Technical Skills –
Slide Design and Presentation

Bruin Actuarial Society
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 produce results; we present to key stakeholders such as our colleagues, other departments, internal management, and clients.

- It’s not enough to have the right answer. You must convince your audience that 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
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 2019-2020 loss ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Score</th>
<th>Current Rating Factor</th>
<th>2019-2020 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

- This looks better! What did we do?
  - Shortened titles and labels
  - Cut out meaningless digits from display
  - Increased font size and centered values
- Next, let’s suppose 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!
## Proposed Credit Factors

<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>
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

- **Current Factor**
- **Indicated Factor**
- **Proposed Factor**

The graph illustrates the comparison of current, indicated, and proposed credit factors across different levels: Low, Medium, and High.
Proposed Credit Factors

- Current Factor
- Indicated Factor
- Proposed Factor
Choose contrasting colors when possible

Make sure the text in the graph is readable

Zoom in on the relevant area of the plot

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
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

- 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.
  - For virtual presentations, you should look at the webcam.
- **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 some 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 Introduction and Kickoff Tomorrow!