

Lesson 4-9: Adjusting the Layout of a Diagram

Figure 4-16

The Lay Out Shapes dialog box.

Figure 4-17

The updated diagram.

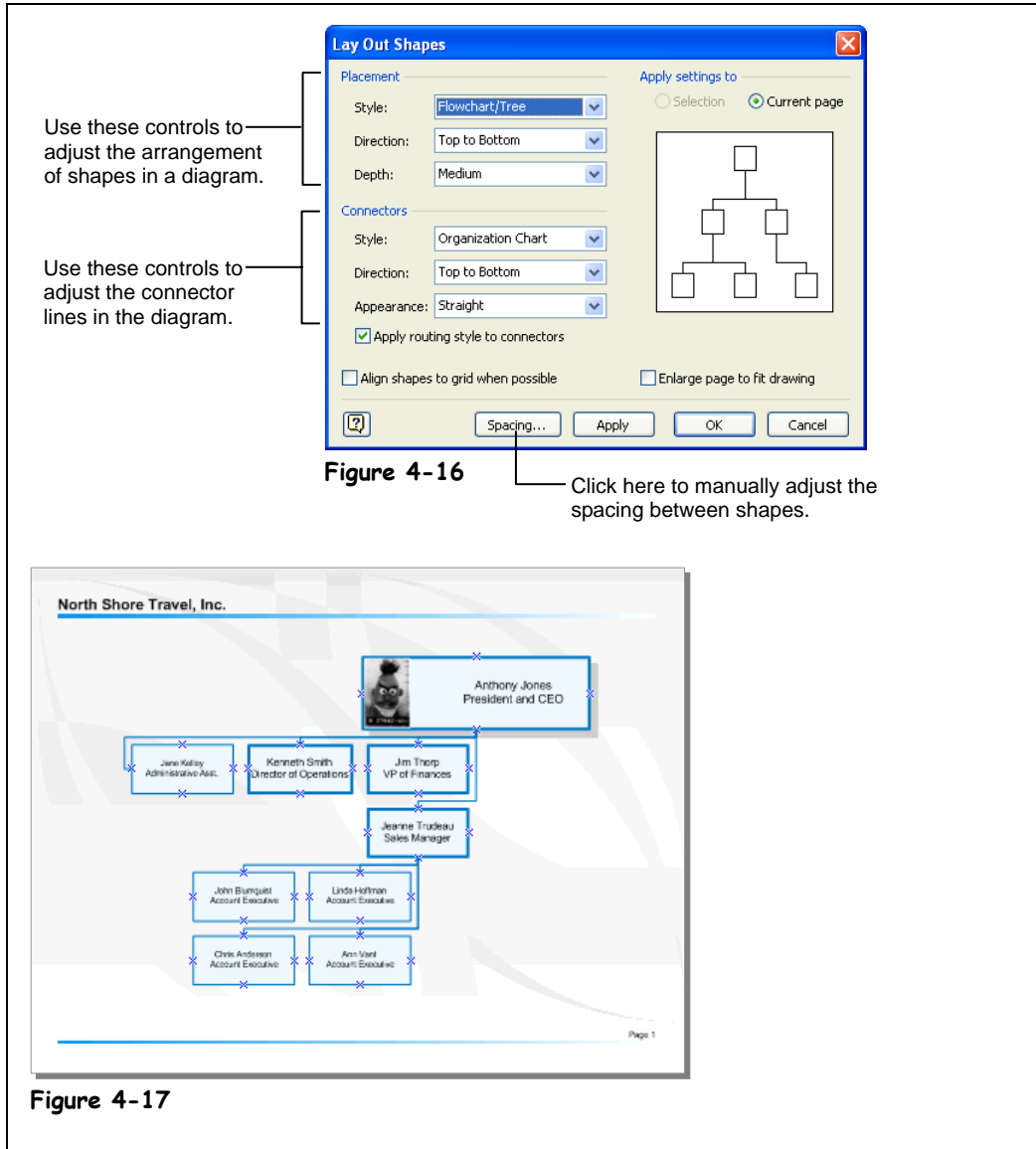


Figure 4-17

It's Monday. You're swamped. And to top it all off, you haven't even started that 100+ employee organization chart you've been putting off since last week. Before you gulp down that ninth cup of coffee and kiss everything else on your agenda goodbye, summon the Lay Out Shapes dialog box.

The Lay Out Shapes dialog box lets you organize all the shapes in your diagram instantaneously, automatically positioning, aligning, and distributing the shapes in your diagram so that you don't have to. The Lay Out Shapes dialog box is a huge timesaver, and can tame even the most unruly of diagrams.

Before we begin, make sure that none of the shapes in the diagram are selected.

1. Click an empty area of the diagram to make sure that all shapes are deselected.

NOTE: If you only want to arrange certain shapes in a diagram, select only the shapes you want to arrange.

2. Select **Shape** → **Lay Out Shapes** from the menu.

The Lay Out Shapes dialog box appears, as shown in Figure 4-16.

First you need to select how you want the shapes in your diagram to be laid out. Since we are working on an organization chart, the shapes need to be laid out in a specific order.

3. In the Placement section, click the **Style** list arrow.

There are four options listed here: Radial, Flowchart/Tree, Circular, and Compact Tree. If your diagram doesn't have any specific direction, such as a network diagram, you'll want to select the Radial style. We are working on an organization chart, however, so we need to select a style that *does* position shapes in a specific direction.

4. Select **Compact Tree** from the list.

A preview of the Compact Tree style appears on the right side of the dialog box.

Now you need to select the direction in which you want the information to flow.

5. In the Placement section, click the **Direction** list arrow and select **Down then Left** from the list.

Now you need to select the depth of the diagram. The *depth* determines how much space to leave between each shape so that all shapes fit.

6. In the Placement section, click the **Depth** list arrow.

There are three options listed here:

- **Shallow:** This option isn't very space-efficient, but it looks well visually. If you are working with an organization chart, select this option if the diagram contains more horizontal shapes than it does vertical (more managers than positions).
- **Deep:** This option is more space-efficient than Shallow. If you are working with an organization chart, select this option if the diagram contains more vertical shapes than horizontal ones (more positions than managers).
- **Medium:** For the indecisive bunch, Medium is a compromise between Shallow and Deep.

7. Select **Medium** from the list and click **OK**.

The organization chart is updated to reflect the changes, as shown in Figure 4-17.

You can also use the Organization Chart toolbar to adjust the layout of an organization chart. Let's try it.

8. Click the **Anthony Jones** shape to select it, click the **Horizontal Layout button** on the Organization Chart toolbar, and select **Align Left** from the menu.

The layout is updated. Let's move this diagram a bit so that it's not falling off the page.

NOTE: If the Organization Chart toolbar does not appear in the program window, select View → Toolbars → Organization Chart from the menu.

9. Click and drag the **Anthony Jones** shape to the left, and then release the mouse button.

All of the other shapes in the diagram follow suit. Repeat this step as necessary until all of the shapes in the diagram are situated on the page.

10. Close the diagram without saving any changes.

If you are working on a diagram that does not follow any specific direction, such as a network diagram, select Radial from the Style list in the Lay Out Shapes dialog box.



Horizontal Layout button

Quick Reference

To Automatically Adjust the Layout of a Diagram:

1. Click a blank area on the drawing page to make sure that all shapes are deselected.
2. Select **Shape** → **Lay Out Shapes** from the menu.
3. Make your specifications in the Lay Out Shapes dialog box and click **OK** when you're finished.

Or...

- If you are working with an organization chart, use the commands located on the Organization Chart toolbar.