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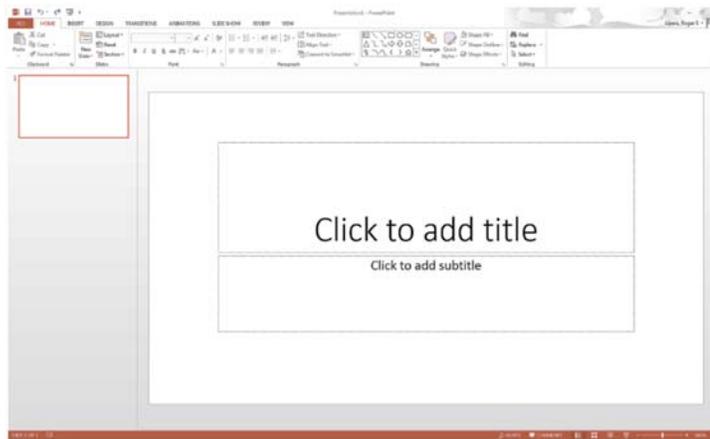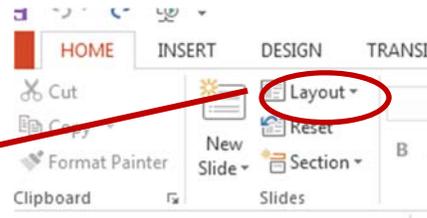**518 442-3607**

Working with SmartArt in PowerPoint

SmartArt is a tool in PowerPoint that allows you to create complicated charts and diagrams with a minimum amount of effort. SmartArt is "smart" in that is automatically adjusts for size as you work on the layout. In this handout we will examine many of the SmartArt features.

When you start PowerPoint your screen will resemble the illustration below.
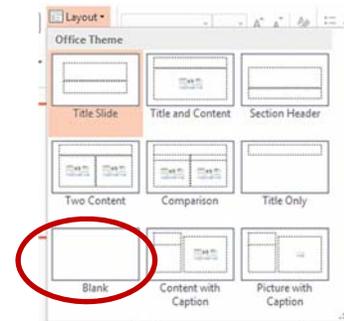

Make sure the Home tab on the ribbon is selected, then click the Layout button in the Slides zone.

Layout button

Select the Blank layout from the panel. This layout will be easiest to work with right now.
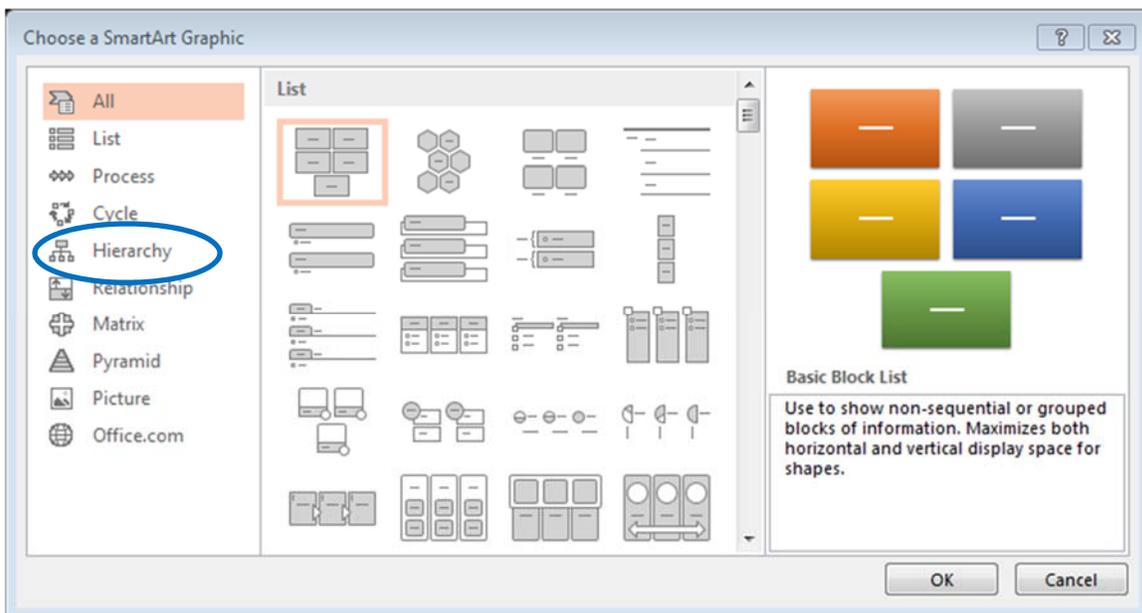
You will now have a blank slide.

Click the Insert tab on the ribbon. The ribbon will change to show you insert options.

Click SmartArt.

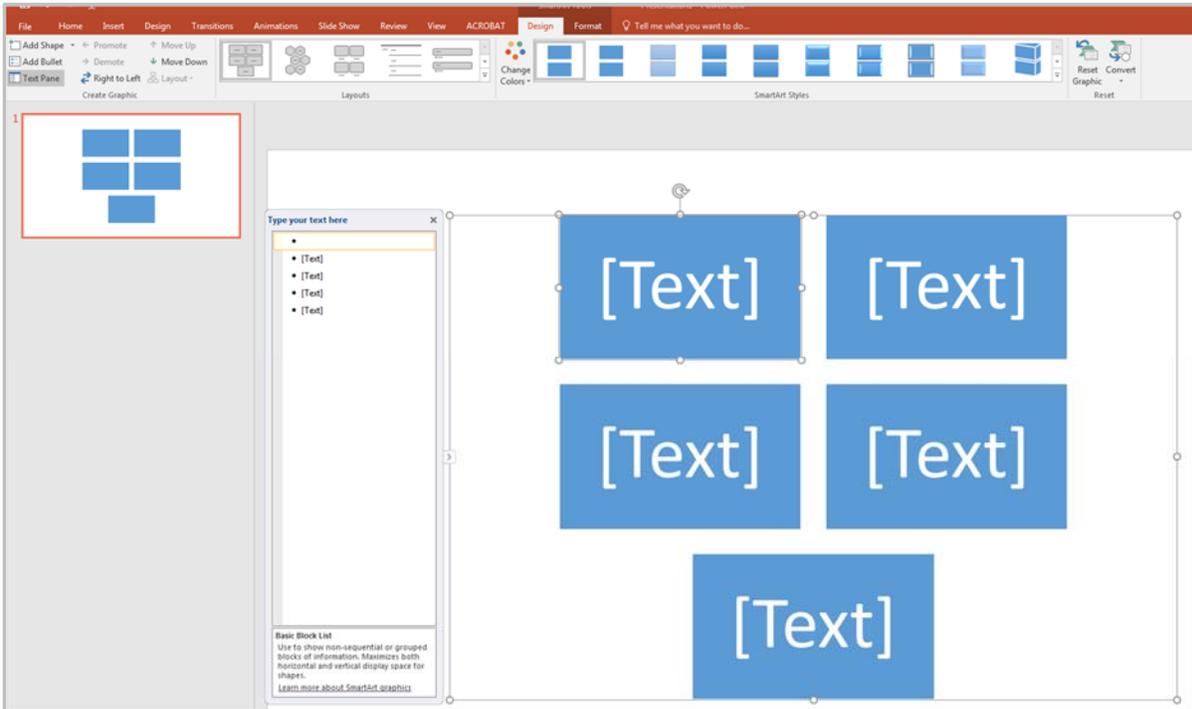The Choose a SmartArt Graphic panel displays.

There are three sections to this panel. On the left is a column that lists the various SmartArt categories. You can select a specific category or choose All to show examples of every option.

The central list section displays graphic representations of the many SmartArt styles. Clicking on a style will select it and cause a thumbnail to be displayed on the right.
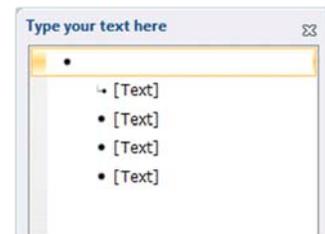
To the right a thumbnail illustration is displayed along with a detailed description of the SmartArt style you have selected.

For this exercise select Hierchacy in the left column. Click OK.

The SmartArt style you selected will be inserted into the slide as shown below. A new purple SmartArt Tools tab will appear on the ribbon. Make sure this tab is selected.
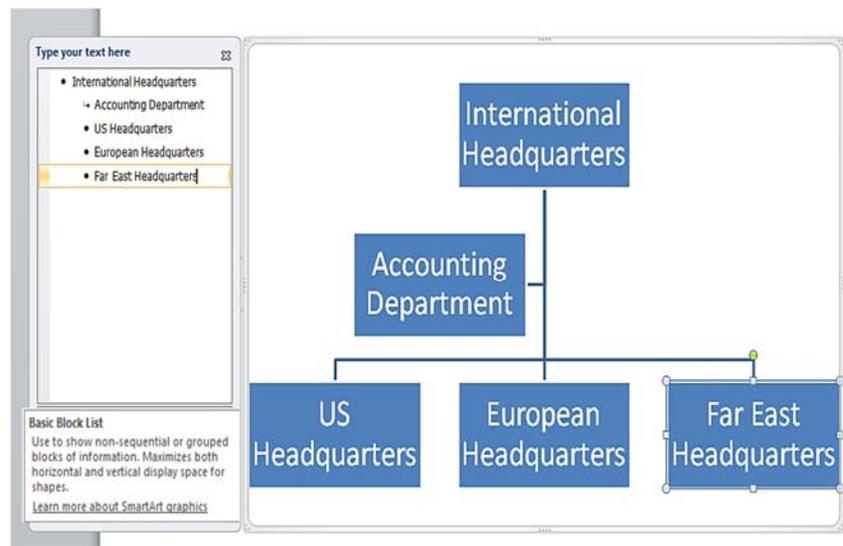
Enter the text for each of the SmartArt boxes in the bulleted list of the text entry box. As you type into each list item, your text will appear in the SmartArt boxes.
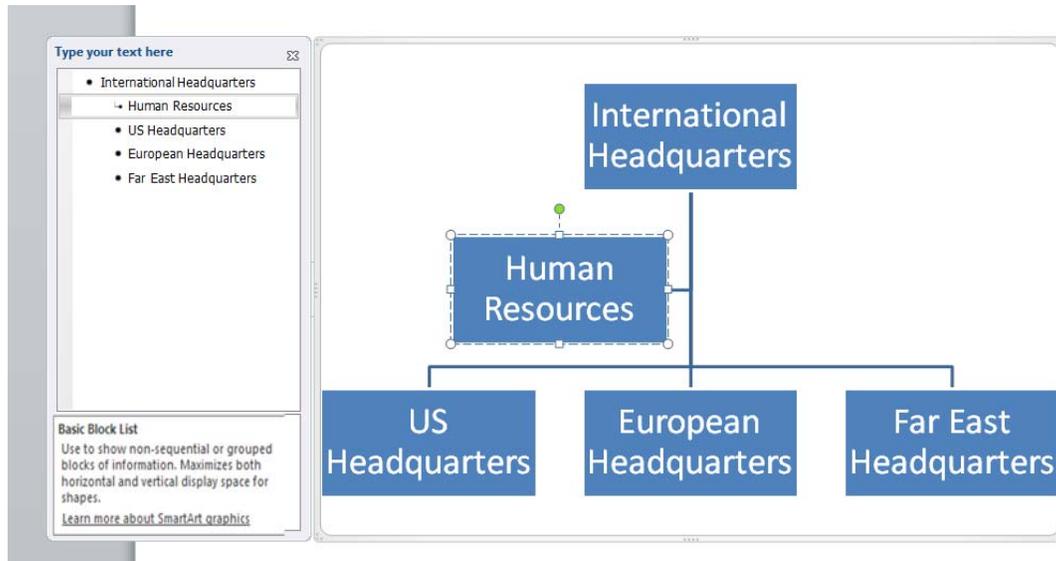

In the example below we have created a simple hierharcy for a multi-national company.

As you add text in the panel on the left, it appears in the boxes on the right. As you add or remove text the boxes resize to match the available space. This is one of the things that makes SmartArt "smart."
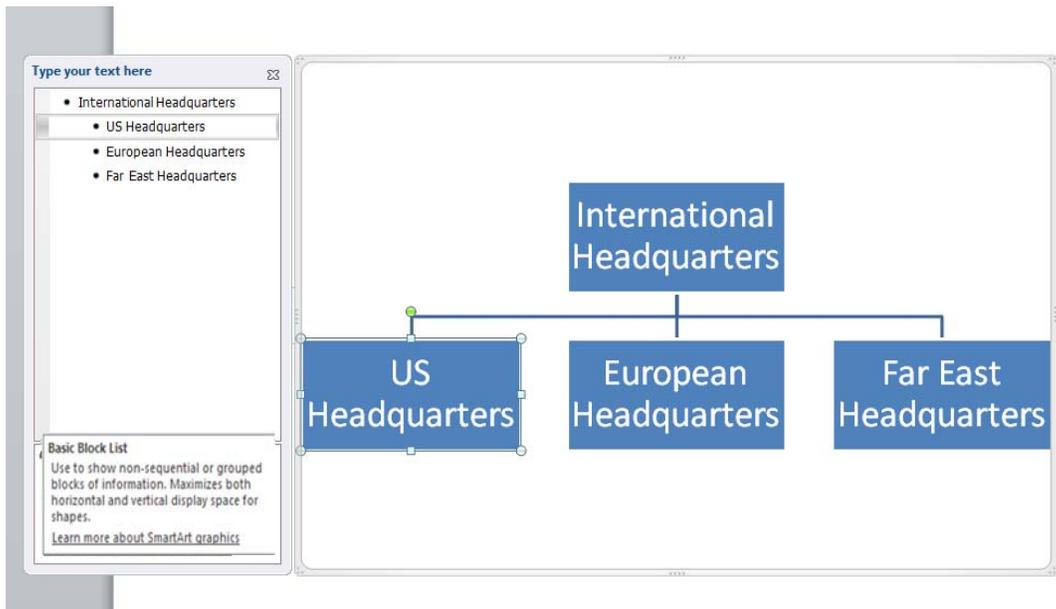
You can also change the text in the boxes directly.

Click in the Accounting Department box and retype the information to Human Resources as shown below.

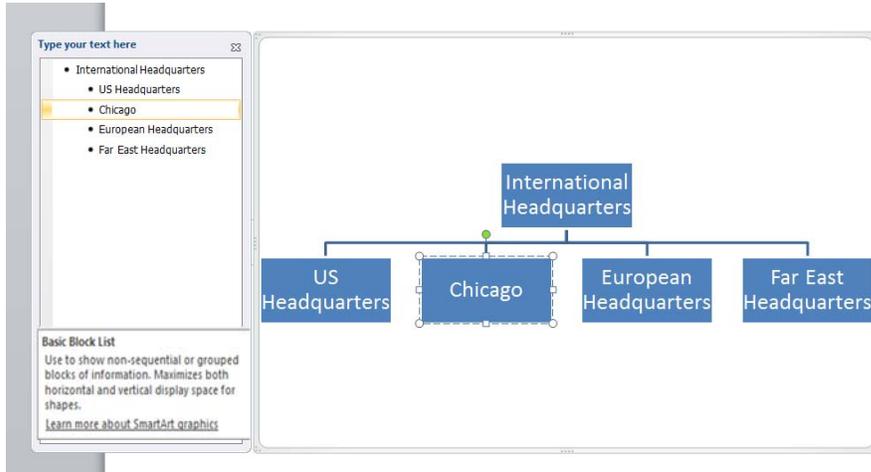As you retype the text the new text appears in the list in the text entry panel on the left.

You can easily remove a box in the SmartArt diagram by deleting it directly from the chart or by deleting it from the list. Remove the Human Resources box to create the chart below.

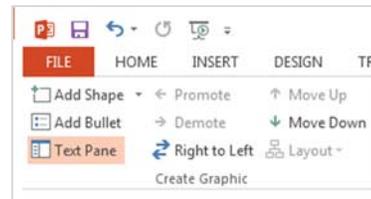You can add more boxes to the diagram easily.

Select US Headquarters in the list. Press the Enter key on your keyboard.

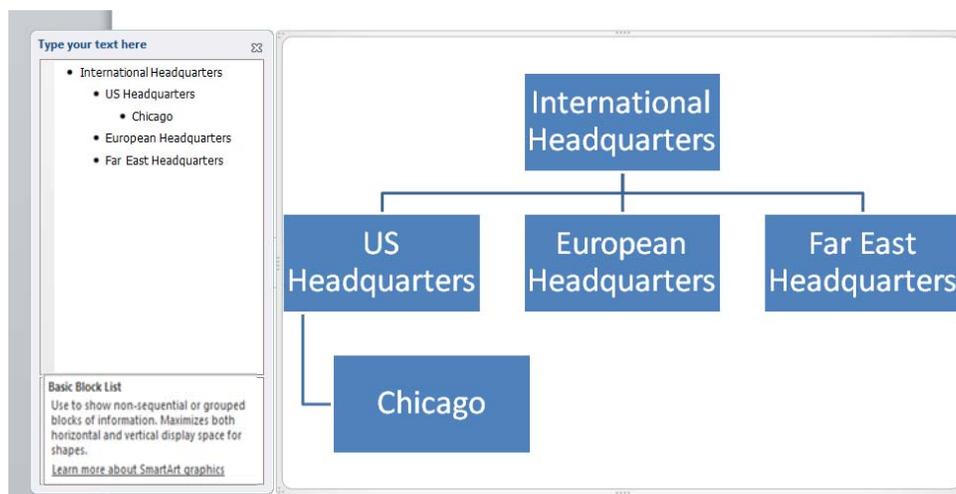Type "Chicago" into the new list item. Chicago will now appear in a new box.

The hierharcy shown above has Chicago on the same level as the international headquarters. Logically, Chicago should probably be "under" US Headquarters.

Make sure Chicago is selected in the list. Click Demote in the Design section of the ribbon.
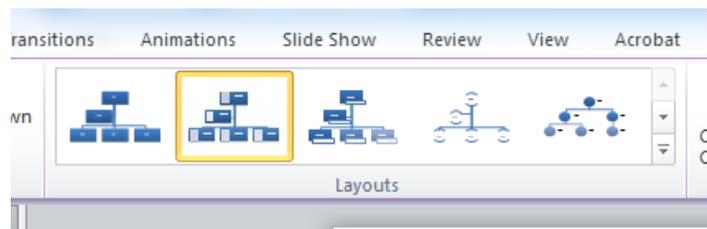

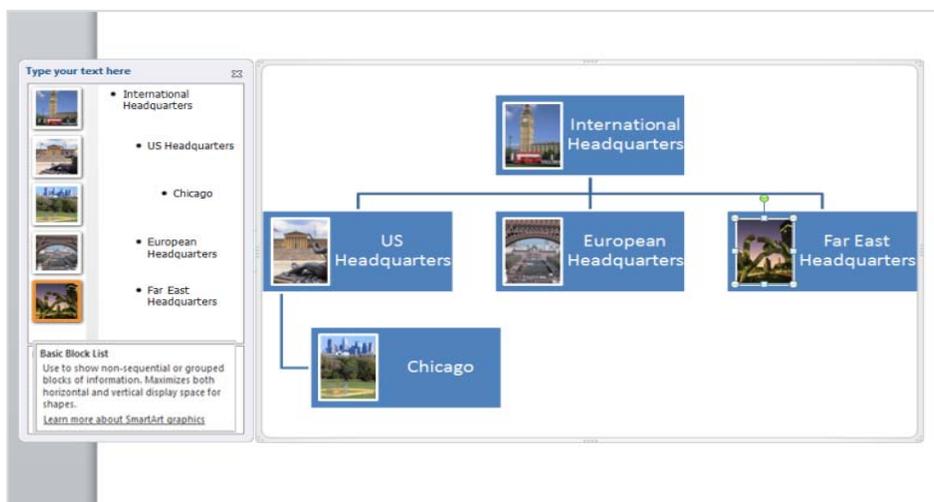Chicago has now moved to a position under US Headquarters.

You can change your SmartArt layouts and customize your chart.

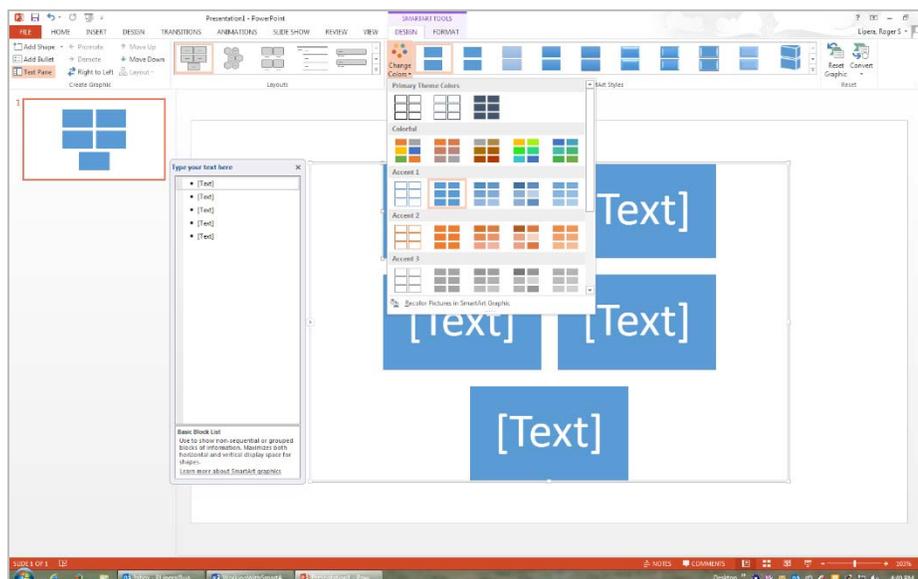Click any of the options in the Layouts section of the ribbon.

In the example below we have added photographs to each box. Other layouts allow you to select fancy shapes and more.
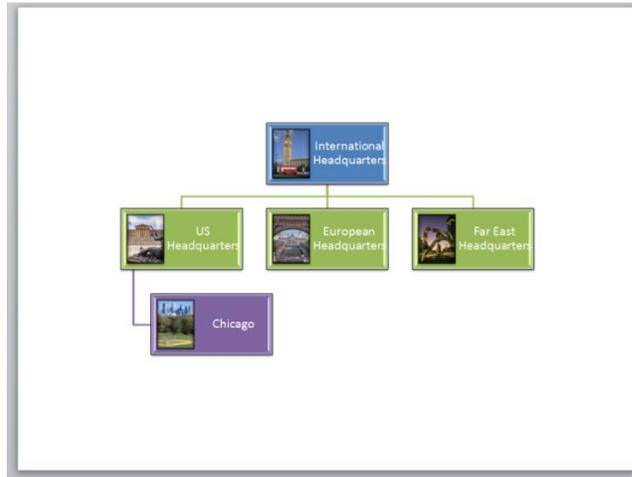
The SmartArt Styles section of the ribbon provides options for custom coloring and graphic styles.
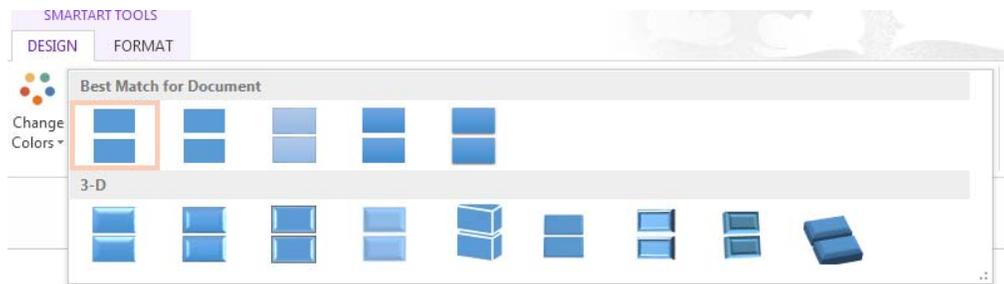

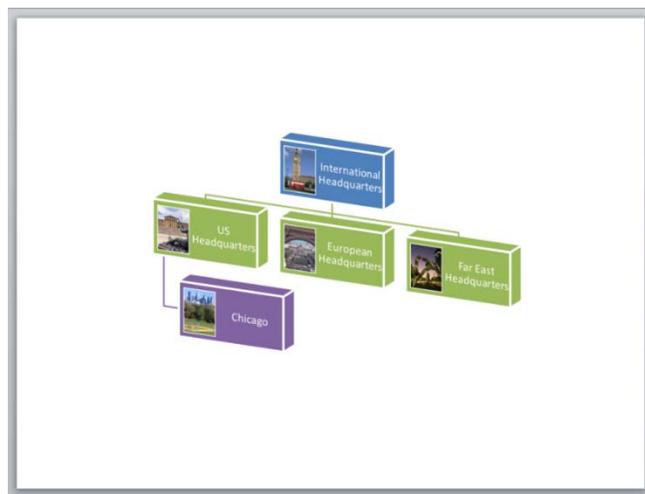The Change Colors dropdown list is illustrated below.

The SmartArt hierhacy diagram below has had custom colors applied to it.

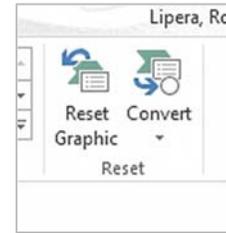There are both 2-D and 3-D layouts available for SmartArt.

The example below has had one of the 3-D layouts applied to it.

In the Reset section of the ribbon, on the far right, are options for resetting or converting SmartArt graphics.

Click Reset Graphic to discard all, or most, customization that you have made to your chart or diagram.

The Convert option gives you the choice of converting SmartArt to text-based lists or simple shapes that do not have SmartArt capabilities.

SmartArt boxes can also be formatted individually. As with regular non-SmartArt shapes, right click on a box and select Format Shape from the list. Use the Format Shape panel to customize the shape.

In the illustration below, the US Headquarters box has had a photographic background applied, and the European Headquarters box now has a color background and custom border.

Roger Lipera 3/13, v2; revised for 2016, 3/18