

Visual Management



Figure 1: An example of Visual Management

Benefits at a glance....

- understand a situation within a matter of seconds
- identify problems more rapidly than you would be able to through text-based communications
- alerts you to take action before it's too late
- provides focal point for communication, review and problem solving

What is it?

Visual management is the communication of information in a simple, non-verbal manner which is quicker for our brains to process. It helps you to:

- share information with others (**Visual Display**)
- see what's happening and how well things are going to plan ... or not (**Visual Control**)

From a continuous improvement perspective, **Visual Management** is about orienting and supporting people and not about controlling their actions.

Visual Management can be used by a team to track and monitor how well progress is being made against the measurable criteria or KPIs (key performance indicators) identified as 'Critical to Quality' to the customer experience from *Voice of the Customer (VoC)* data.

When to use it?

Use Visual Management when you want to:

- communicate quickly and accurately
- expose problems and highlight good practice
- spot trends in data and compare performance
- keep everyone in the loop



How to use it?

The Focus Programme uses **Visual Management** to enable a **Daily update** for each of their projects and for the Team itself. This provides the basis for communication through **Visual Display**, for example, the team barometer (Fig 3a) and **Visual Control** (Fig 3b) showing progression on projects.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Attendance and barometer - How are you today? Do you need any support?										
2											
3			Asha	Alex	Chris	Kim	Lisa	Noor	Pat	Ravi	Sam
4	M	5-Jan-26	Happy	Annual Leave	Ok	Happy	Happy	Ok	Very Concerned	Happy	Happy
5	T	6-Jan-26	Happy	Ok	Apologies	Happy	Ok	Ok	Concerned	Happy	Happy
6	W	7-Jan-26	Apologies	Ok	Apologies	Happy	Apologies	Ok	Ok	Annual Leave	Ok
7	T	8-Jan-26	Happy	Apologies	Apologies	Very happy	Ok	Ok	Ok	Annual Leave	Happy
8	F	9-Jan-26	Non Working	Ok	Ok	Happy	Concerned	Happy	Happy	Non Working	Ok

Figure 3a: An example from the Daily Update – A Visual Display showing who in the team is working on a given day and whether the individual might need support.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	
1	Action Planner: what are we all working on and how is it going?									
2										
3						w/c 5 Jan 2026				
4	Projects	Project name	Lead			Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
5		Project 1	Aisha			Green	Amber	Amber	Green	Green
6		Project 2	Carlos			Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
7		Project 3	Lisa			Green	Green	Green	Green	Closed
8		Project 4	Patrick			Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
9		Project 5	Sam			Green	Green	Amber	Red	Red
10										
11	Other	Local Practitioner Classroom Session				Event				
12		Team Away Day						Event		
13		Website Launch Day							Event	
14										

Figure 3b: A digital example of using 'Visual Control' to see how well things are going to plan (Projects Section) and Visual Display' to share information ('Other' Section).

Visual management is important in the presentation of information in person and online. Think how you could apply the principles to the high-level structure of a team SharePoint site or even to the design of forms and spreadsheets.

Accessibility Good Practice – Where colour is used, ensure alternative indicators (e.g., symbols, labels or positioning) are also provided.

Visual Management can be used so that differing levels of risk can easily be communicated, at a glance, using red-amber-green (RAG) colour-coding relating actions required to the level of risk as show in the risk register in Figure 4 below. Red is high-risk, amber is medium-risk and green is low-risk.



# Risk Factor	Description of risk	Cause (if this were to be the case...)	Effect (if this would result)	Impact (consequence to the programme)	Probability (likelihood)	Skills	Impact	Flag	RAG	Priority	Monitoring (how could we tell if it's happening)	Response Plan & Actions (if/when current control)	Assessment of residual risk - Likelihood	Assessment of residual risk - Impact	Assessment of residual risk - RAG
1	Programme budget overruns leading to compromised delivery of services	Staff time to work on other projects	Staff time to work on other projects	Staff time to work on other projects	High	2	Medium	2	Red	1	1. Staff time to work on other projects	1. Staff time to work on other projects	Medium	Medium	A
2	Programme / project timescales are extended as work items, impact on completion of personal computing equipment	Home computer hardware may not be of sufficient power	Staff take more time to deliver work	Design to programme / project timescales	Medium	2	Medium	2	Yellow	2	2. Staff time to work on other projects	2. Staff time to work on other projects	Medium	Medium	A
3	Programme / project timescales are extended as staff cannot work effectively without access to personal computing equipment	Change of capacity maintained or cloud-based technology used by IT services	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Design to programme / project timescales	Low	3	High	3	Green	3	3. Staff time to work on other projects	3. Staff time to work on other projects	Medium	Medium	A
4	Programme / project timescales are extended as staff cannot work effectively without access to personal computing equipment	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Design to programme / project timescales	Medium	2	Medium	2	Yellow	2	4. Staff time to work on other projects	4. Staff time to work on other projects	Medium	Medium	A
5	Programme / project timescales are extended as staff cannot work effectively without access to personal computing equipment	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Design to programme / project timescales	Low	3	High	3	Green	3	5. Staff time to work on other projects	5. Staff time to work on other projects	Medium	Medium	A
6	Programme / project timescales are extended as staff cannot work effectively without access to personal computing equipment	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Design to programme / project timescales	Medium	2	Medium	2	Yellow	2	6. Staff time to work on other projects	6. Staff time to work on other projects	Medium	Medium	A
7	Programme / project timescales are extended as staff cannot work effectively without access to personal computing equipment	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Design to programme / project timescales	Low	3	High	3	Green	3	7. Staff time to work on other projects	7. Staff time to work on other projects	Medium	Medium	A
8	Programme / project timescales are extended as staff cannot work effectively without access to personal computing equipment	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Design to programme / project timescales	Medium	2	Medium	2	Yellow	2	8. Staff time to work on other projects	8. Staff time to work on other projects	Medium	Medium	A
9	Programme / project timescales are extended as staff cannot work effectively without access to personal computing equipment	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Design to programme / project timescales	Low	3	High	3	Green	3	9. Staff time to work on other projects	9. Staff time to work on other projects	Medium	Medium	A
10	Programme / project timescales are extended as staff cannot work effectively without access to personal computing equipment	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Staff cannot communicate (loss of email/Teams) payments cannot be made (loss of finance)	Design to programme / project timescales	Medium	2	Medium	2	Yellow	2	10. Staff time to work on other projects	10. Staff time to work on other projects	Medium	Medium	A

Figure 4: An example of actions colour-coded relating to level of risk

Other examples of **Visual Management** tools include:

- **Andons** – a visual device that indicates status or warns of problems or failure and alerts you to take action. A simple example of Andon is the availability status displayed in your profile on Microsoft Teams.
- **Warning signs** - such as the one below in a store room at the Ashmolean.



'A visual device is a mechanism or thing intentionally designed to influence, guide, limit or even guarantee our behaviour by making vital information available as close to the point of use as possible to anyone ... who needs it without speaking a word'

Dr Gwendolyn Galsworth, visual workplace expert