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Ever wondered if there is such thing as the perfect slide? I have been searching for the formula to design the perfect slide for my presentations. Surfing through resources on the internet. Browsing through pages of visual design books that I have on my bookshelf. And experimenting with ideas and content of my own.

Did I find the perfect slide?

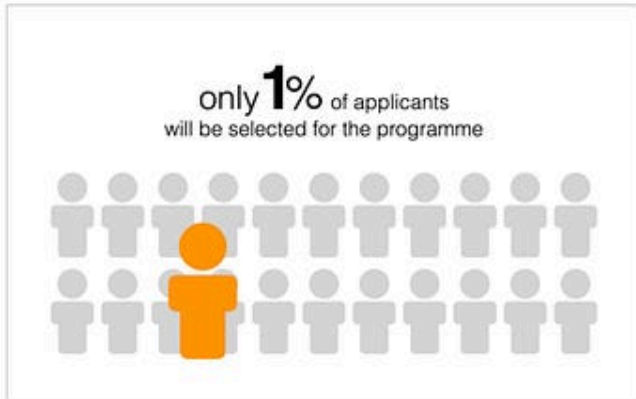
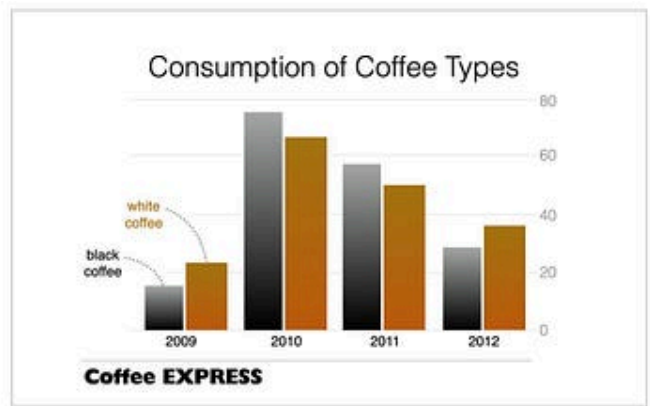
Is there such a thing called the perfect slide? PowerPoint and Keynote come with a fair amount of templates with various themes. Some of them are actually quite well designed, and you should be able to find one that is suitable for the presentation that you are designing. However, I find these standard templates not quite ideal for many of my presentations.

However, these templates do not produce the perfect slide design that I had in mind. **They still have placeholders that suggest showing paragraphs of text and bullet-points**, which I do not feel will project key messages with high-impact. Thus is not the perfect slide design that I am looking for.

I think the perfect slide is one that is simple, conveys the message with impact, and is easily understood.

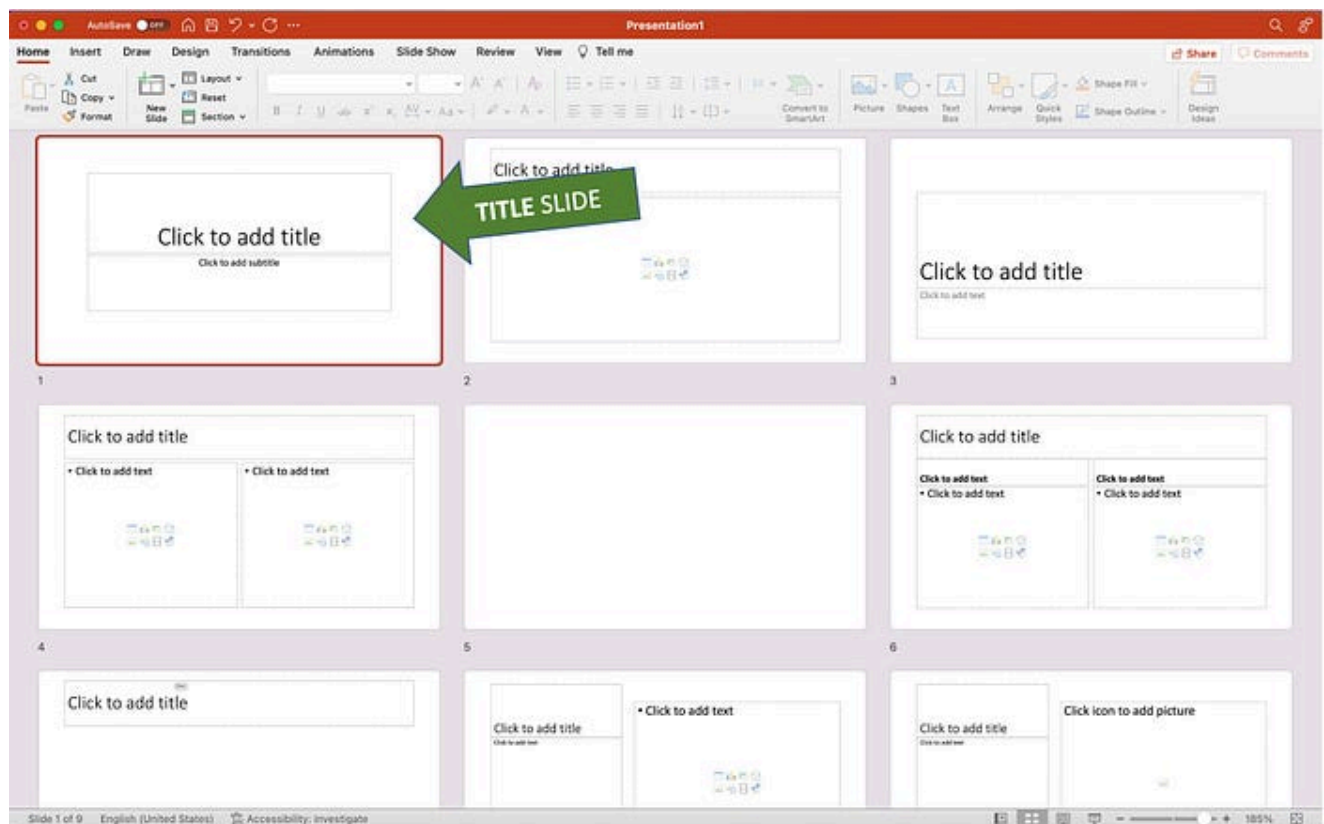
This can be just a text message, chart, diagram, or simply an image.

only **1%** of applicants
will be selected for the programme



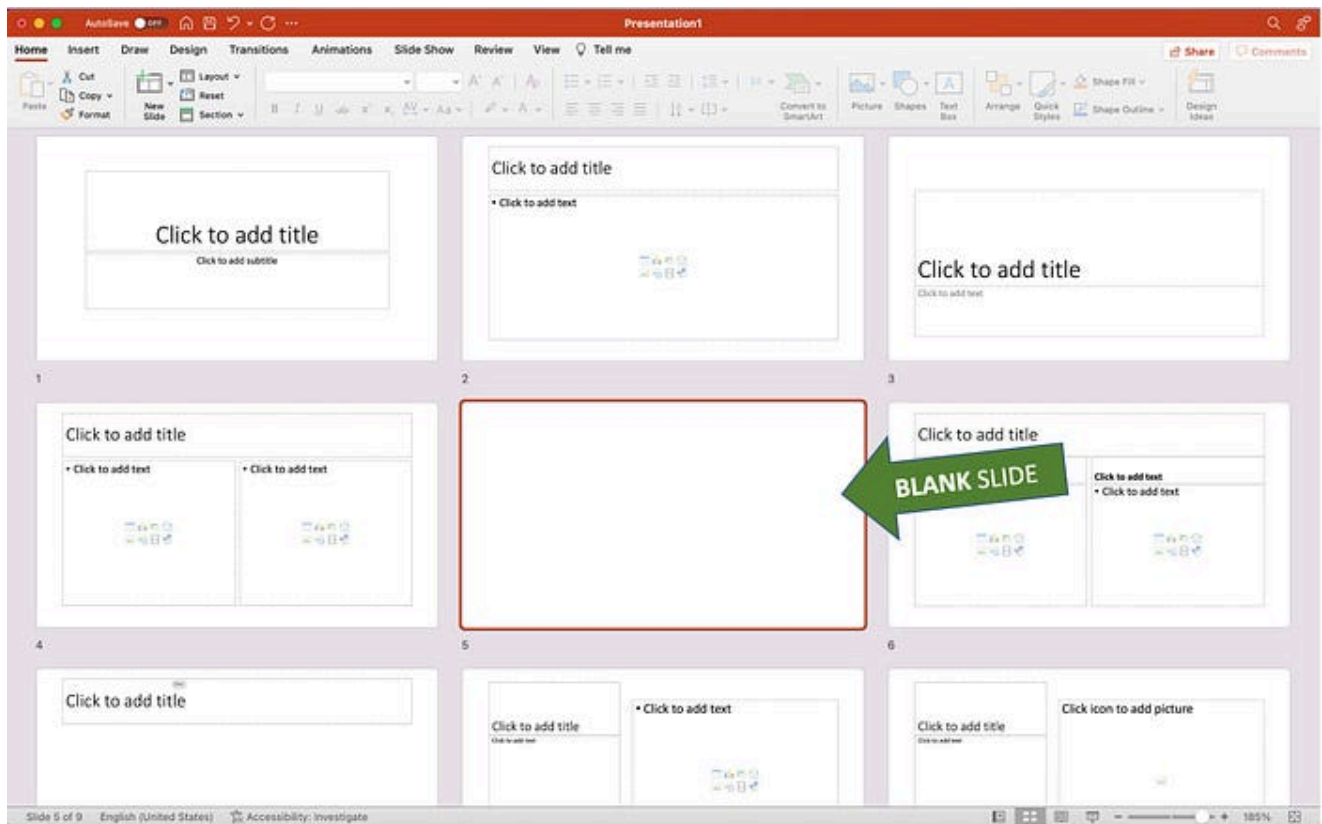
Examples of simple slides

Let's take a look at a set of standard PowerPoint templates. Forget about themes for now. Let's just take a look at the default plain templates.



PowerPoint template highlighting TITLE SLIDE

The TITLE SLIDE template is a good one. Just one line of text. That's good. It's simple. This can be use to show the key message or the intro message to a new section. Or sometimes we just want a simple slide with just one line of message.

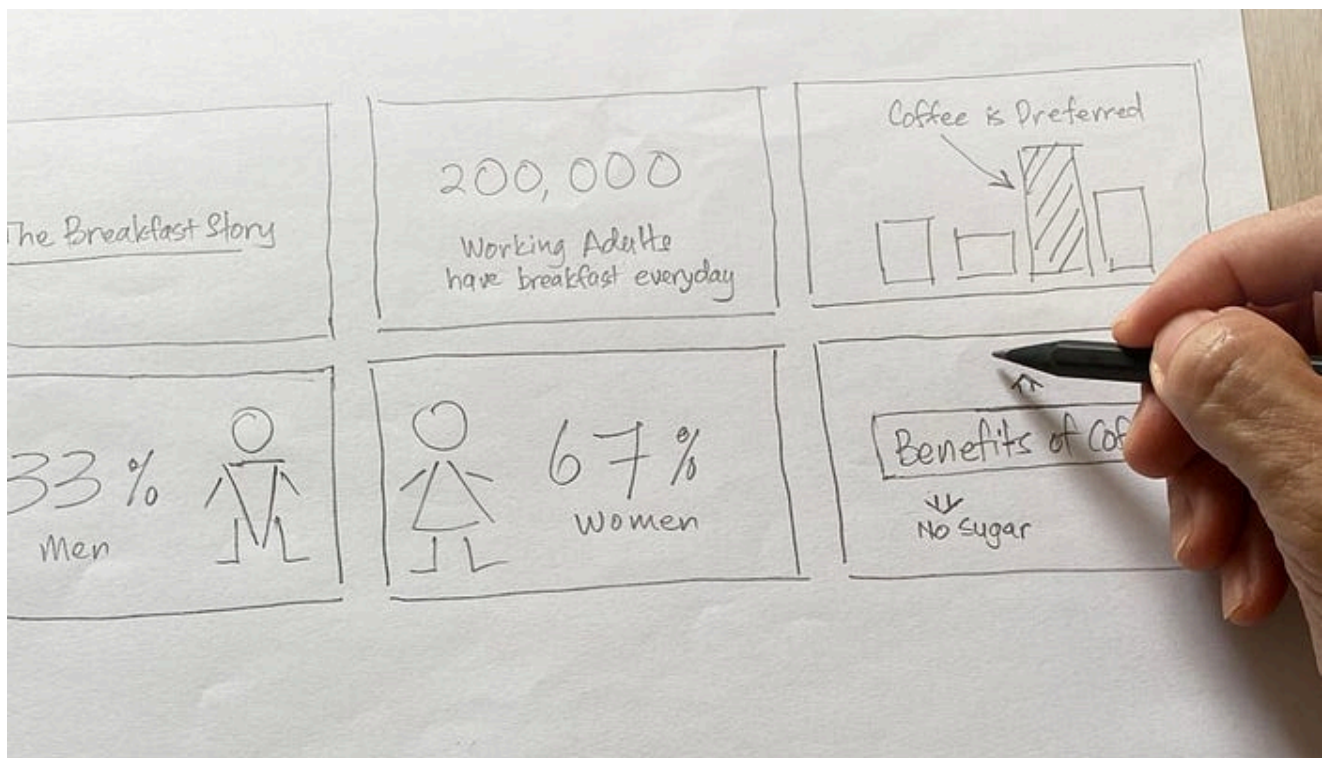


PowerPoint templates highlighting BLANK slide

My favorite has to be the BLANK template — nothing on it. No placeholders. Just an empty space. It frees my mind to create and design in any way I want.

Whenever I create slides for my presentation, I always start with a blank page.

I mean, really a blank page, which I call a storyboard. And I start thinking about how to show what I want the audience to see.



Drafting a storyboard

That's a lot of thinking, and it's good **because as I think through how I want to show my ideas, I will also think of how I will say it.** That forces me to think deeply and internalize my presentation delivery. This will eventually translate to smoother delivery, which equals to a better presentation.

The whole idea of designing the perfect slide is to get to a point where not only the message stands out, but the overall visual is visually balanced and professional.

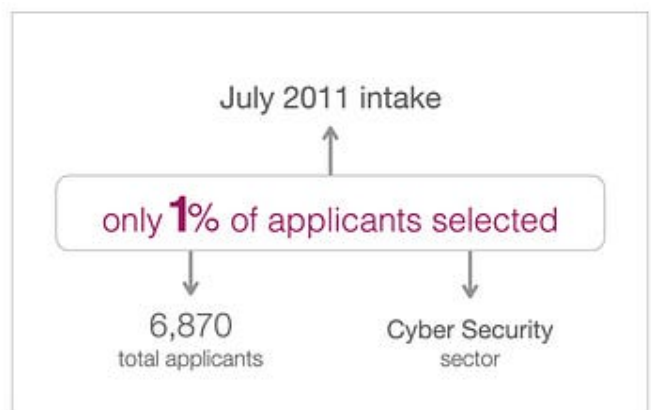
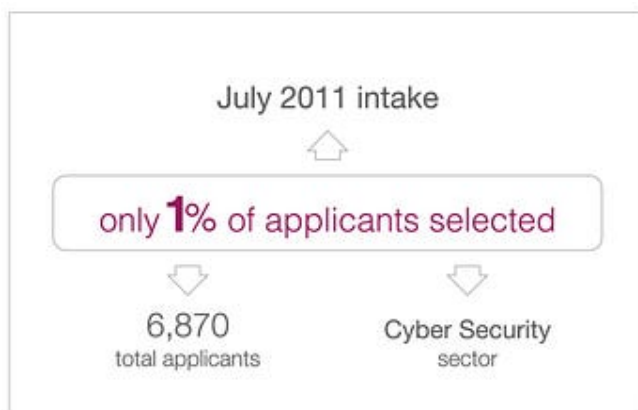
So we are trying to achieve two things here — the message and the aesthetic. Once the message has been decided, the next will be to find the perfect design idea that will display the message in high impact.

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Examples of text only slides

If we are dealing with just text messages, there are a few ways to do this. Depending on how we want the message to be seen, we can use a single-line message on the slide or display it in multiple lines.



Examples of text slides designed using keywords

We can also display the message using keywords and connecting secondary keywords to the main keyword with connecting lines or arrows.

I find that designing with text alone can be really interesting.

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Examples using emphasis on text slides

Instead of just a boring 1 line of plain text, we can change the attributes of select words within the text to give emphasis or importance. Making them **bold**, or assigning a **different colour**, or even **changing the size** of the few words.

Changing the size is my favourite as I can immediately change the visual perspective of the audience. Directing the eyes from trying to read the text to just seeing the the slide content as visual elements.

I use this technique all the time when designing my presentation slides that involve text elements. This technique is not only suitable for presentation slides but can also be used in other communication, like when designing a poster or the title page of an article.

There is always a perfect slide design for every type of content.

Even when the slide content has images, a chart, or graphic elements, there are ways to design the perfect slide when we understand visual design principles.



Image that fills up the whole slide



When working with images, I like to use high-resolution images and **fill the entire slide** with that one image. This is the perfect slide design to show off an image on the slide.

A single image, focused, simple, and no distraction — the perfect slide.

Of course, not all the time; we work with just one image. Quite often, we work with multiple images because they are related. We can always share the slide with other images, graphics, and text elements.



1%
applicants

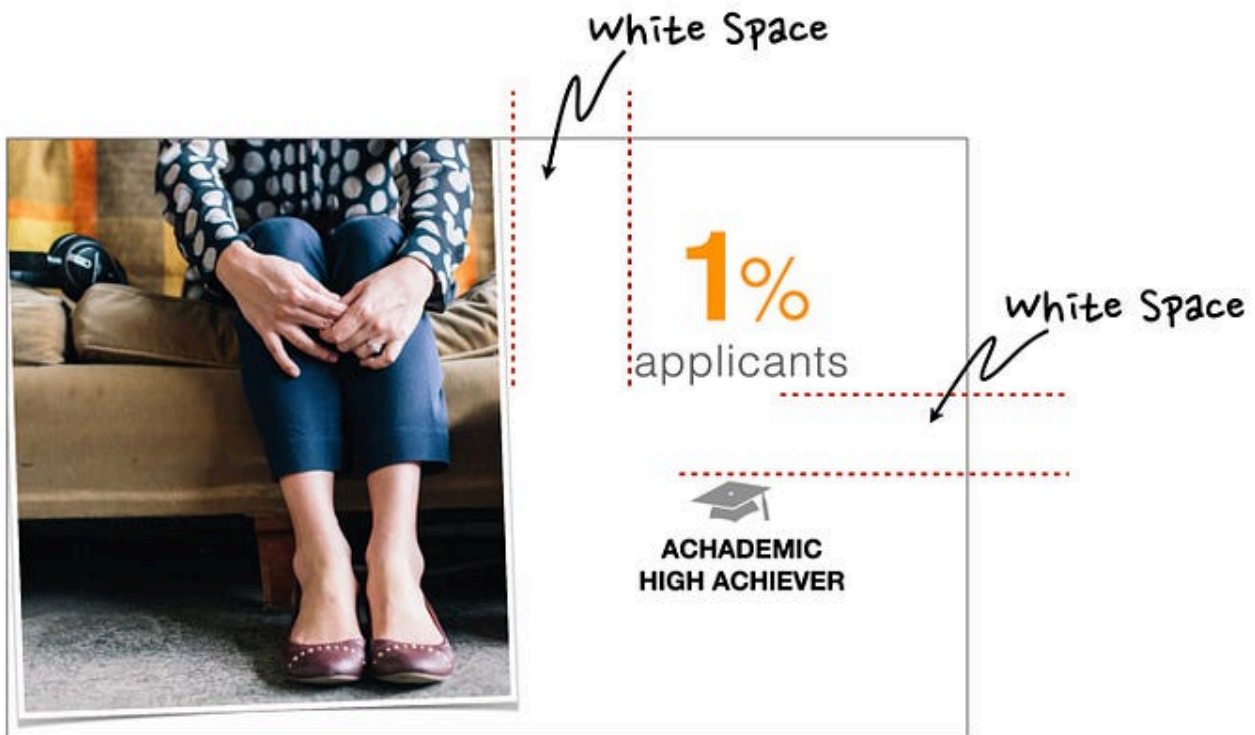


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HIGH ACHIEVER**

A framed image sharing a slide with other visual elements

In this case, we can design using a framed image and other visual design techniques. For example, we discussed the text design technique earlier in this video, **adding emphasis** to select text to *ensure the audience sees the text content instead of reading it*.

Besides the techniques used for text content, other techniques involve the placement of visual objects, *specifically the space between the various blocks—referred to as **white space***.



White space explained

Too narrow makes objects look cramped and suffocated. Too wide might break the relationship of the object to the key message. All these considerations are crucial to designing that perfect slide we use for the presentation.

There isn't a right or a wrong way to create the perfect slide design.

Ultimately, we need to ensure that the message we want to convey is clearly shown, easily understood, and the overall slide looks professional.

Do you feel that you have achieved the perfect slide designed for the presentation? If not, then make the necessary adjustments so that together with your killer delivery, you are able to nail the presentation without regrets.

Follow me! *for ideas to design better presentations.*