# Factory floor Reporting constructively



**Handout**

**Using Data Constructively**

**Data backs up your story and gives it credibility. But just presenting numbers and statistics isn’t enough. Present data in a way that leads to understanding and doesn’t just overwhelm.**

**Zoom into key data points and zoom out to provide context:**

* Flat/absolute numbers are difficult to comprehend.
* Facts put in relation to something else make more sense (e.g., “…that is equal to the size of 10 football pitches.”).
* The farther an issue is from the audience’s everyday life, the less likely it means something to them – “My reality is not your reality.”
* Do not take the reader’s knowledge for granted.
* The reporter helps create the public’s worldview.

**Steps to take:**

* Put the data in context and offer perspective – why is this figure important? What does it mean?
* It’s better to offer perspective early in the report instead of waiting until the end.
* Environment and circumstances are always relevant.
* As percentages and numbers should be in relation to something else, events should be put in context.
* Describe developments, trends, breakthroughs and collapses.

*(Source: Minna Skau, editor at the Danish news agency Ritzau)*

*Graph by ICONCRAFT from NounProject.com*