Excel Model Design Guidelines
https://dwuconsulting.com
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1. Purposes
   a. User-friendly
   b. Accuracy
   c. Transparency
2. User-friendly – benefits ourselves
   a. Add Table of Content tabs and add separate tabs for each topic
   b. Separate input from output
   c. Use color coding macro for easy audit
   d. Avoid linking to two cells on other tabs
   e. Add comment whenever necessary
   f. Link to first hand source
3. Accuracy – faithfully reflect assumptions
   a. Three types of errors
      i. Internal consistency (detectable by outsiders)
      ii. Compliance with external rules (detectable by knowledgeable outsiders)
      iii. Reflecting proper assumptions (not easily detectable by anyone)
   b. Internal consistency & compliance with external rules
      i. Use consistent formula for all columns, and highlight any exception
      ii. Set up QC tab as a quality check, linking to each tab
      iii. Never use circular reference
      iv. Search for "#REF!", "N/A" and "ERROR" in value
   c. Reflecting proper assumptions
      i. Use audited financial statement or historical data to crosscheck
      ii. Develop key assumption file
      iii. Use scenario indicator to prevent delivering wrong set of files
4. Transparency – for all users to easily understand
   a. Do not link to external files
   b. Use simple formula for calculation (such as sum, if, sumif, index/match, sumproduct, offset, etc.), and use complicated formula when necessary (such as functionality tabs)
   c. Show intermediate steps for logical flow
   d. Do not hide assumptions; list assumption on Assmpt tab
   e. Do not use range name
5. Others
   a. Remove unnecessary details
   b. Provide flexibility to extend the model
   c. Provide flexibility to design scenario analysis