One Month of Activity, according to my FitBit

Shown above is the number of steps taken during each day according to the logs of my FitBit band. While there are other measures the device collects (including floors climbed, minutes of light, moderate, and heavy activity), the count of steps is a good shorthand for my exercise level. December of 2013 was chosen as a representative month because it shows a lot of variables: work days vs non-work days, being at home and being at my girlfriend’s parents house, and days of the week. The last three days are excluded from the data set because I had a case of the winter flu and thus was mostly in bed. By aggregating and disaggregating the data in a few ways, I can show what types of environments are conducive to increasing my activity level and which types are not. From this data I can adjust my exercise program accordingly.

While this seems like a strange disaggregation, I’m using it as a stand-in for “external influences.” This year, we spent the Christmas holiday in Pittsburgh, where my girlfriend’s parents live. It was only the second time I had met them, and the desire to put on a good appearance was quite high. Her family are avid walkers—thus every time someone suggested we go for a walk, I felt internal pressure to agree. Although it was a holiday, it was reasonably temperate outdoors. Furthermore, walking tours of the attractions of Pittsburgh were planned as well. The difference could have been quite higher; on Christmas Eve and Christmas, we barely left the house. Throwing those two sedentary days out, the average of the days where I am trying to make the best appearance would be over 10,500.

If it’s December, then the NFL is still on. Thus, I’m fairly clear why activity levels are so low on Sundays. What I am surprised to see is the second highest day is Monday. Saturdays being the highest day is probably skewed by having two days in Pittsburgh—the remaining data points are among the lowest (4,512) and the highest (12,875). The bad news is that my goal is 10,000, and nothing in my weekly life currently is meeting that except for some anomalous Saturdays.

This doesn’t “feel” right - let’s throw out the holidays to account for the disruption they represent to the daily routine:

Patrick Horner - Contexts of Viz Assignment 4