Observation Assessment #2

Topic: Aesthetically Pleasing Emails

One of the most surprising things that I've learned over the past couple of months while working with my mentor on this medical mission trip is the important of making things look good. The difference that making content look aesthetically pleasing and organized makes on the audience is much greater than I could've ever imagined. This concept sounds pretty self-explanatory and common sense, but what I thought was an organized way of presenting information a couple months ago is nothing compared to how Ellie has shown me she can communicate.

For example, part of my job as project manager is to send out weekly updates to the whole team so that everyone is on the same page and up-to-date on the decisions being made constantly. Through these emails, I also send out details about what people should expect to occur in the future and what they should be doing in preparation for the trip. For the first "update email" I sent, I listed everything from hotel and flight arrangements and action items for the t-shirt fundraiser that had been developed/decided in the few weeks before. I sent the email in list format - all the same font - thinking that the bullets were enough organization for the email. I am not quite used to sending big emails in the corporate setting, despite my summer internship, so I was lacking a true understanding of a quality email. For the second "update email", I sent it to Ellie and Aldo to check the information before I sent it out. Ellie edited the email and sent it back to me.

Now it might seem like I am overreacting about a singular email but the effect that a sophisticated, organized, and aesthetically pleasing had completely overshadowed whatever I thought my email would get accomplished. Different colored fonts for different sections, specified "action required" items, and clear instructions for the recipient while also maintaining a list/bullet point easy-to-follow format completely blew my mind. I already knew the content in the email - because I wrote it originally - but I was more compelled to follow along and actually read the email that Ellie wrote rather than my original draft.

I have seen this skill in email-constructing at other points in time but I've never had the chance to see quite a clear comparison between my basic email and Ellie's sophisticated one. The use of tabs, charts, colors, fonts, and other tools are nice to use in Word and Excel but applying them to the realm of mass communication and project planning ensures that the recipients of the information I'm sending out are able to follow along and actually do what I am asking of them. When I sent Ellie's version, I had a large response rate and an increase in the interactions with the t-shirt fundraiser, meaning that the very busy physicians I was contacting actually found the time to sit down and follow my instructions - this is a major feat for me! While this assessment about a pretty email is superficial at first glance, this realization of the importance of skills that many just brush off as "tedious" and "girly" are extremely important in the communication of information in a setting where one is not always sure the other is receiving the information as needed.