

# Data Amnesty

*What is the best way to share results from a questionnaire that uses a likert scale?  
How do we help people understand/interpret them?*

Most of you are probably familiar with Likert scales, they ask you to respond to an item using a set scale such as, "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Neutral", "Disagree", "Strongly Disagree". Here is an example of a Likert question from the DIP's very own annual survey.

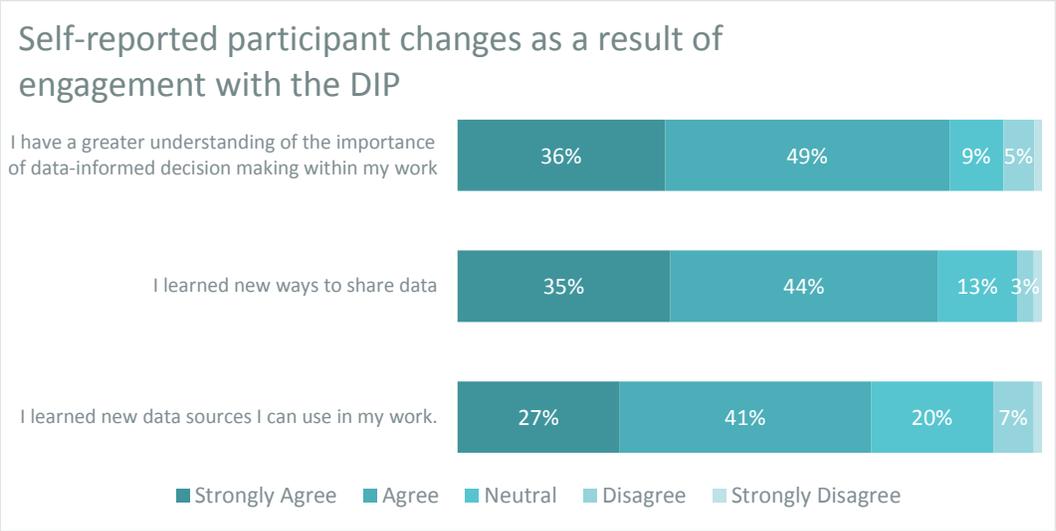
\* 6. Please rate your agreement with each statement below.

### *As a result of my engagement with the Data Innovation Project...*

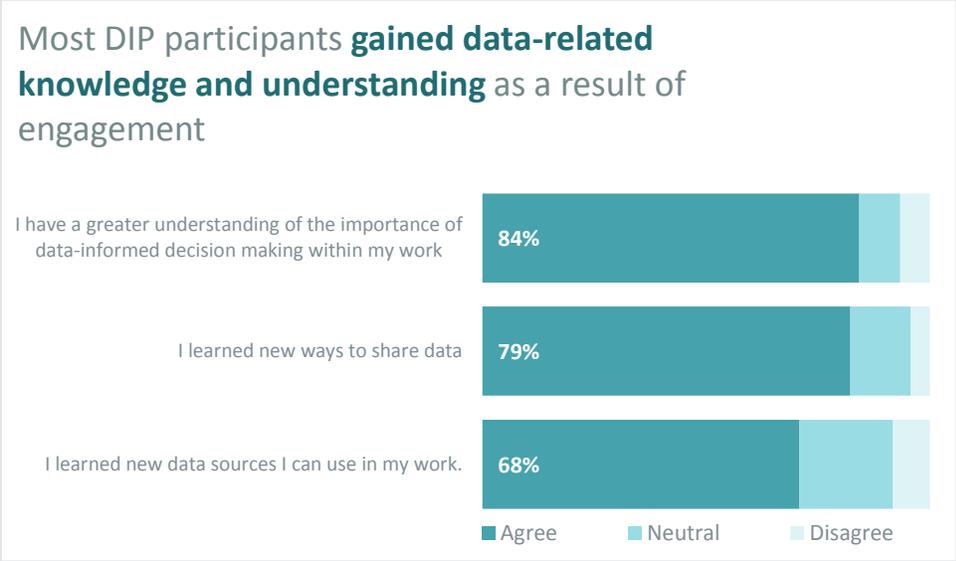
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I have a greater understanding of the importance of data-informed decision-making within my work.	<input type="radio"/>					
I learned new ways to share data.	<input type="radio"/>					
I learned of new data sources I can use in my work.	<input type="radio"/>					

First, let's tackle the visualization piece of our Data Amnesty question. The most common way to visualize Likert scale data is to use a stacked bar chart. Below is a stacked bar chart we made in Excel using this survey question's results. We also did a little tidying up from the MS default for a more visually appealing chart (some tips: add title, remove gridlines, add data labels, change colors to branded color scheme).

For more on how to make a simple stacked bar chart, [check out this video by Ann K. Emery.](#)



Now that we have an appealing stacked bar chart, let's make it more understandable. In our first iteration, neither the title nor the five response categories help the viewer quickly interpret the results. [Stephanie Evergreen](#) recommends aggregating the Likert categories into larger buckets to make the stacked bar chart easier to process. Here it would make sense to roll up all the positive responses into an "Agree" group and to do the same for the negative responses. Following Stephanie's lead, we made this revamped stacked bar chart. We also revised the title and used colored and bolded font accents to convey the high-level finding we want the viewer to take away. Both changes remove clutter and allow for quick interpretation.



*Do you think our final version is effective? **Let us know!***