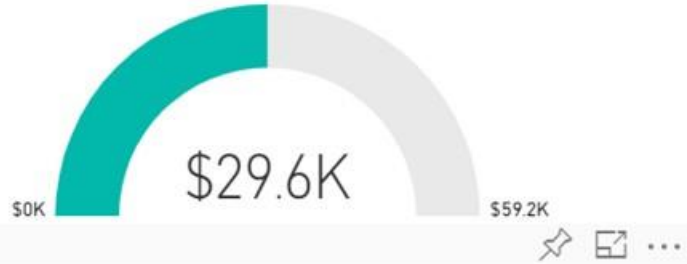




Is this starting to get too cluttered?

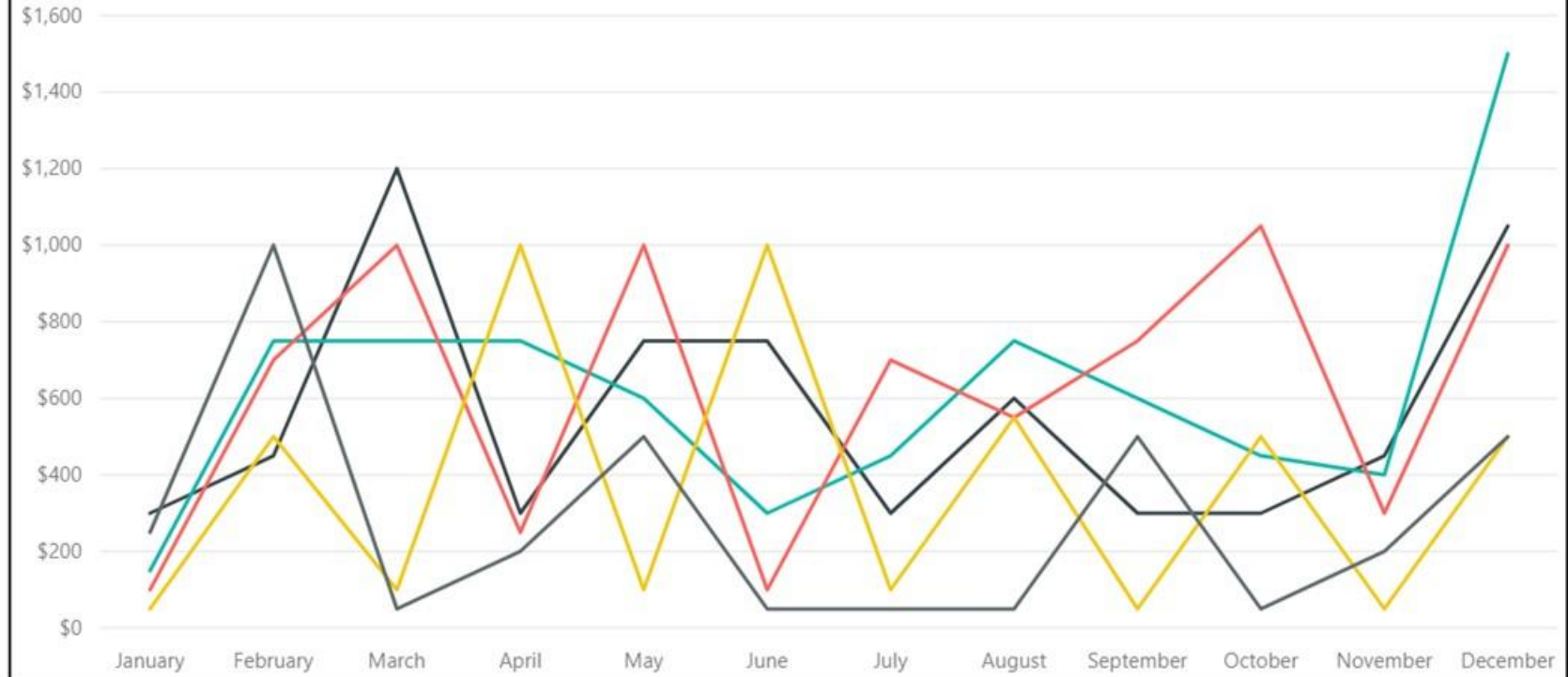
Sales Dashboard

\$ sales



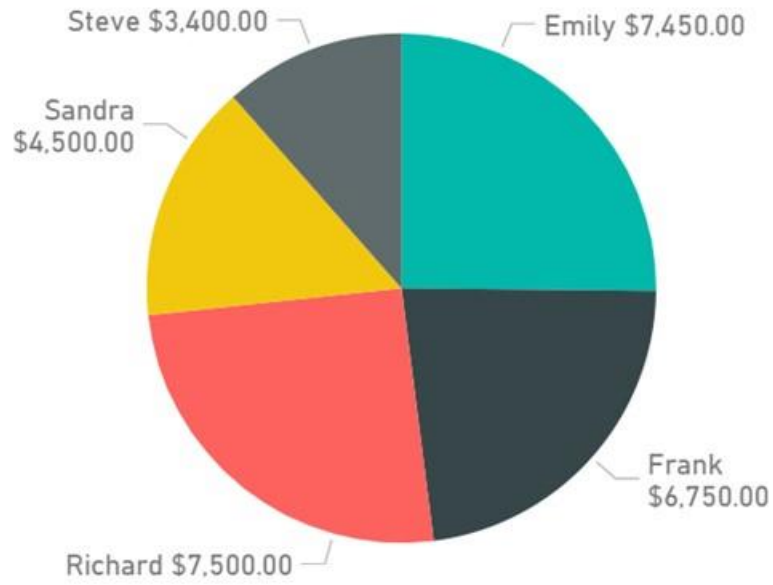
\$ sales by Month and Salesperson

Salesperson ● Emily ● Frank ● Richard ● Sandra ● Steve



\$ sales by Salesperson

Salesperson ● Emily ● Frank ● Richard ● Sandra ● Steve



\$ sales by Product and Salesperson

Product ● Car ● Bike ● Sled

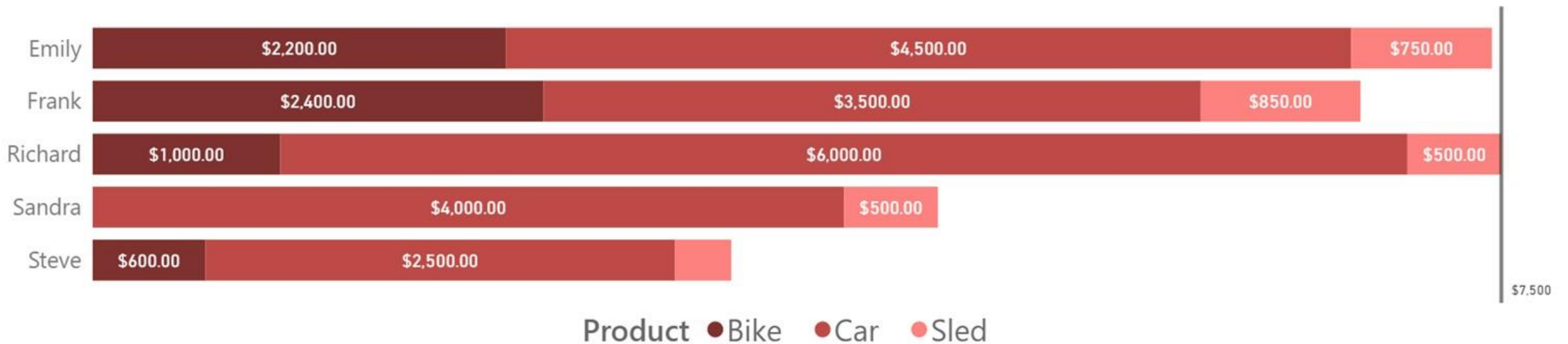


Sales Dashboard

Annual Sales for 2017

Total Sales

\$29.6K



EXERCISE

Select a few charts (either among the examples we have seen so far, or something you have seen at work).

Are they too cluttered?

Does the answer depend on the audience?

Provide some decluttering suggestions.