Microsoft Elevate

Storytelling & AI

KEEPING STORIES HUMAN IN THIS AGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Christina Macchiarola

- Director of Global Experiences for Microsoft Elevate
- Over a decade of nonprofit marketing experience in New York City
- Moonlights as a Barre and Pilates instructor



Britt Peemoller

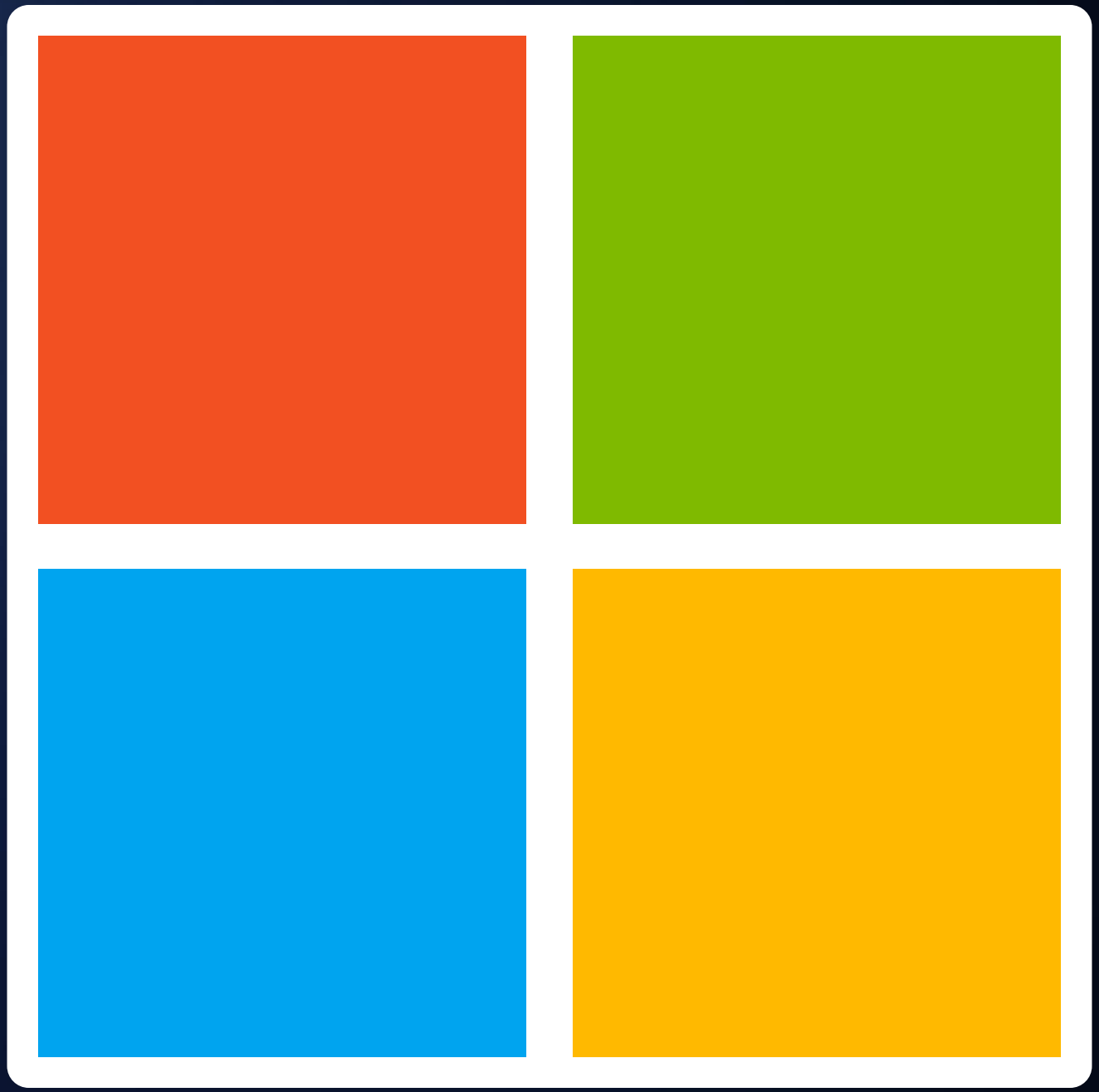
- Director, Storytelling & Customer Advocacy for Microsoft Elevate
- Former Red Cross spokesperson and Public Affairs in Disaster instructor
- Duolingo fan learning German and French, today will be day #756



Microsoft

Microsoft mission

Empower every person and every organisation on the planet to achieve more.



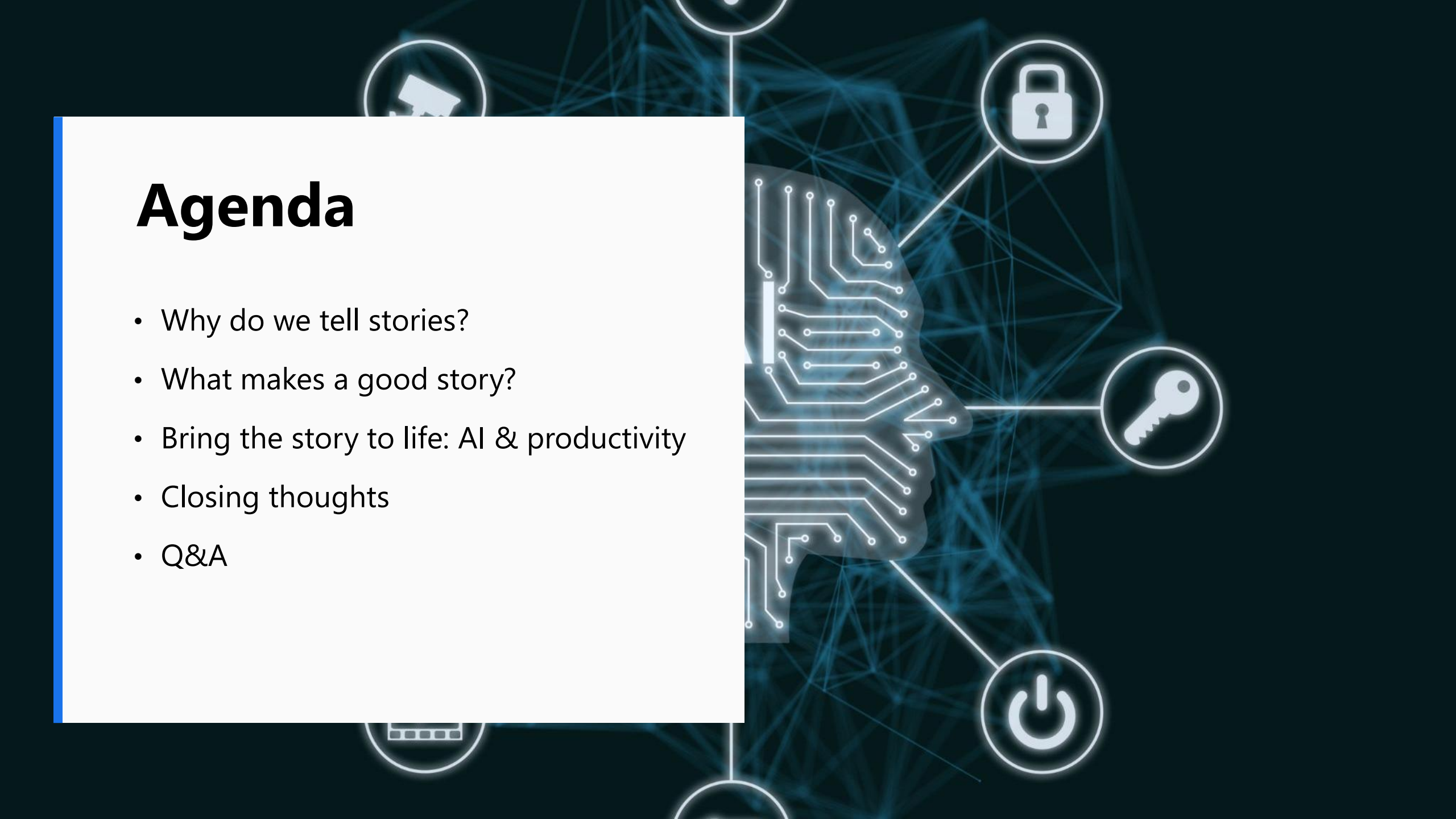
Microsoft Elevate

Widening the circle of opportunity by strengthening education, workforce, and social impact systems to help people thrive in the AI economy



Agenda

- Why do we tell stories?
- What makes a good story?
- Bring the story to life: AI & productivity
- Closing thoughts
- Q&A



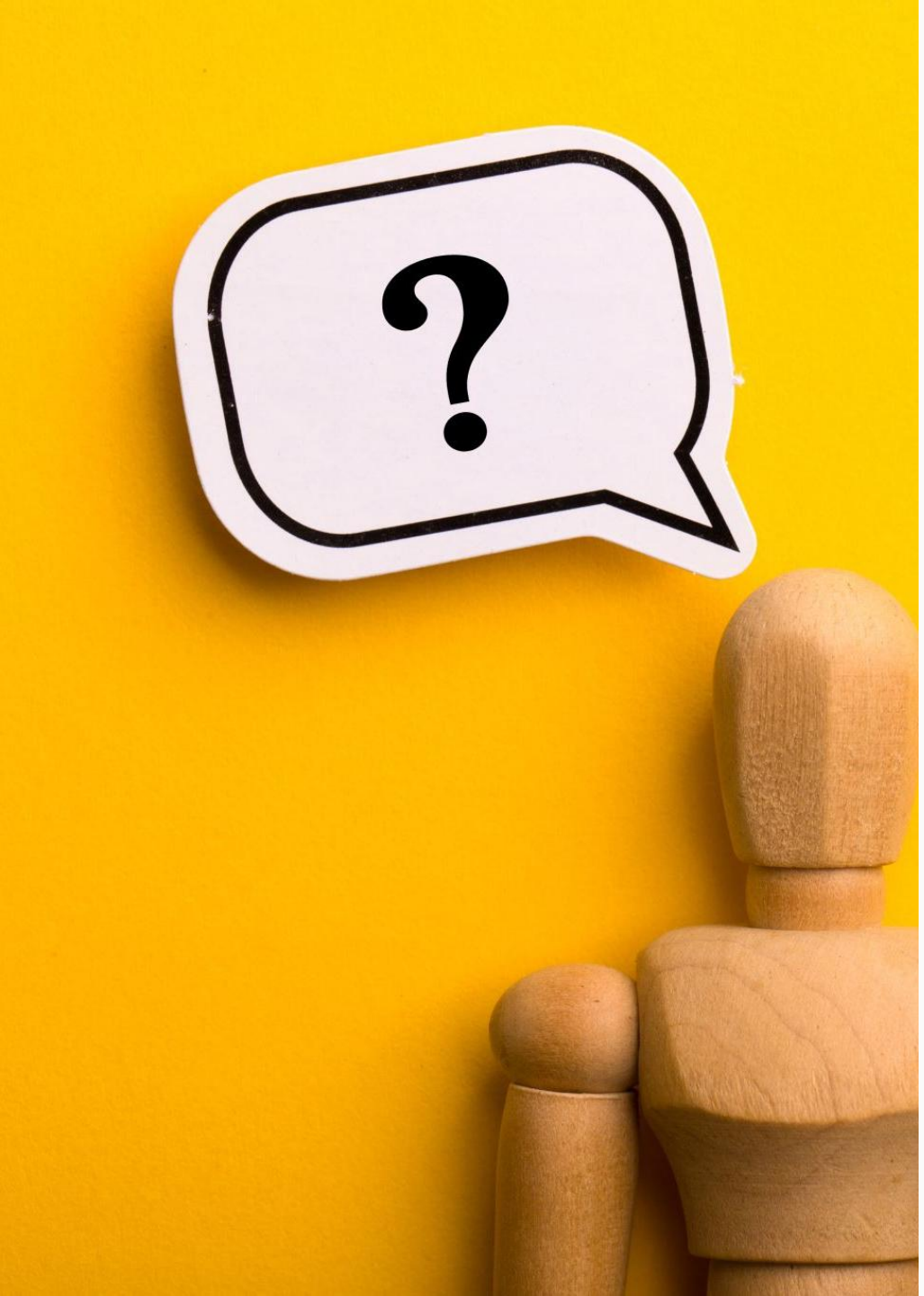


Why do we tell stories?

Our brains are hardwired for stories




Why stories
matter now?



What makes a good story?
The 10 Principles of Storytelling

- Know your audience
- Define your message
- Tell your story as if you’re telling it to a friend
- Set the scene
- Find your characters
- Identify your conflict/tension
- Tune into your senses
- Surprise!
- Bring yourself
- Stay curious



Know your audience



Define your message

Tell your story as if you're telling it to a friend




Set the scene


Find your
characters


Conflict or
tension



Tune into the senses



Surprise element

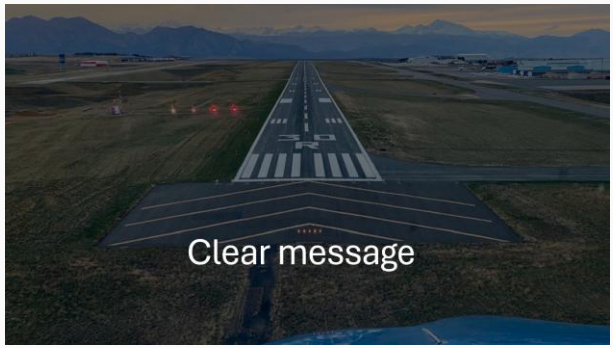

Bring yourself

Stay curious

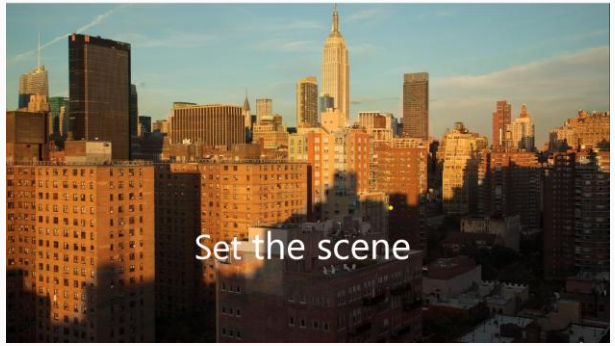


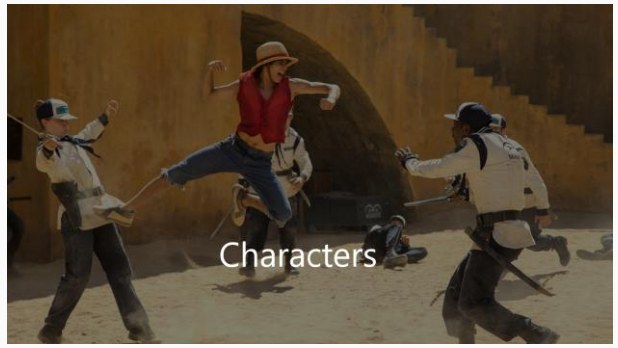
10 Principles of Storytelling







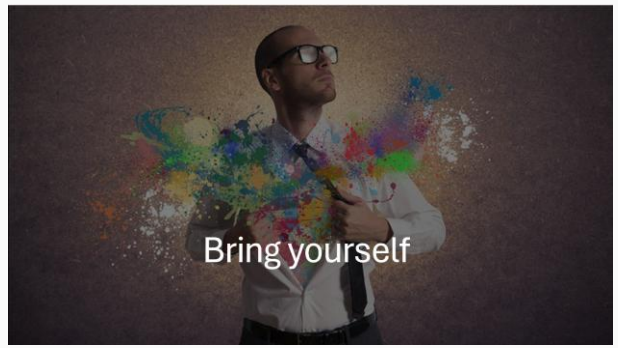














Bring your story to life





Bring the story to life: AI & productivity

- Do your research
- Develop your story
  - The medium is the message
- Amplify your story

Prompt ingredients

Include the right prompt ingredients

To get the best response, it's important to focus on some of the key elements below when phrasing your Copilot prompts.

Goal: **What** response do you want from Copilot?

Context: **Why** do you need it and who is involved?

Generate a short 3-5 article reading list to inform me on nonprofit initiatives in Brooklyn, New York. Focus on journals and blogs. Please summarise each article.

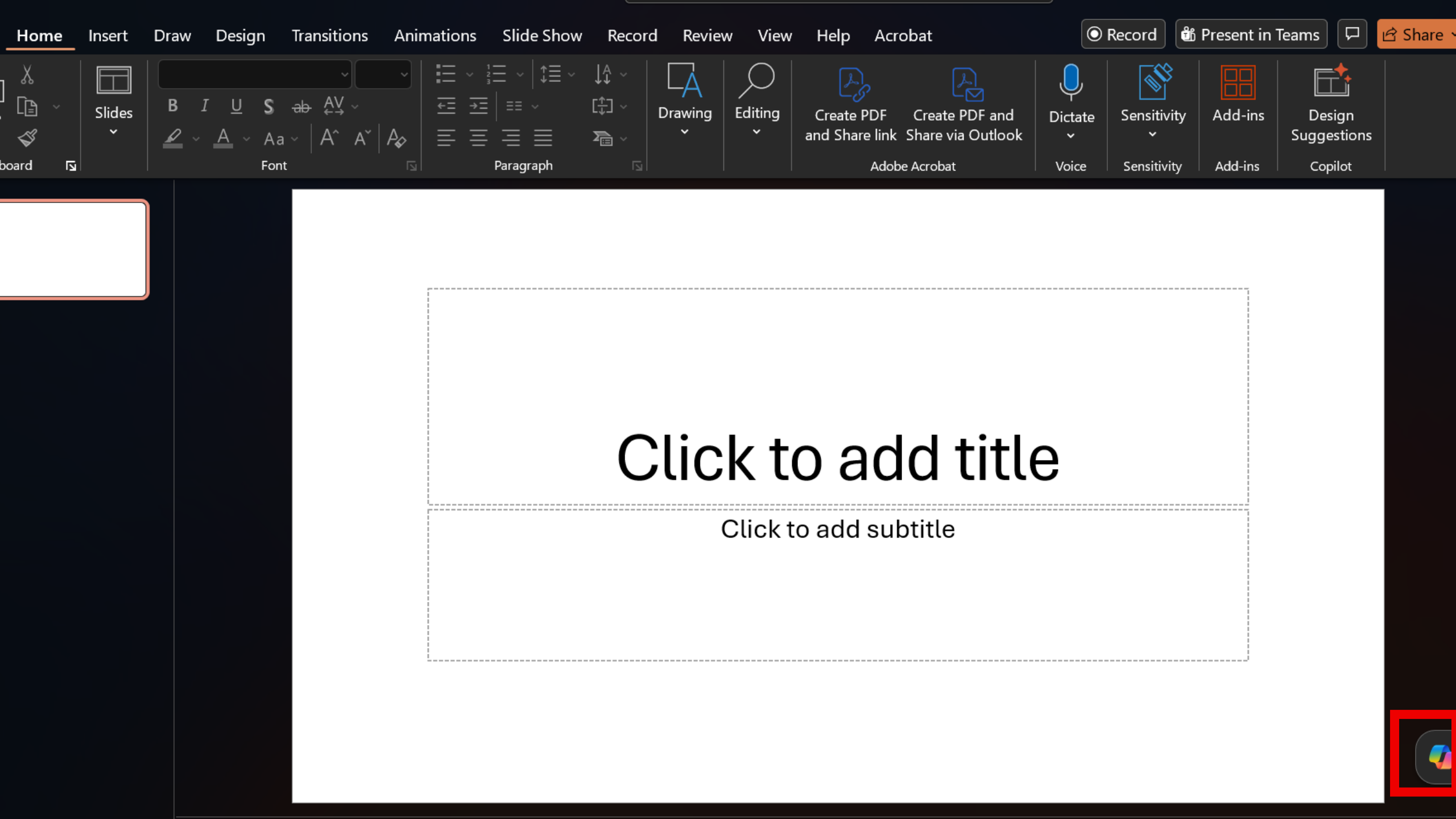
Expectations: **How** should Copilot respond to best meet your expectations?

Source: **Which** information sources or samples should Copilot use?


Do your research



The medium is the message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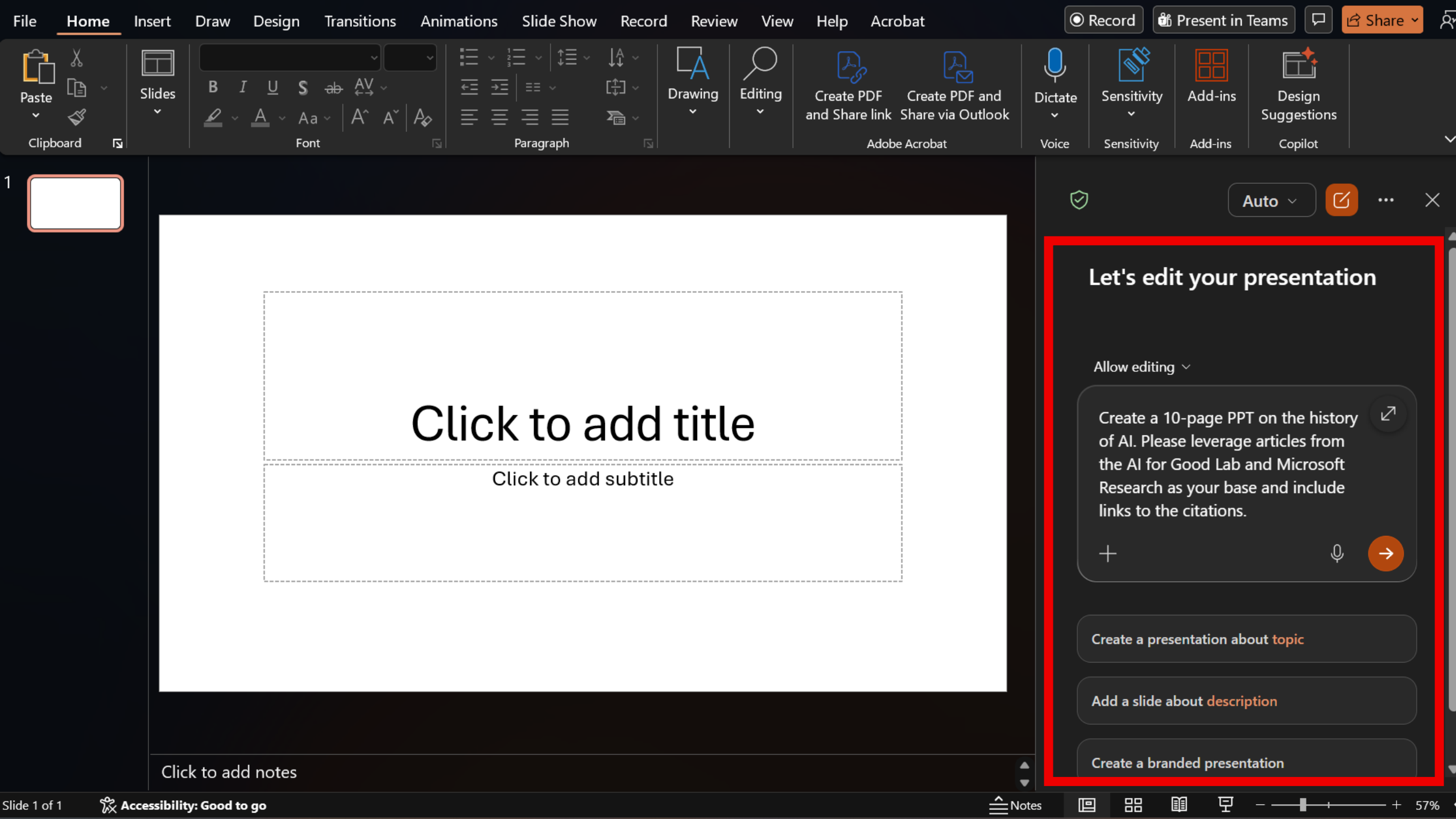
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Dictate
Voice
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1
Click to add title
Click to add subtitle
Click to add notes
Auto
Let's edit your presentation
Allow editing
Create a 10-page PPT on the history of AI. Please leverage articles from the AI for Good Lab and Microsoft Research as your base and include links to the citations.
Create a presentation about topic
Add a slide about description
Create a branded presentation
Slide 1 of 1
Accessibility: Good to go
Notes
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Clipboard | Font | Paragraph | Adobe Acrobat | Voice | Sensitivity | Add-ins | Copilot

1

Click to add title

Click to add subtitle

Click to add notes

Auto

Create a 10-page PPT on the history of AI. Please leverage articles from the AI for Good Lab and Microsoft Research as your base and include links to the citations.

Copilot

Clarifying details

Looking at the details

Reviewing the specifics of your request.

Clarifying details

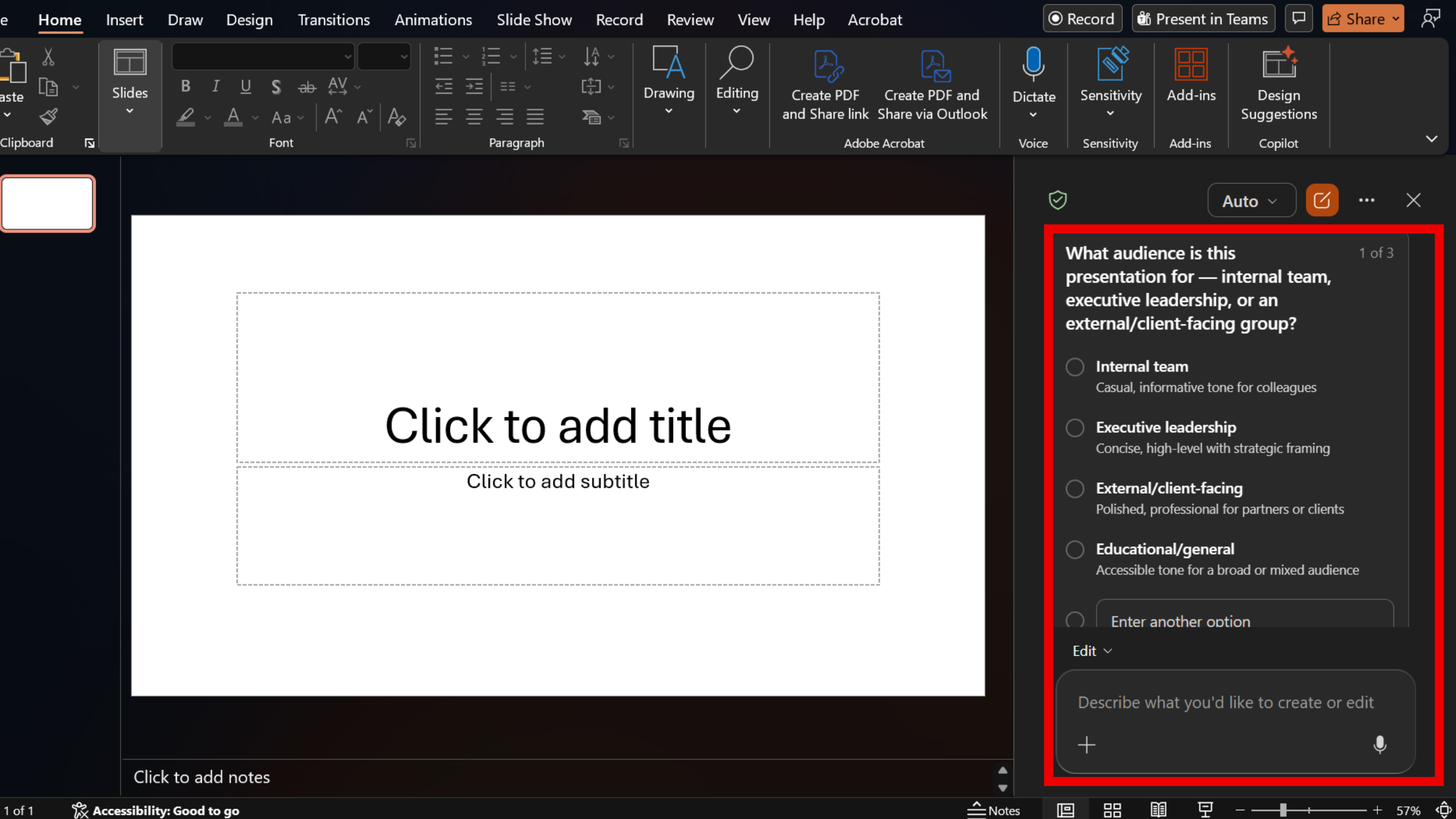
I'm gathering a few details first, then I'll look for source material and shape the presentation with the default theme

Edit

Describe what you'd like to create or edit

AI-generated responses may be incorrect

Slide 1 of 1 | Accessibility: Good to go | Notes | 57%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Click to add subtitle
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Auto
What audience is this presentation for — internal team, executive leadership, or an external/client-facing group?
1 of 3
Internal team
Casual, informative tone for colleagues
Executive leadership
Concise, high-level with strategic framing
External/client-facing
Polished, professional for partners or clients
Educational/general
Accessible tone for a broad or mixed audience
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Edit
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1 of 1
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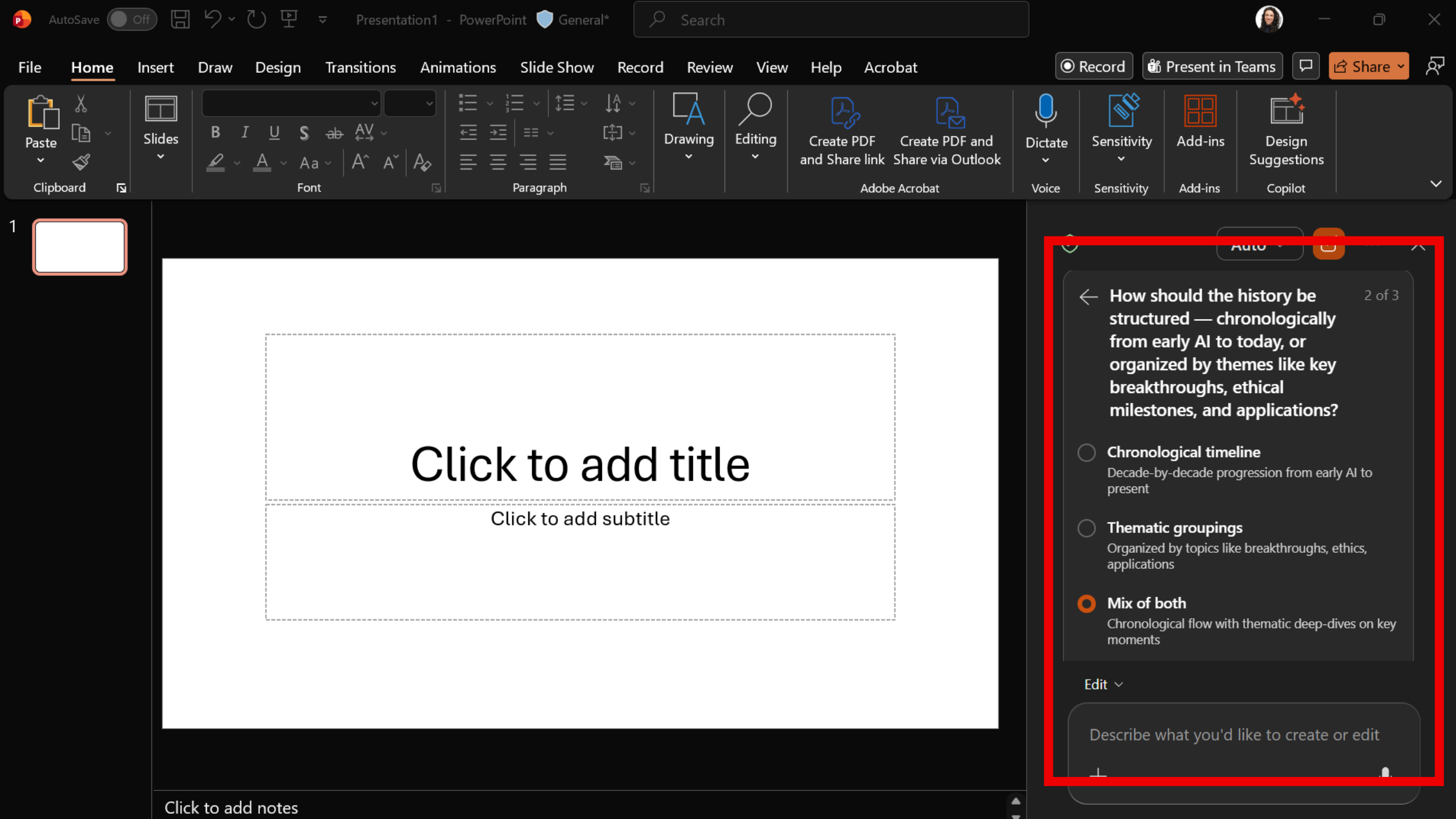
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Create PDF and Share via Outlook
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Design Suggestions
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Auto
How should the history be structured — chronologically from early AI to today, or organized by themes like key breakthroughs, ethical milestones, and applications?
2 of 3
Chronological timeline
Decade-by-decade progression from early AI to present
Thematic groupings
Organized by topics like breakthroughs, ethics, applications
Mix of both
Chronological flow with thematic deep-dives on key moments
Edit
Describe what you'd like to create or edit

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1

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Thinking it through

Understanding what you're looking for.

Researching history

I'm gathering reliable background on AI's key milestones, breakthroughs, ethics, and future directions from Microsoft Research and AI for Good sources.

Weighing the options

Considering the best approach for this.

Reviewing results

I'm reading the available search results and deciding whether more looking is needed.

Edit

Describe what you'd like to create or edit

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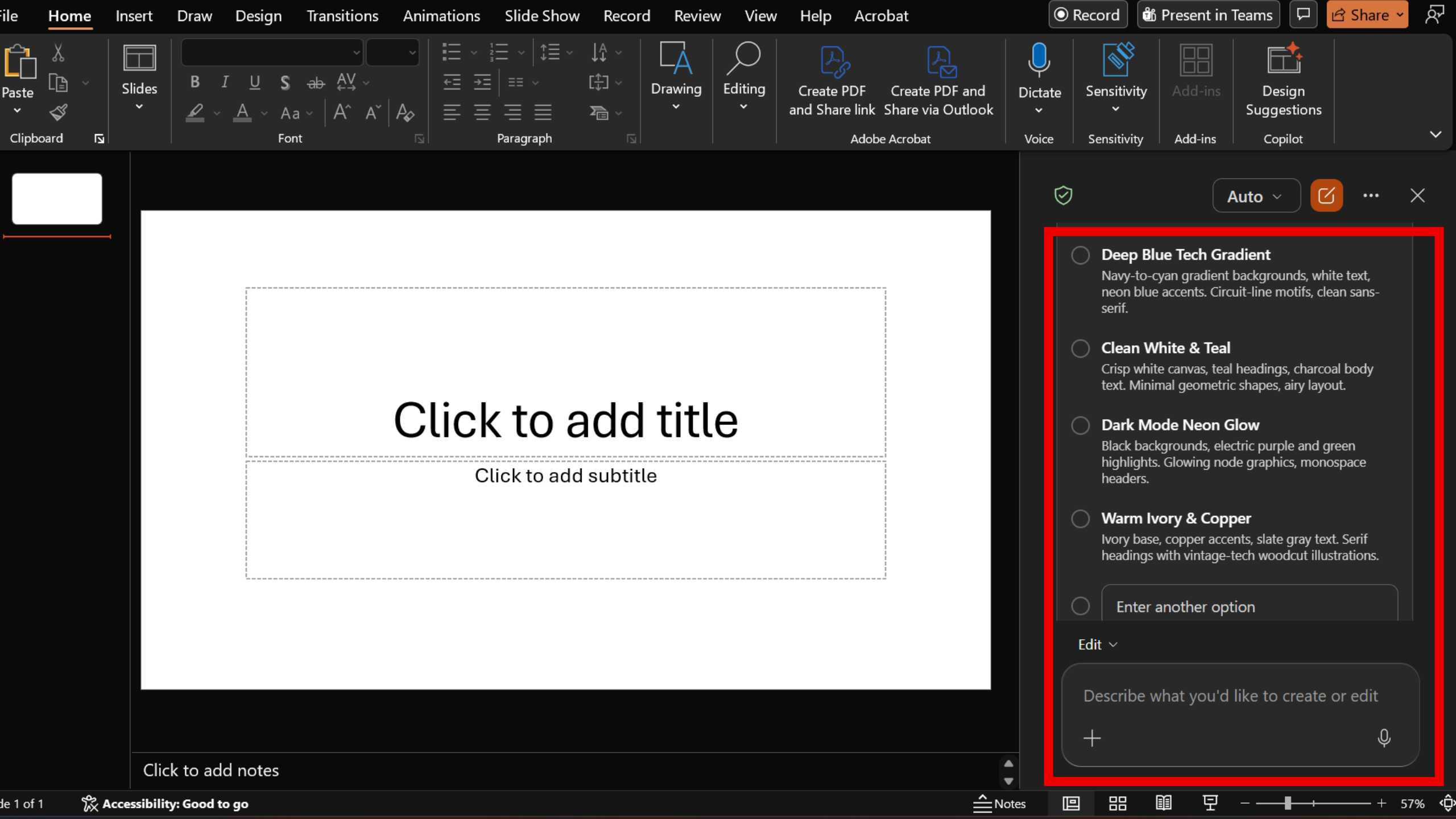
Slide 1 of 1 | Accessibility: Good to go | Notes | 57%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Editing
Create PDF and Share link
Create PDF and Share via Outlook
Adobe Acrobat
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Voice
Sensitivity
Add-ins
Design Suggestions
Copilot
Auto
Deep Blue Tech Gradient
Navy-to-cyan gradient backgrounds, white text, neon blue accents. Circuit-line motifs, clean sans-serif.
Clean White & Teal
Crisp white canvas, teal headings, charcoal body text. Minimal geometric shapes, airy layout.
Dark Mode Neon Glow
Black backgrounds, electric purple and green highlights. Glowing node graphics, monospace headers.
Warm Ivory & Copper
Ivory base, copper accents, slate gray text. Serif headings with vintage-tech woodcut illustrations.
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de 1 of 1
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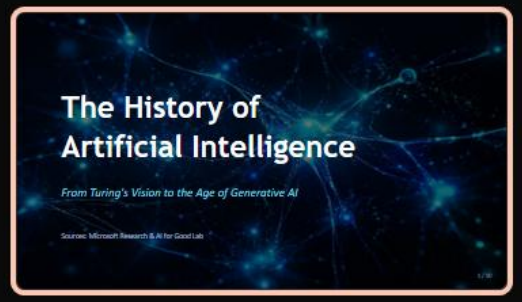

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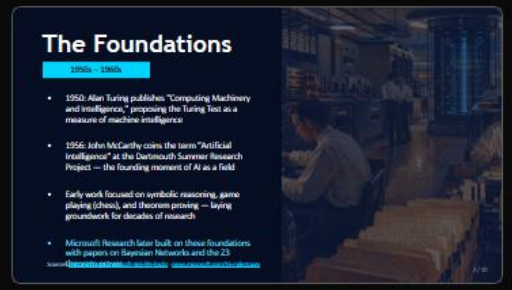

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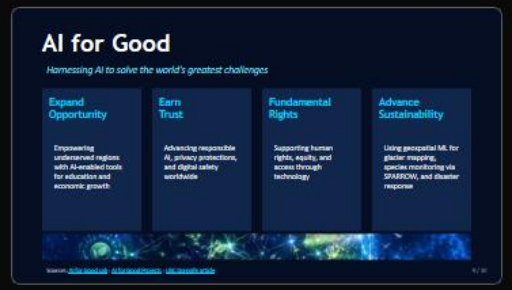

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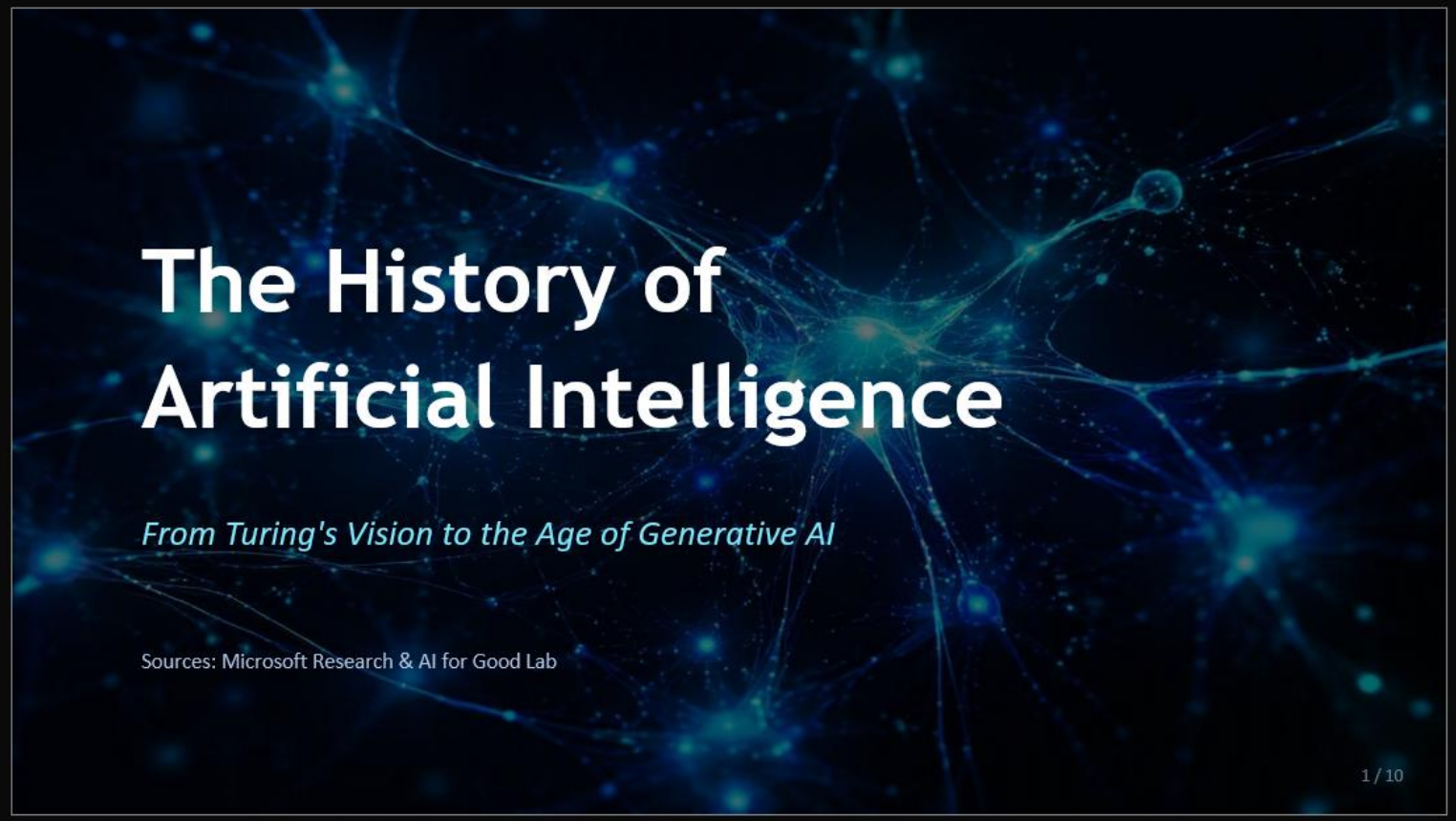

Click to add notes

Auto

I built a 10-slide presentation tracing AI's history from Turing's 1950 paper through the generative AI era, grounded in articles from Microsoft Research and the AI for Good Lab. Each slide includes clickable citation links to the source material — covering the AI for Good Lab overview, Microsoft Research's NLP and Computer Vision groups, the AI at Scale timeline, the Responsible AI journey, and the 2026 trends outlook.

The presentation follows a chronological arc with thematic deep-dives: foundations and the Dartmouth moment, AI winters and expert systems, the machine learning revolution, the deep learning breakthrough, NLP and computer vision advances, the responsible AI timeline, AI

Edit

Describe what you'd like to create or edit



AI Winters & Expert Systems

1970s – 1980s

The AI Winter

- Funding collapsed in the 1970s as early AI failed to meet ambitious predictions
- The Lighthill Report (1973) criticized AI's inability to solve real-world problems at scale
- A second winter hit in the late 1980s when expert systems proved too costly to maintain

Expert Systems Rise

- Rule-based systems like MYCIN (medical diagnosis) and XCON (computer configuration) showed commercial promise
- 1985: Microsoft launches its first OS — a step toward the computing infrastructure AI would eventually require
- Despite setbacks, these decades built critical knowledge in knowledge representation and reasoning

Source: news.microsoft.com/15-milestones

3 / 10

Click to add notes

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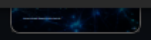










AI for Good

Harnessing AI to solve the world's greatest challenges

Expand Opportunity

Empowering underserved regions with AI-enabled tools for education and economic growth

Earn Trust

Advancing responsible AI, privacy protections, and digital safety worldwide

Fundamental Rights

Supporting human rights, equity, and access through technology

Advance Sustainability

Using geospatial ML for glacier mapping, species monitoring via SPARROW, and disaster response



ources: AI for Good Lab · AI for Good Projects · USC Dornsife article

9 / 10

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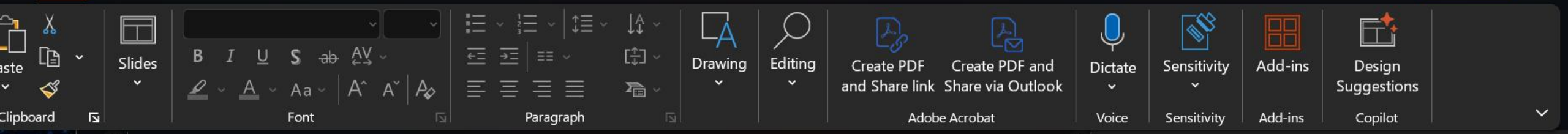
outlook.

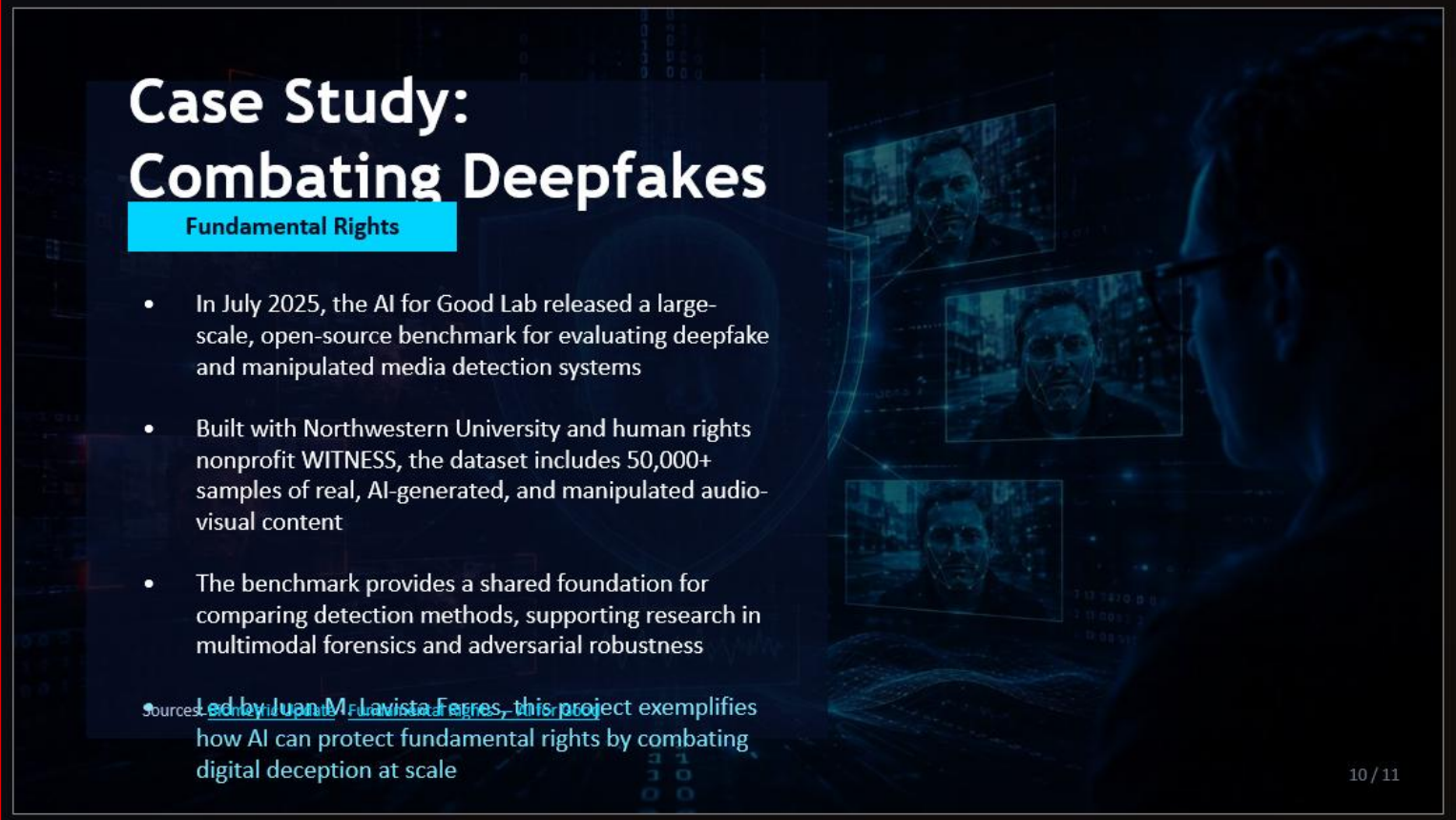
The presentation follows a chronological arc v
thematic deep-dives: foundations and the
Dartmouth moment, AI winters and expert

Edit

After slide 9, can you add a slide on one of the AI for Good lab's most recent human rights projects? Refer to it as a case study.







Auto

University and human rights nonprofit WITNESS — released a 50,000+ sample open-source dataset in July 2025 for evaluating manipulated media detection. Both citation links are included, and all slide numbers across the presentation have been updated to reflect the new 11-slide total.

From here I could:

- Add another case study from a different AI for Good pillar
- Include speaker notes with talking points for the new slide
- Adjust the visual layout or emphasis on the case study

Sources

Edit

Describe what you'd like to create or edit

Click to add notes

Callback!

- Know your audience
- Define your message
- Tell your story as if you’re telling it to a friend
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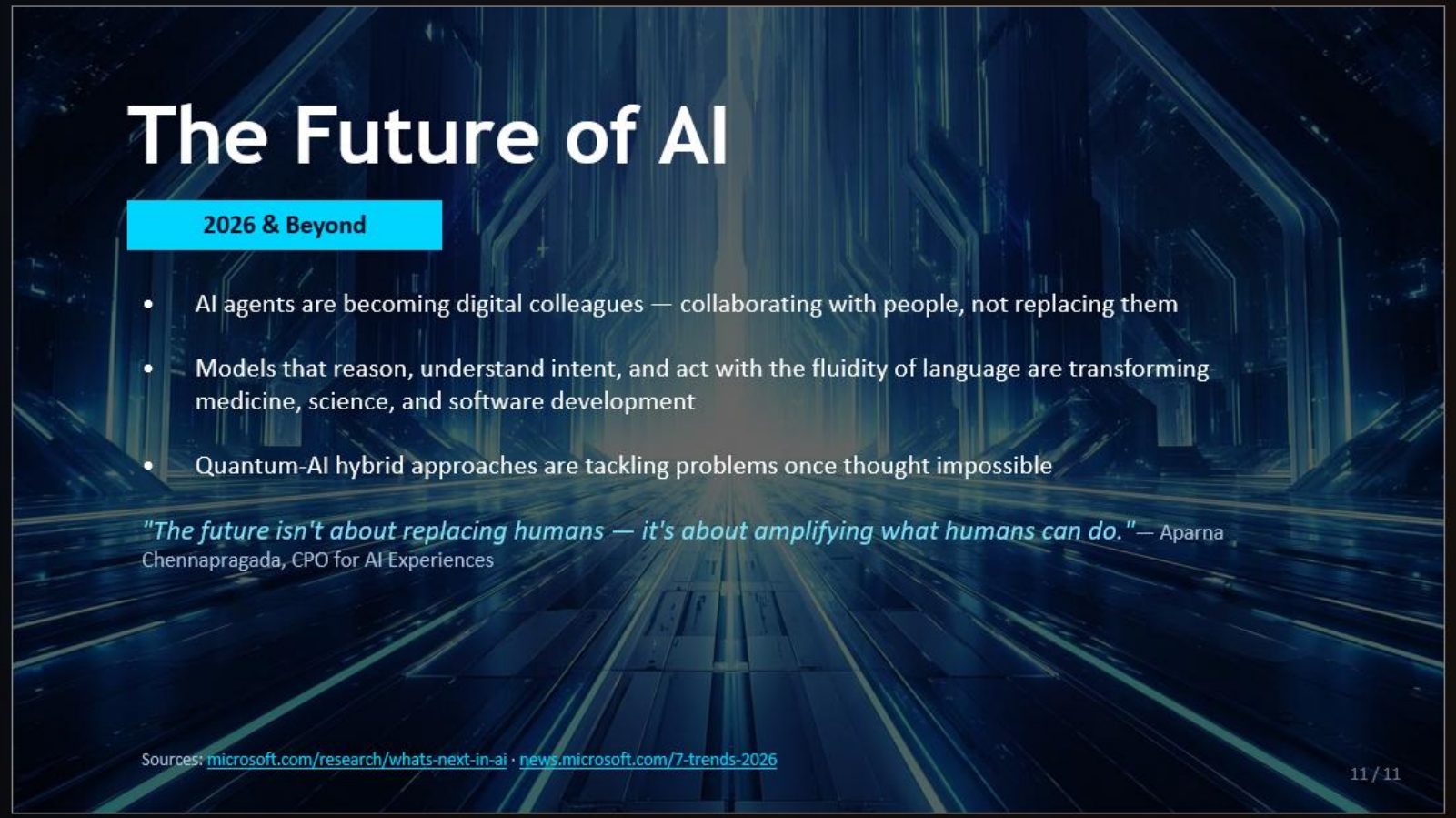
Amplify your story





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Let's edit your presentation

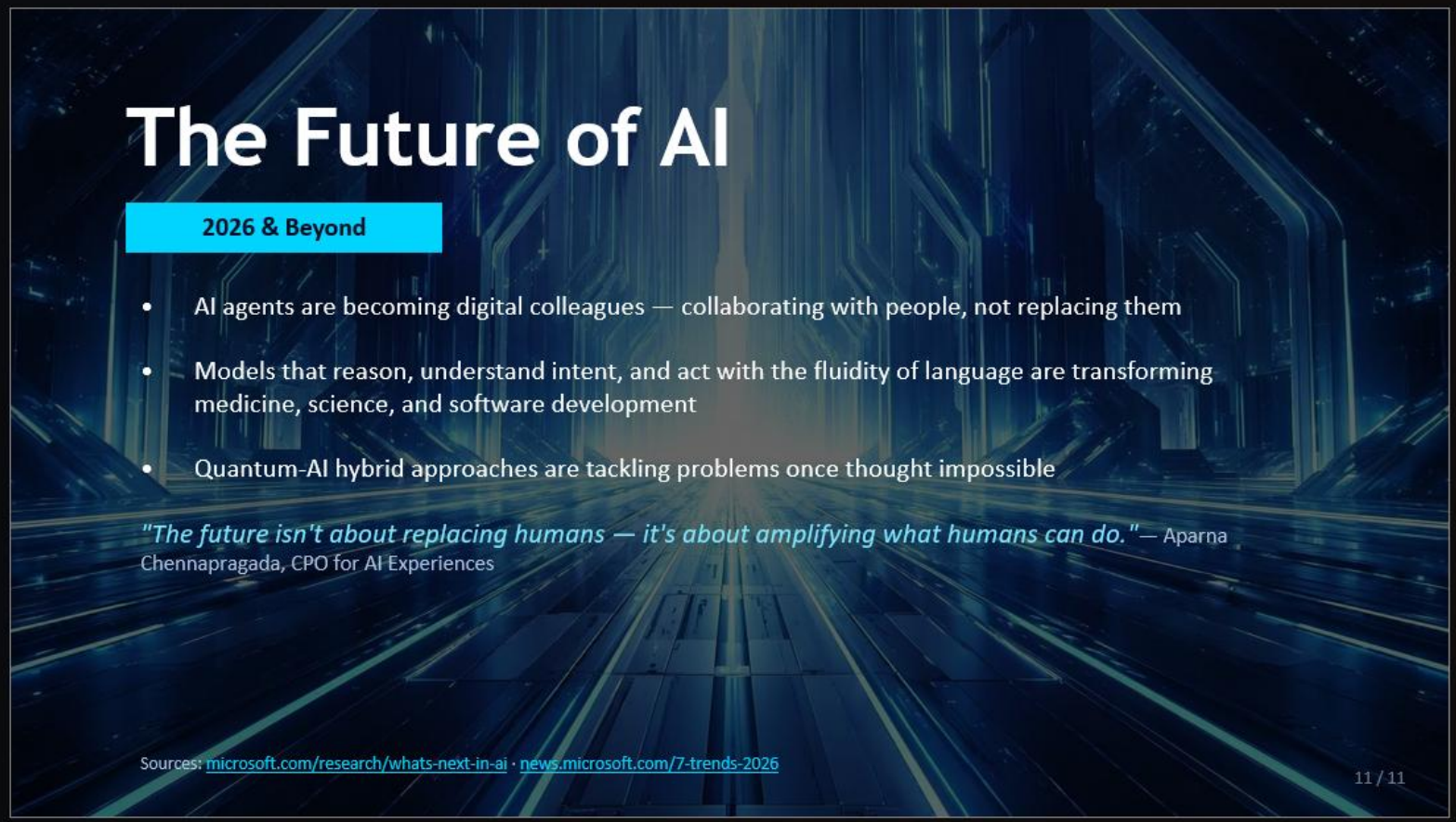
Allow editing

I have to give this presentation to a group of prospective customers on July 9. Can you help me draft a LinkedIn post for Microsoft for Nonprofits and an email that I can send to our database?

Add a slide about description

Summarize this presentation

Clean up the layout of this slide



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Nonprofits)

From Turing's first question to today's AI agents — the story of artificial intelligence is one of the most important stories of our time. And it matters deeply for the nonprofit sector.

Join us on **July 9** for *The History of Artificial Intelligence: From Turing's Vision to the Age of Generative AI* — a session exploring how AI evolved from symbolic reasoning and expert systems to deep learning, natural language processing, and responsible AI frameworks that are shaping the future of social impact.

You'll learn how:

- AI breakthroughs in computer vision and NLP are powering real-world solutions — from

Edit

Describe what you'd like to create or edit

Closing thoughts



Key takeaways

Stay at the centre of your storytelling

Maintaining the human element is essential in storytelling to ensure emotional connection and relatability.

Let AI handle productivity, while you focus on creativity

AI frees up time for storytellers to explore new narratives, enhancing the storytelling experience for audiences of all ages.

Be curious—both in your story development and AI tool experimentation

Experiment, learn, and don’t be afraid to make mistakes.

Next steps

01 Explore our grants and discounts:
microsoft.com/Nonprofits

02 Find training that meets your needs:
aka.ms/NonprofitSkills

03 Connect with us on LinkedIn:
linkedin.com/showcase/microsoft-for-nonprofits

Download our AI playbook