IMPACT OF VISUAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ON THE TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

This paper describes a technique for planning, known as Visual Management. It is a promout as a workplace where all associates understand and manage their own work in a safe, clean, organized environment that fosters open communication, pride, and continuous improvement. The problem of applying the total quality management using Visual Management, is that it can tend to challenge the traditional authoritarian strategic planning models, which have become the paradigms of modern business. Yet Visual Management provides an appropriate tool for the declaration of the strategic vision of business while integrating goals and targets in a single holistic model. There have been various adaptations of Visual Management to align the technique of western thinking and management approaches, yet outside Japan its significance has gone largely unreported. Visual Management provide real-time information on workplace status by a combination of simple, effective visual information aids that allow employees to understand their influence on the organization overall performance hence allowing the employees to improve their performance.

Key Words: Visual Management, performance, strategy, total quality management

Introduction

This paper presents an exploratory research study which seeks to give an insight on Visual Management has been evolving and effectively employed in some manufacturing and service organisations for a long time. In order to facilitate a cross-industrial learning process and to advance in detailed research the understanding of how the Visual Management concept may serve in an organisation is necessary. Strategic philosophies or practices such as Kaizen, Lean Manufacturing, Six Sigma, Total Quality Management and Continuous Improvement are used by many organizations to help improve processes, drive productivity and maintain a competitive edge in today’s ever-increasing global economy. Despite varying concepts, each practice uses Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to assess, analyze and track business manufacturing processes. Even if an organization does not employ formal continuous improvement initiatives, efficiency gains can still be realized by borrowing lessons learned through the visual management techniques of those processes.

The authors begin by considering the growing recognition of the visual turn in management research as a counterweight to the linguistic turn, while also discussing reasons for resistance to visual approaches. Next, they review research that uses visual methods to study management and organization and suggest that visual management studies may be categorized according to whether methods used are empirically driven or theory based. This categorization highlights the philosophical, theoretical and interdisciplinary underpinnings of visual management studies. It also enables the visual to be accorded a status equivalent to linguistic meaning, through dispelling the realist assumptions that have impeded analytical development of visual management studies to date.
Definition of visual management

Visual management (of which 5S is a part of) is a workplace organization methodology used to create, maintain, monitor, and improve a well organized, clean, safe and highly productive work area. See the 5S onepager for more specifics on that methodology.

In the organisational world Visual Management is a management system that attempts to improve organisational performance through connecting and aligning organisational vision, core values, goals and culture with other management systems, work processes, workplace elements, and stakeholders, by means of stimuli, which directly address one or more of the five human senses (sight, hearing, feeling, smell and taste).

Visual Management is realized in visual workplaces, which are structured with information giving, signalling, limiting or guaranteeing.

Visual management (VM) is the managerial strategy of consciously integrating visual tools in workspaces with the aim of increasing transparency on construction sites. Several VM tools and approaches that had been originally developed in the manufacturing context were implemented in construction.

Key rules for any business when developing its strategy is ensuring that workplace activities and roles are aligned with the business objective, and that goals and performance are adequately communicated to key stakeholders. This is true of any business strategy whether that’s selling millions of dollars of widgets to deploying a business improvement project.

Visual management – Goals

Visual management is the process of displaying critical information such as KPIs that relate specifically to production output, efficiency and quality. By displaying this data on the factory floor, employees have a better sense of production levels and tend to strive for higher performance. Visual management also provides actionable information that allows supervisors to better monitor performance and determine, in real-time, areas that may need improvement. The overall result helps to drive productivity throughout the organization by increasing efficiency, quality and uptime.

Summary of Visual Management Objectives in:

- Facilitates employee autonomy
- Serves to eliminate waste
- Fosters continuous improvement
- Allows for quick response & recovery
- Leads to information sharing

The work environment should be spotless, safe and self-cleaning

Standards should be easy to recognise and abnormal conditions are quickly identified, enabling speedy analysis and resolution

Performance and progress should be readily apparent to employees

Mechanisms should be in place to significantly reduce or remove waste and defects in the process.

Developing suitable business processes that meet these objectives is one thing but it is imperative that this is coupled with business measures and metrics that offer adequate insight into business performance against targets and can be analyzed to help explain gaps (in order that recovery action can be initiated). Having KPI’s or metrics however is never, by itself, sufficient, the organization must adequately communicate these to its stakeholders (it’s workforce and its management). A workforce that is able to see how activities and tasks are helping the company meet its objectives, whilst also having a hand in how processes are constructed to meet these goals are likely to be more productive, be able to understand the link between performance and results and be better equipped in solving any problems that might arise.
total quality management

Total Quality Management (TQM) has become, according to one source, ‘as pervasive a part of business thinking as quarterly financial results,’ and yet TQM’s role as a strategic resource remains virtually unexamined in strategic management research. Drawing on the resource approach and other theoretical perspectives, this article examines TQM as a potential source of sustainable competitive advantage, reviews existing empirical evidence, and reports findings from a new empirical study of TQM’s performance consequences. The findings suggest that most features generally associated with TQM—such as quality training, process improvement, and benchmarking—do not generally produce advantage, but that certain tacit, behavioral, imperfectly imitable features—such as open culture, employee empowerment, and executive commitment—can produce advantage.88

TQM as a system that drives improvement is very analogous to a visual management approach. The elements and characteristics are considerably supportive of each other, and the two philosophies mandate a similar organizational mindset. Consequently on the road of a company to TQM, a visual management approach and any of its tools under its umbrella in practice, is a compatible valuable tool to TQM.

Companies that implement TQM as a comprehensive integrated initiative, report results in the areas of operational efficiency (such as cycle-time reduction, unproved productivity, and fewer defects), in customer satisfaction, and in organizational values such as lower turn over and higher morale89

One of the most important enablers of continuous improvement sustainability is ease of communication, and doing so in a way that can be understood by all employees and allows information to flow rapidly throughout the company. Visual Management (VM) provides significant benefits in communication and standardisation which boosts the effectiveness of improvement systems.88

The Functions of Visual Management

A literature review was performed to identify functions of Visual Management. The details of the review resulted in a taxonomy of the functions identified from different resources. The elaboration of the identified functions for a better understanding of their possible contributions to an organisation is necessary and presented in the following.9

Transparency : Transparency can be defined as the ability of a production process (or its parts) to communicate with people.91

Discipline: Visual Management reflects people’s adherence to the expectations of processes by transforming the abstract concept of discipline into directly observable concrete practices94

Continuous Improvement: Continuous improvement (or kaizen in the lean terminology) is a highly dynamic capability and can be defined as “an organisation-wide process of focused and sustained incremental innovation.”94

Job Facilitation: Job facilitation can be defined as a conscious attempt to physically and/or mentally ease people’s efforts on routine, already known tasks by offering various visual aids. Visual Management facilitates routine job tasks for people by offering a quick, correct and holistic understanding of their job requirements98

On-the-Job Training: On-the-job training includes learning from experience. Integrating working with learning is a competitive imperative for organisations. Information in the environment enables on the job training, which is an effective way of learning, as it is integrated in actual work and helps employees learn by practical experience. Thus, on-the-job learning is a tool for acquiring tacit knowledge through sharing experience

Creating Shared Ownership: Psychological ownership can be defined as a feeling of possessiveness and being psychologically tied to an object (material or immaterial). When a potential employee steps into a Visual Management organisation, the vivid atmosphere populated with visual aids for employees marks positive impressions and a sense of support for him/her. Effectively designed and visually displayed “employee praises” convey the message of a caring, supporting and encouraging organisational atmosphere

Management by Facts: Management by facts is based on the use of facts and data based on statistics. Visual Management is partially about opening the objective organisational reality to the relevant people through the flow of information

Simplification: The management of information in dynamic and complex environments sometimes goes beyond the efforts and abilities of individuals. Organisations mainly use strategic information to make decisions, to make sense of changes and developments in their external environments and to generate new knowledge through organisational learning
Unification: Organisations are constituted by interconnected socio-technical departments, with various layers. One of the managerial issues is to establish synchronisation and harmony (shared understanding) between these layers. People may illusively think that they work in an isolated manner solely according to the departmental values and conditions to which they belong. 

Conclusion

Indeed, visual management provides an opportunity to total quality management continuously by disseminating and deploying the vision, direction, targets, and plans of corporate management to top management and to all employees so that people at all job levels can continually act on the plans, and evaluate, study, and feedback results as a part of a continuous improvement process.

Whilst there are a variety of communication tools open to businesses, visual management can be one of the strongest and simplest to deploy. Visual management is a is typically used to describe a number of smaller tools and methods that can be used for communication purposes — such as, visual aids (i.e. posters and signs), charts or graphs, indicators and visible queues which all act to communicate business goals and current performance. Visual management reinforces and strengthens messages about corporate methods and objectives, offering a reliable message of what is required how it should be achieved and why. Visual Management also has the benefit of being consistent in how and what information is promulgated within the organization. The same message is relayed in the same way to all personnel.

Improvement begins with the admission that every organization has problems, which provide opportunities for change. It evolves around to total quality management involving everyone in the organization and largely depends on cross-functional teams that can be empowered to challenge the status quo.

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Using Visual Management To Display Goals And Performance Within Your Company


iv Using Visual Management To Display Goals And Performance Within Your Company

v Three Effective Visual Management Solutions


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