

# Getting Comfortable with Data

## Playlist | Dabbling in the Data

### WELCOME TO THE *DABBLING IN THE DATA* PLAYLIST!

One of the best ways to use the Dabbling methods is to mix them together, creating a hands-on, interactive experience for your interest holders.

Just like a good playlist of your favorite songs, putting together a mix of *Dabbling* activities can make data more memorable and meaningful. The advanced options offer a chance to take a deeper dive into a particular approach that piques your interest.

The team at Public Profit put together the Getting Comfortable with Data Playlist to give you a jumpstart for your own work. Have fun!

### GETTING COMFORTABLE WITH DATA

For lots of us, the word “data” conjures memories of confusing math classes in school and gotcha moments in the workplace... bad vibes all around.

This playlist is intended to help teams feel more comfortable with data, and to brush up on the skills they already have when it comes to analyzing information.

The mood for the activities in this playlist should be fun, lighthearted, and curious. If your organization talks about a growth mindset, this is a great time to mention it. We can all learn new things!

Plan about 30-90 minutes for this sequence, depending on how many of the activities you do, the group size (larger groups = more time), and their familiarity with the concepts. Detailed instructions for each activity are in *Dabbling in the Data*.



## HEIGHT LINEUP



Use this activity to get your team comfortable with concepts like graphing continuous data, number lines, and line graphs.

In Height Lineup, members of the group stand in order of their height, from shortest to tallest. The facilitator then shows an example on a whiteboard or poster that shows the number line on the x-axis, and the height on the y-axis.

Dig deeper by turning the Height Lineup into a line graph with continuous data. (Just for fun: bring some yarn and have the team make their own line graph on top of their heads!)

# HUMAN HISTOGRAM



Use this activity to refresh folks' understanding of graphing categorical data and bar charts.

In Human Histogram, group members stand in lines based on a shared characteristics, like their hair color (e.g. brown, blonde, red, black), role on the team, or other factor. The facilitator then shows an example on a whiteboard or poster that shows a bar chart, with the categories on the x-axis and counts on the y-axis.

# HIGH-LOW



Use this activity to explain concepts like average, number line, and cluster charts.

In High-Low, group members chart different data points based on whether they are higher or lower than the group average. The facilitator usually pre-sets the activity by calculating the average in advance and putting data points on post-its. The group then “reveals” the data by building the chart together.

# SORT IT OUT



Use this activity to explain data analysis and categorization.

In Sort it Out, group members sort pieces of candy based on their characteristics, such as size, color, or squishy-ness. They reflect on the variety of ways that the candy can be sorted, and how that can apply to analyzing data.

# Advanced option: TREND TIMELINE



Use this activity to explain change over time and mixed methods.

In Trend Timeline, the group starts with a timeline of a key metric, like program attendance. Each member then contributes information about the factors that affected the metric, such as changes in program activities, staffing, weather, etc. This is one example of a mixed-methods approach, using both quantitative and qualitative data to understand an observed trend.