Iowa State University

Academic Success Center

Designing Effective Visual Tools

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?**
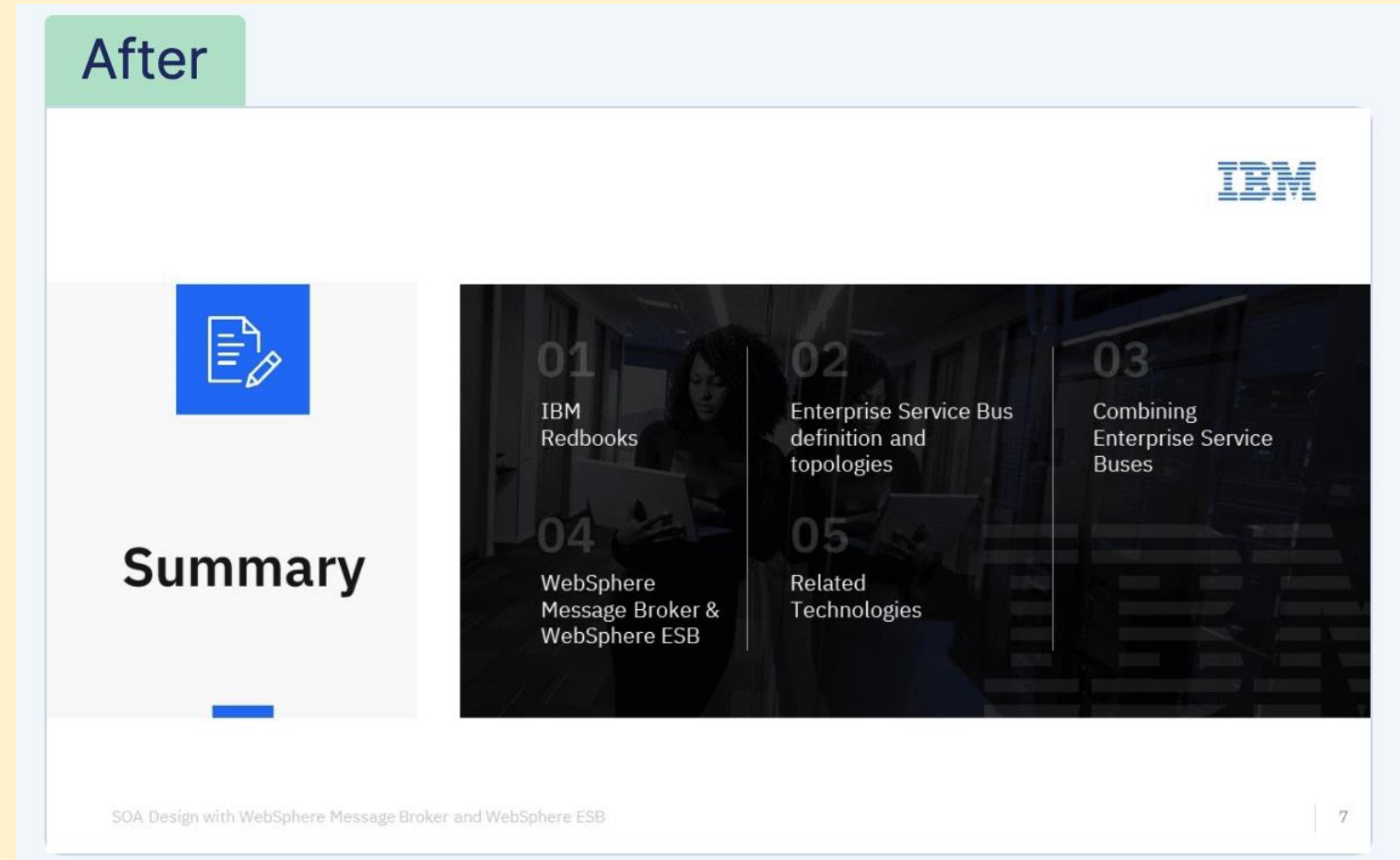
Basic Design Principles

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. *Twiisted Media*. https://twiistedmedia.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.
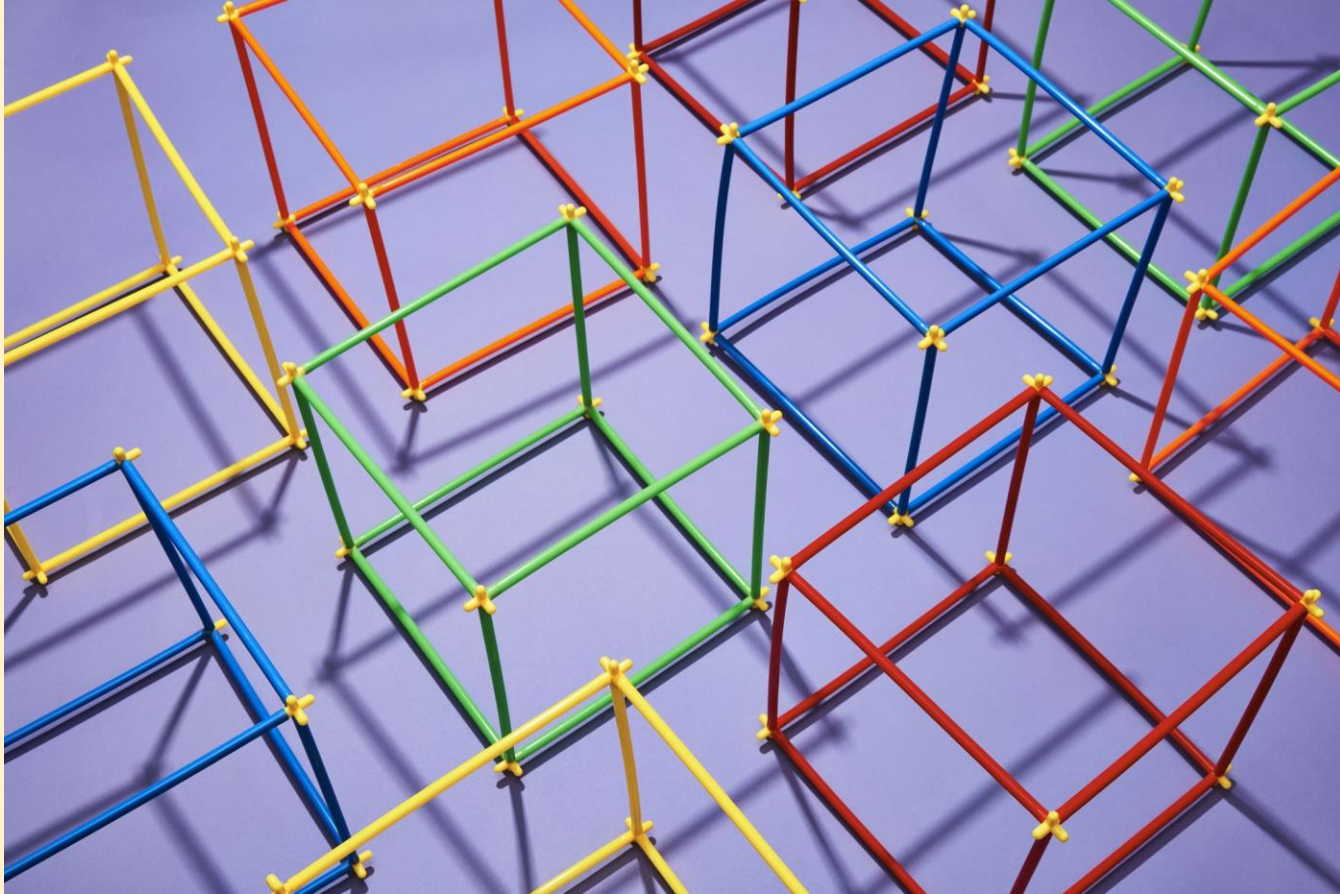
- Alignment creates visual order.

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

McGuire, S. (2019, Nov 21). *What are the 9 types of infographics?* https://venngage.com/blog/9-types-of-infographic-template/

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?
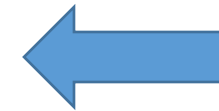
Which of these sizes is easiest to read? ⬅ 24 font

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.
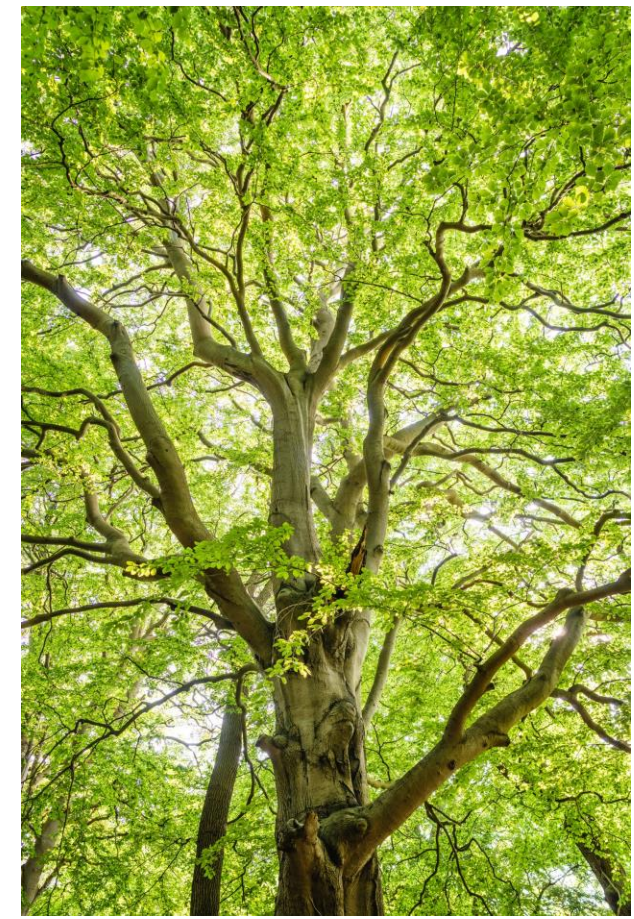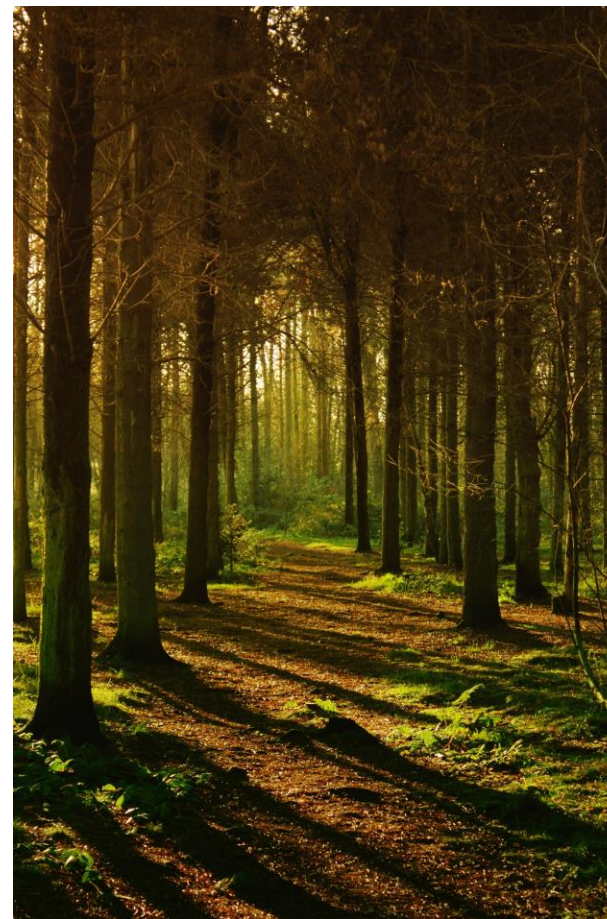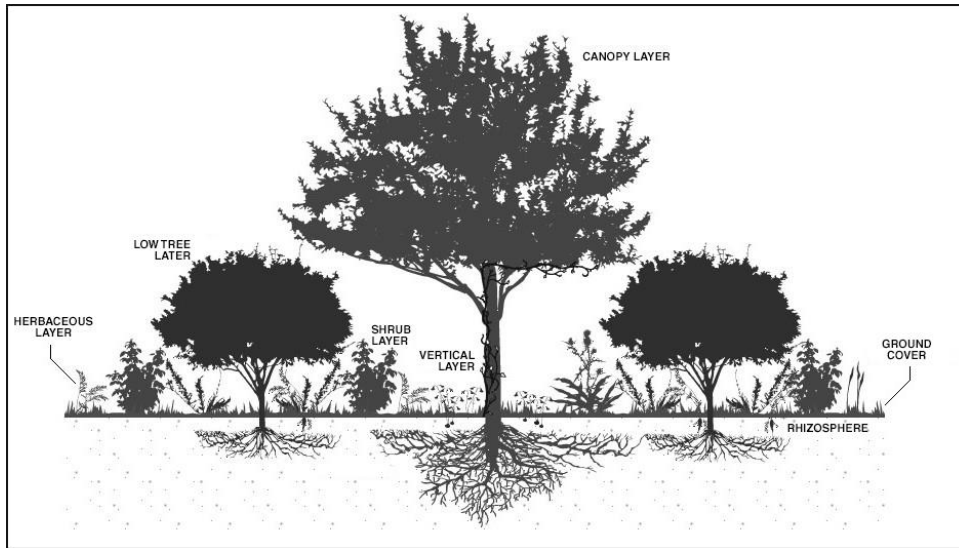
Background

Darker backgrounds can be more relaxing.
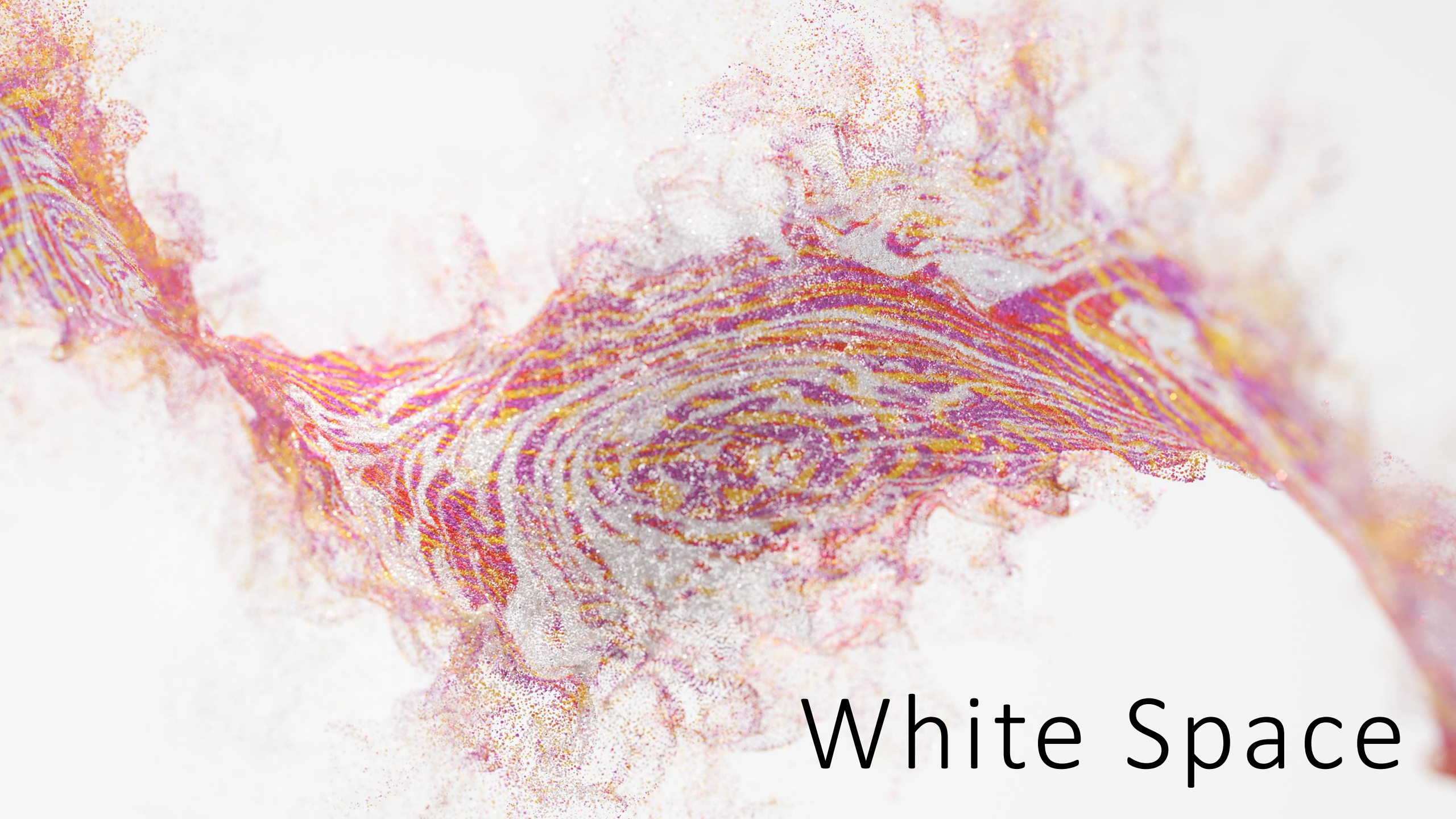
White Space

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

image from Pexels https://images.pexels.com/photos/1459495/pexels-photo-1459495.jpeg?auto=compress&cs=tinysrgb&w=600

Application Activity

In small groups, analyze the following images.

- What is working well?
- How can they be improved (based on universal and basic design principles)?

Abhishek, K. (2020, Dec 7). *Five worst presentations ever & why they went wrong.* https://www.orai.com/blog/worst-presentation-ever/

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 $180 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
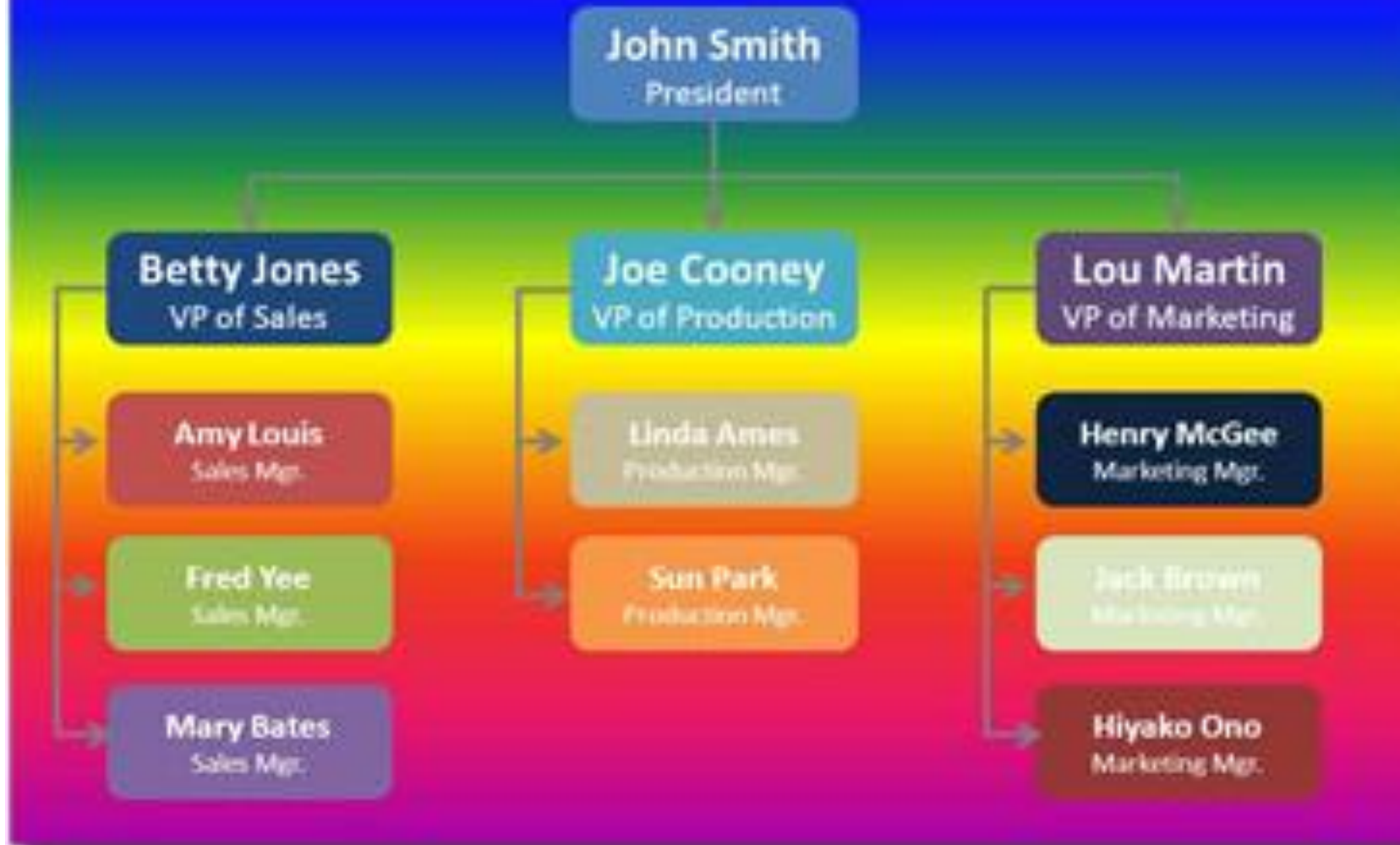
Methods for Verifying Conflict-Free

- 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

Foley, L. *How to avoid the four biggest PowerPoint color mistakes.* https://blog.indezine.com/2011/10/how-to-avoid-four-biggest-powerpoint.html?doing_wp_cron=1612892921.1323320865631103515625

Babau Haus. 2013. *The type collective.*
http://www.baubauhaus.com/image/40292?utm_source=Feedburner&utm_campaign=feed&utm_content=Baubauhaus

YALE SCHOOL OF ART

Home
About the School
Apply to the School
Gallery
Publications
News
Public Events

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 alums—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 >>

Yale School of Art. (n.d.). *Official school of art COVID-19 updates.* https://www.art.yale.edu/

WRITING & COMMUNICATION CONSULTATIONS

What is it?

- Appointments for individual or group assignments
  - Help with written, spoken, or visual projects
  - Not just for English classes!
- Personalized support from a trained peer tutor
- Common Topics
  - Organizing a paper
  - Revising a resume
  - Practicing a speech
  - Grad school application materials

WRITING & COMMUNICATION CONSULTATIONS

- Meet in-person in Hixson Lied Student Success, or meet with your consultant online!
- All appointments are 45 minutes in length.
- Online appointments can be held on GoogleDocs, Webex, or a combination of the two.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2-5pm	9a-7p	9a-7p	9a-7p	9a-7p	9a-1p

How to schedule: Scan this QR code:

or on the EAB Navigate App

Thank you for your feedback!

Workshop title:
"Designing Effective Visual Tools"

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References

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Williams, R. (2008). *The non-designer's design book (*3rd ed). Peachpit Press.
Yale School of Art. (n.d.). *Official school of art COVID-19 updates.* https://www.art.yale.edu/