

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY®

**Academic Success Center**

**Designing Effective Visual Tools**

# Writing & Communication Consultations



- Writing and communication consultations are **free** and include both virtual and in-person appointment options.
- Consultations use a peer mentoring model and can cover all stages of the composition process and assist with course assignments like papers, speeches, and more, as well as professional documents.
- For the most up-to-date information, please visit our website:  
<https://www.asc.dso.iastate.edu/writingsuccess>

# Agenda

- Agenda
  - Visual rhetoric
  - Design principles
  - Application practice with various examples

\*Check out additional resources through our website:

<https://www.asc.dso.iastate.edu/visual-and-electronic-resources>

# Visual Rhetoric



- Visual rhetoric focuses on what we see to help us communicate meaning (inform, persuade, etc.).
  - Can refer to images or texts and how they are arranged or designed.
  - Examples: presentations, research posters, websites, portfolios, art, infographics
  - **How have you used visual rhetoric?**

# Basic Design Principles

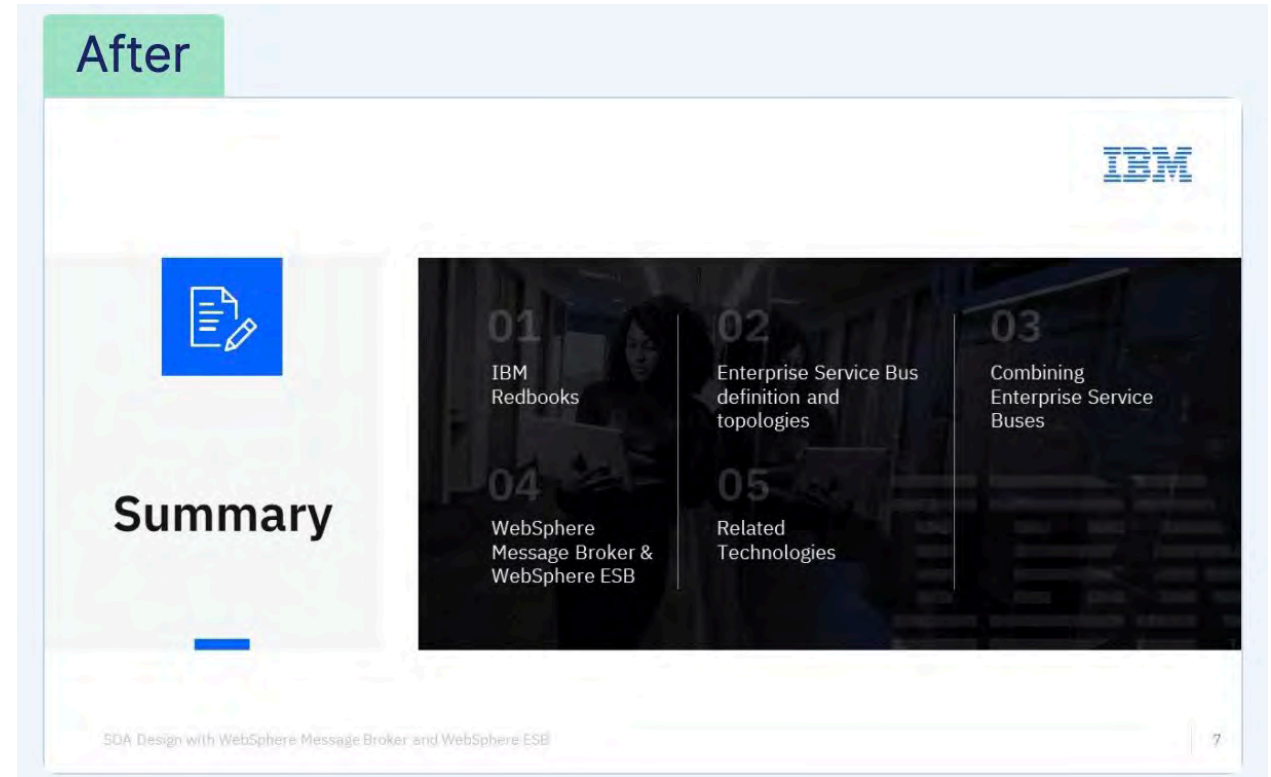


1. Contrast
2. Repetition
3. Alignment
4. Proximity

(Williams, 2008)

# Contrast

- Contrast = elements of a text are VERY DIFFERENT rather than the same or similar
- High or low contrast allows the communicator to **emphasize or deemphasize, respectively, certain elements of a design.**



Albinagorta, C. (2020, June 18). *Professional PowerPoint examples to upgrade your designs.* <https://24slides.com/presentbetter/professional-powerpoint-design-examples/>

# Repetition

- Repetition = the use of the same element multiple times
- Repeating elements of a visual design can emphasize the relationship between elements that are repeated



(2018, Oct. 15). Say it again: The power of repetition in print. *Twisted Media*.  
<https://twistedmedia.com/say-it-again-the-power-of-repetition-in-print/>

# Alignment

- Alignment = how elements on a page are arranged, whether horizontally or vertically
- Effective use of alignment can help control how a reader moves through the piece of communication.
- Alignment creates visual order.



Albinagorta, C. (2020, June 18). *Professional PowerPoint examples to upgrade your designs.* <https://24slides.com/presentbetter/professional-powerpoint-design-examples/>



# Proximity

- Proximity = distance between elements of a text
- Having items close together indicates a close relationship.
- Having items far away communicates that those items are not closely related.



# Additional Visual Elements



- Universal Design
- Font style and size
- Background
- White space (margins, spacing, etc.)

# Universal Design



- The Center for Universal Design defines UD as "the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design" (as cited in Burgstahler, 2021).
- This means accessibility benefits everyone through increased clarity and inclusion.
- Example: closed captioning for videos, minimum font size of 24 on presentation slides, and dyslexia friendly sans serif fonts

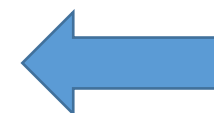
# Text Size



Which of these sizes is easiest to read?

Which of these sizes is easiest to read?

Which of these sizes is easiest to read?



**24 font**

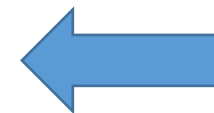
Which of these sizes is easiest to read?

Which of these sizes is easiest to read?

Which of these sizes is easiest to read?

Which of these sizes is easiest to read?

Which of these sizes is easiest to read?



**12 font**

# Text and Font



- Some fonts are difficult to read.
- Neutral fonts and avoiding all caps makes it easier to read.
- Best practice for slides is 6x6 rule: fewer than six bullet points with fewer than six words each

# Background



- Brightly-colored backgrounds can take attention away from the speaker.

# Background

HELPING  
CYCLONES  
SUCCEED

- Darker backgrounds can be more relaxing.

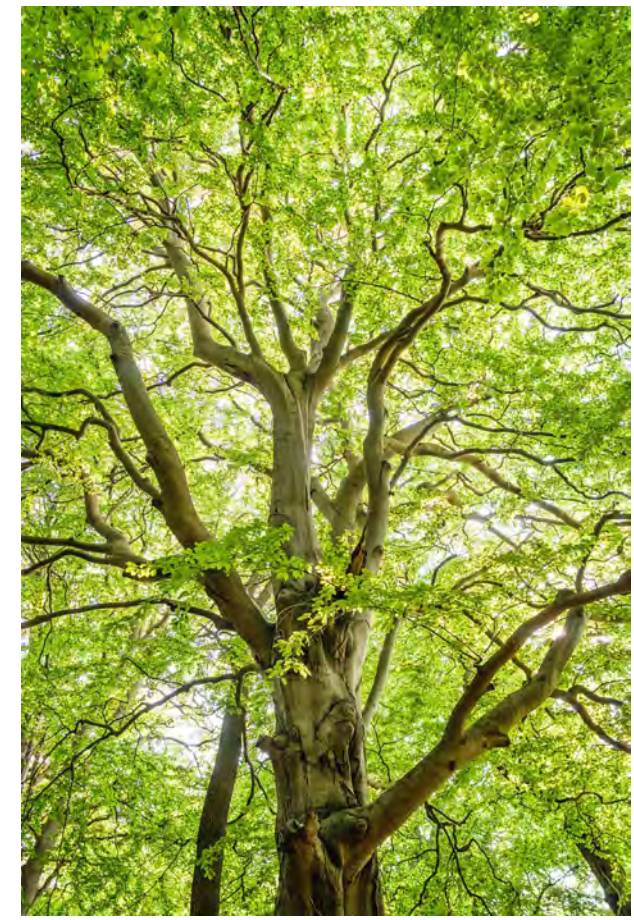
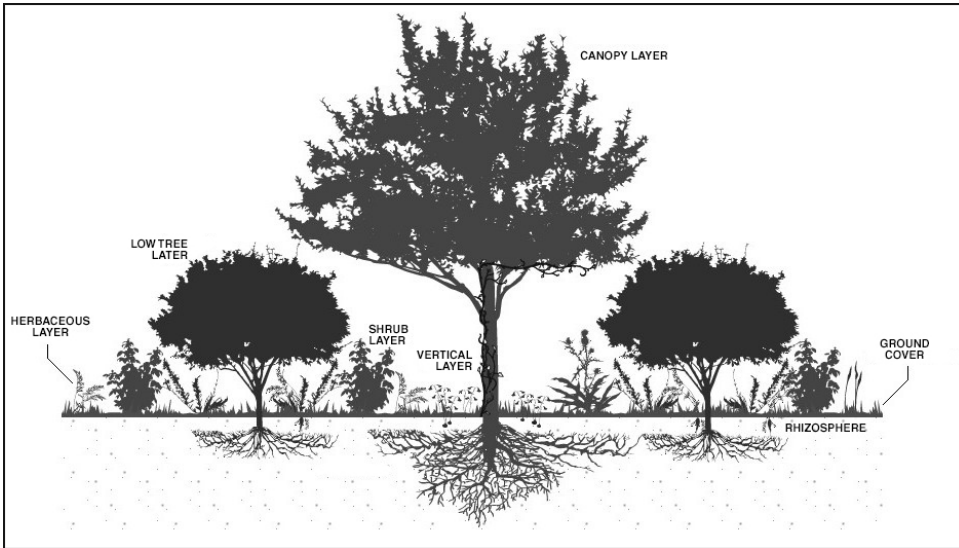
# White Space



- White space allows the eye to take in a message more easily.
- Using white space effectively can help your audience find the focal point of each slide.
- When possible, consider adding blank slides into your presentation when there is not a visual element needed.



# The layers of a forest





# Canopy layer

- provides protection from too much sun, wind, precipitation
- adds structural diversity for a variety of lifeforms
- allows for better temperature control in a forest

# Application



- In small groups, analyze the following images.
  - What is working well?
  - How can they be improved (based on universal and basic design principles)?

# 5 Great Productivity Apps



ToDoist

Ultimate “to-do” list app



Slack

communication app for collaboration



Toggl

Time tracker app



Evernote

Organizing and IdeThoughtsas



Trello

Kanban Project Management App

# Conflict Minerals: Should Businesses Avoid or Develop?

## Supply Chain Management, McCombs School of Business

### Abstract

- Conflict minerals are those that are sourced under armed forces
- Militia sell the minerals to smelters to be used
- In countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), roughly 5 million civilians and workers have died working in these mines.
- Armed militia in the DRC generate \$100 million annually from exporting conflict minerals to smelters
- Profits are used to continue their supply of weapons

### Research Objective

- Analyze the effects companies have on countries that source conflict minerals
- Determine the extent to which companies are held responsible for the treatment of workers in these mines
- Make recommendations for how businesses can create a more transparent supply chain

### Background/Introduction

- In 2010, the US passed the Dodd-Frank Act
- This act required that companies list and audit all of their suppliers
- Businesses were prohibited from sourcing from countries that sold conflict minerals
- 2014 is the first year that companies are required to provide their first audit showing improvements in their supply chain towards less use of these minerals



### Benefits of Dodd-Frank Act

- Serves as guiding point for companies to base their plan of action against conflict minerals
- Forces companies to disclose what their suppliers use
- Eliminates a major source of income in countries, like DRC, that rely on profits from conflict minerals
- Creates more transparency in businesses

### Negatives of Dodd-Frank Act

- Focus of economy should be on reforming financial and capital markets, not human rights
- Adds another layer of bureaucracy to business
- Shifts the balance in the supply and demand of companies
- Estimated initial compliance costs of \$3 to \$4 billion USD, and another \$200 million annually thereafter

### Methods for Verifying Conflict-Free

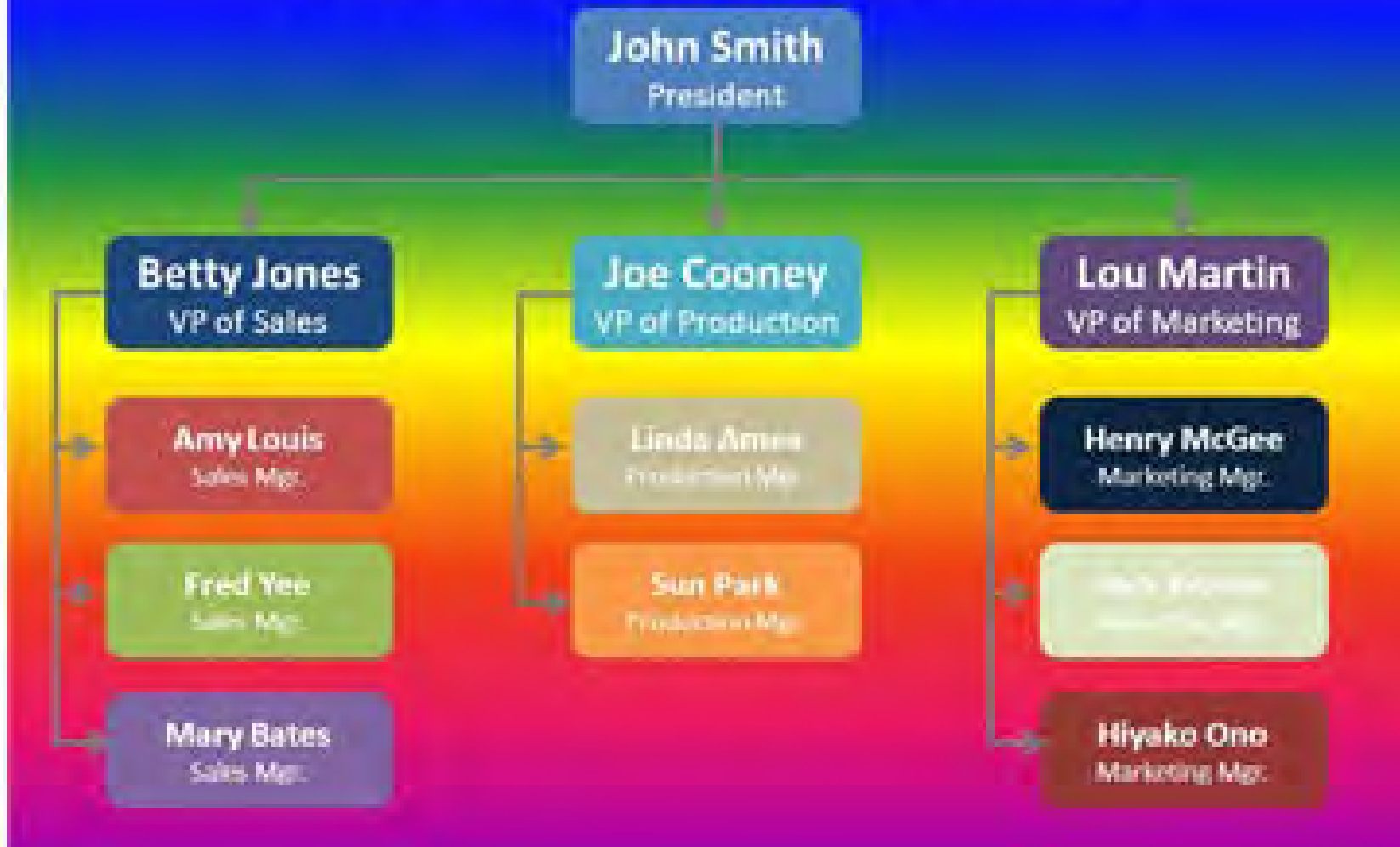
- Auditing: required of each supplier within a company's supply chain
- Supply certification: third-party auditors evaluate suppliers under standards that the company has already set out
- Bag and tag labeling: minerals are bagged and tagged "conflict free" immediately upon extraction
- Analytical fingerprinting: a method determined by a group of German scientists in which the region in which the minerals were extracted from can be determined

### Recommendation

- Source majority of minerals from places that are not in conflicted regions
- Find political support from international amnesty to bring reform to the business process in these regions



# ABC Company Org Chart



01

THE TYPE  
COLLECTIVE  
DOT COM



9

7—22  
FEB '13

Aviatorilor 9

Andrei Ogradă  
Octavian Budai  
Felix Hornoiu  
Vian Peanu

Vlad Neuman  
Alex Beltechi  
Nicu Duță &  
Koma

Yale School of Art  
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# YALE SCHOOL OF ART

Home  
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Pause animations ||

This website exists as an ongoing collaborative experiment in digital publishing and information sharing. Because this website functions as a wiki, all members of the School of Art community—graduate students, faculty, staff, and alumni—have the ability to add new content and pages, and to edit most of the site's existing content.

## Official School of Art COVID-19 Updates:

**All public Yale School of Art events for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester have been canceled or postponed.**

*A Message from Dean Kuzma to MFA Students (March 21, 2020) >>*

*SoA COVID-19 Student Resources >>*

*Yale School of Art COVID-19 FAQ >>*



# References

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