Technical Skills - Slide Design and Presentation
Agenda

• Importance of strong communication
• The visual aid: effective slide design
• Presentation, spoken and unspoken
• Answering difficult questions
Our Emphasis on Communication

• Many other case competitions have a **written component only** in the first round
• We have a full presentation aspect from the very beginning
• Case competition participants will gain exposure to all forms of communication:
  • Technical (through the Excel files)
  • Written (through the written memorandum)
  • Verbal (through the presentation and question and answer portions)
Our Emphasis on Communication

• For any profession, communication is vital—even more so for actuaries.
• We don’t just come up with results; we present to key stakeholders: our colleagues, other departments, internal management, clients, …
• It’s not enough to have the right answer. You have to convince your audience your answer is right, or it all goes to waste.
Our Motivation

• “The one easy way to become worth 50 percent more than you are now — at least — is to hone your communication skills — both written and verbal.”
  - Warren Buffett

• We want to give everyone an opportunity to hone their written and verbal communication skills.
• Put in the work, and you will be worth much more than 50% more when employers start looking through your résumé next recruiting season.
Slide Design
Slide Design

• The PowerPoint should serve as a **visual aid.** It is not the primary focus!
• The primary focus is the presenters—**you**!

• Let’s consider a poorly designed slide. **First assume that we wish to present the data in a table.** What can be improved about the following slide?
## Comparison of Current Credit Score Rating Factors and 2018-2019 Loss Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Score</th>
<th>Current Rating Factor</th>
<th>2018-2019 Loss Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low (Less than 400)</td>
<td>0.9005</td>
<td>0.3019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (401 to 650)</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.5555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (Greater than 650)</td>
<td>1.1010</td>
<td>1.1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure-Weighted Average</td>
<td>1.0053</td>
<td>0.6385</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Credit Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Score</th>
<th>Current Factor</th>
<th>Loss Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide Design

• We shortened the title and many labels, and cut out meaningless digits from the display.

• This looks a lot better! Let’s suppose that we want to incorporate some additional analysis.
## Proposed Credit Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Score</th>
<th>Current Factor</th>
<th>Loss Ratio</th>
<th>Indicated Factor Change</th>
<th>Indicated Factor</th>
<th>Indicated Factor (Medium as Base)</th>
<th>Proposed Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weighted Average</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide Design

• This slide is very cluttered! It’s unclear what is going on.

• We don’t need to show all the intermediate steps.
• Focus on the important columns, and remove the “work” columns!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Score</th>
<th>Current Factor</th>
<th>Indicated Factor</th>
<th>Proposed Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide Design

• Although this is much cleaner, there may be other ways to visualize this.
• What alternative visualizations can you think of to make our results clearer?

• Let’s try a chart. How could we improve the following chart?
Proposed Credit Factors

Low

Medium

High

Current Factor

Indicated Factor

Proposed Factor
Proposed Credit Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Factor</th>
<th>Indicated Factor</th>
<th>Proposed Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide Design

• Choose contrasting colors when possible
• Make sure the text in the graph is readable
• Zoom in on the relevant area of the plot
Slide Design

• Let’s consider a different example. Suppose that we wish to present the following recommendation:
Proposal

• 2017 losses were higher than they should be, so our premium isn’t enough

• We must raise premium to meet the target loss ratio

• We will do this through the following two methods:
  1. Change rates for each rating variable
  2. Increase the base rate from $800 to $830

• This will bring our loss ratio from its current level of 85% to the target of 77%.
Proposal

• Current loss ratio: 85%
• Target loss ratio: 77%
• We raise rates by:
  • Changing rate relativities
  • Increasing base rate
Slide Design

• Again, we want to cut down on words as much as possible.
• When introducing your proposal, you do not need to go into the details!

• Let’s see if we can improve it further:
Proposal

Change rate relativities

Increase base rate

Decrease loss ratio from 85% to 77%
Additional Tips

- **Start with an agenda.** You want your audience to know what you’re going to tell them.
- **Number your slides.** This will make it easier for judges to refer to specific slides.
- **Make sure text is large and contrasts with the background.**
- **Keep a consistent color scheme throughout.** If you use red for automobile and purple for truck, keep it that way for the entire presentation.
Presentation Tips
Presentation Tips

• Practice, practice, practice! If you don’t put in the time, it’ll be quite obvious.
• Some people like to script what they’re going to say; others prefer to just talk about their portion.
  • If you choose to use a script, don’t memorize the script. It should be a guideline, not what you’re going to say word-for-word.
  • People who memorize a script generally sound quite robotic, and it’s awkward if you forget what you’re going to say.
Presentation Tips

• Assume your target audience is **upper management** (think: VP, COO, etc.), **not** a chief actuary.
  • KISS: “Keep it simple, stupid”
  • They are much more concerned about how your results **impact** the company as a whole.
Presentation Tips

- Remember to **introduce yourself, the problem, and your solution.**
- **Face the audience**, not your slides. If you need to look at the slides, find some excuse to reference the slides.
- **Speak slowly and clearly.** You will likely rush when you’re nervous, so make sure to actively remember to slow yourself down.
- **Practice the transitions** between different group members’ portions.
Q&A Tips: Things to Consider

• What decisions were hard to make as a group?
• What were some areas of disagreement during group discussions?
• What parts of the problem were you unable to solve “correctly”? What did you end up using in place of a “correct” answer?
• What assumptions did you make? Are they realistic? How would your analysis change if those assumptions didn’t hold?
• If you could have more data, how would you improve your analysis? This indicates where the weaknesses of your analysis lie.
Q&A Tips

• Try to plan who will answer what question, making sure everyone gets a chance to answer questions.
• “I don’t know” is **not** a valid answer. The judges expect that you may not know the answer to some of the questions, but you should try to come up with some insight.
Questions?

Reminder:
Case Competition Kickoff tomorrow!