

# The Eight Skills to Visual Working

Here at TICL, we have a well practiced and perfected ability to effect change fast that our customers like.

We have developed a process improvement methodology, based on the use of visuals which help to breakdown complex and abstract activities into tangible and understandable ones.

As humans, we can understand images in an instant, in a way we cannot with text. For our brains to process text, we must work that bit harder and it takes a bit longer. As a matter of fact, the brain processes images 60,000 times faster than it does text!

The human brain has always been able to process images so much faster than it can words. But how can they make a difference when it comes to team learning and decision making?

**Images are powerful:** visuals quickly transmit information to the brain. They remove ambiguity, confused understanding and bring a combined group understanding quickly....

Do you sometimes feel like your systems and processes are like spaghetti on a plate?



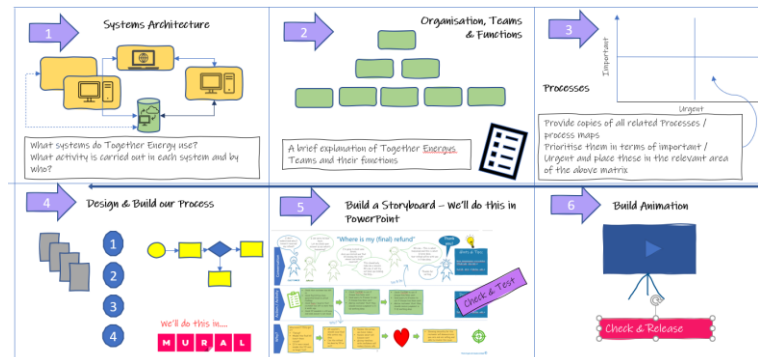
Or maybe they're a bit too overly engineered or wordy?  
Could they be inhibiting clarity?

## A Really Really Important Slide

- This is the most important piece of information that I want to give you, so I'm going to put it in a PowerPoint bullet that you'll never read.
- And here is another important piece of information that I think you should know about my awesome product and company. Too bad you're talking to your neighbor instead of reading this PowerPoint slide
- Oh did I also mention that this very important piece of information is instrumental to our competitive advantage?
- And if you thought that was great, wait until you learn about our patent-pending process for printing money
- If that has you excited, wait until I tell you about another really cool bridge that we plan to purchase with the money you give us.
- Our competitors have no idea what they are about to see because we are sooo cool we can fit 500 words on a single PowerPoint slide
- If we don't turn \$500,000 into \$500 Million in 3 years, we'll say we're sorry we burned through all your hard earned money, but at least we tried.

So how do we get from this.....

Or are they.....  
Synthesized & Structured



← ....to this?

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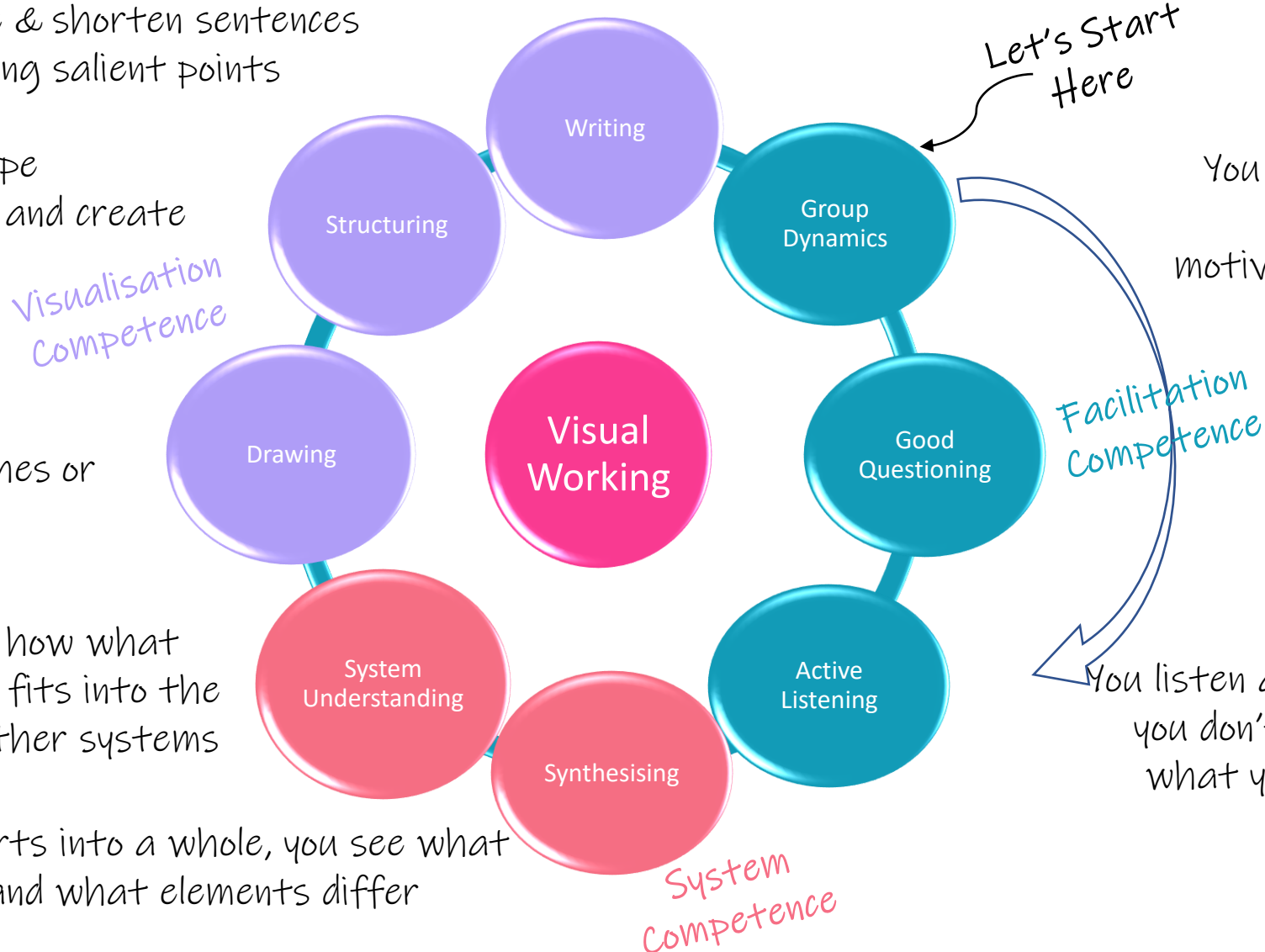
You can summarise & shorten sentences whilst still capturing salient points

You can size & shape templates, models and create a sense of flow

You can translate process into sketches or visual concepts

You get a sense of how what you are working on fits into the bigger picture & other systems

You can gather parts into a whole, you see what belongs together and what elements differ



You see things from others' perspective. You notice, motivate and engage a group

You are curious, you formulate & ask good questions – you challenge generously

You listen actively & attentively – you don't interrupt. You repeat what you have heard to check understanding

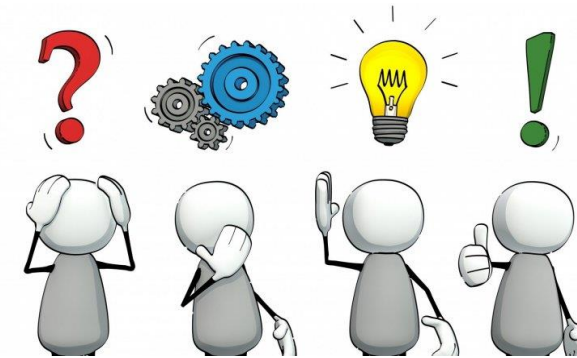
## Group Understanding - Getting the Group Right -

Understanding the needs of the group and working with them in a structured way will ultimately be reflected in their visual learning and understanding.

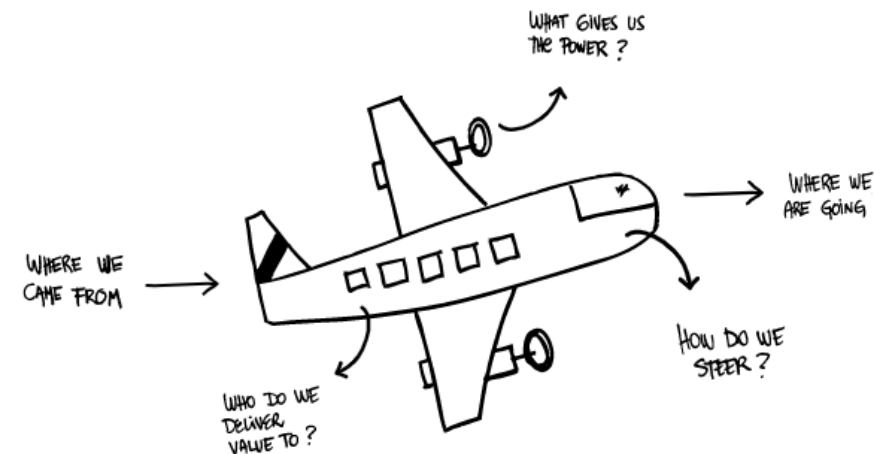
In order for a group to collaborate and learn together each individual needs to feel part of the community. This works best when they are seen, heard and understood. Each individual must feel that they are 'part of the solution'.

Setting down this foundation will help with shared discussion and will create some resonance with the group.

Don't let the needs of one individual overshadow the needs of the group, encourage a balanced interaction.



### Check-in

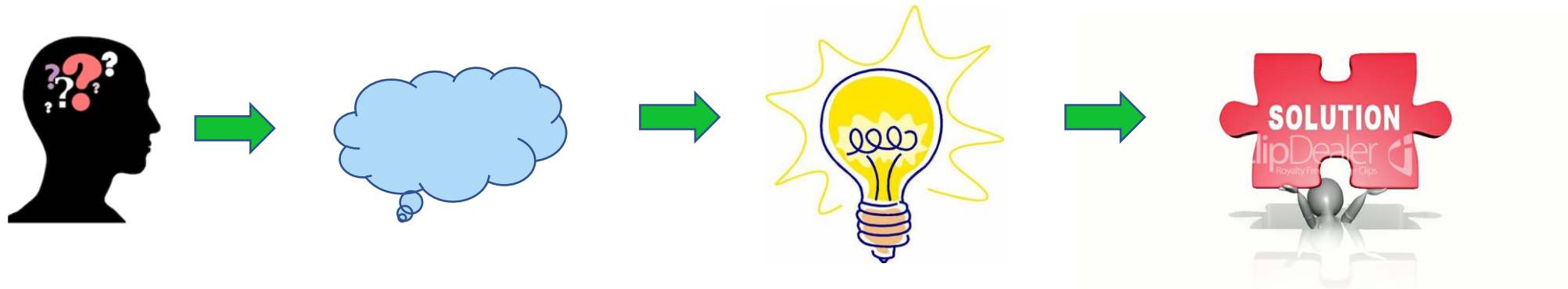


## The Right Questioning

*Good questioning encourages dialogue and creative thinking. They create the framework of what to talk about and starts individuals visualising and innovating.*

*Open questions can be used for exploration and investigation, closed questions usually drive decision making or conclusions. Use questions to guide the group so they listen to one another, change perspective and allow them to reach their own conclusions and usable outcomes.*

*The quality of the question drives the quality of the dialogue thereby the quality of the visuals and images you create.*



## Active Listening

The better you listen, the better your group understanding and questioning.

To listen actively and attentively is actually a difficult skill to master. How many times have you sat at a meeting whilst someone is talking either thinking about something else or thinking what you want to say next. We call that 'queuing'.

Put your own inner critic and advisor on hold. Listen with an open mind. Indicate with your body language with gestures or repeat what you have heard to demonstrate understanding.

When you actively listen, you are then able to generate 'good questions'. You are demonstrating that you are showing them acknowledgement and respect, important if you want them to continue to engage. If people feel they are not being listened to they will stop engaging. Ultimately you are gaining knowledge and understanding which in turn will make far better visuals.



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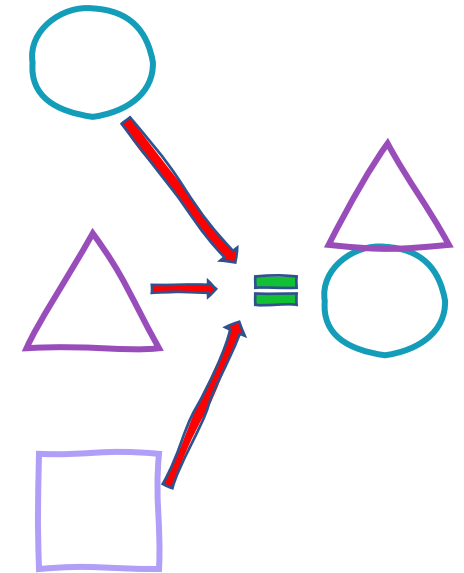
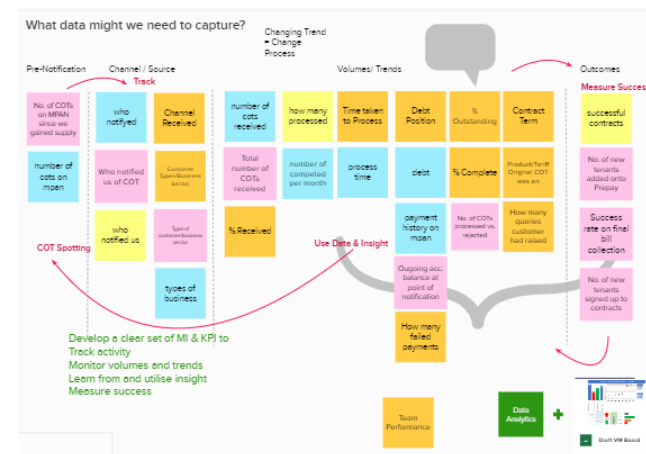
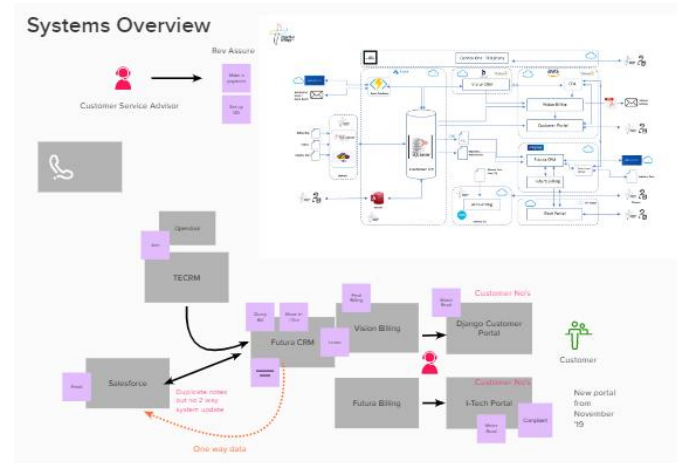
## Synthesising

Looking at individual parts to see what make a whole. Or, putting things together that go together.

Listen and try and determine what elements go together and what elements differ - Work out what ties all these things together.

Being able to analyse and organise the knowledge learned means you can see, design and create an overview of what can often be a complex and abstract process into a tangible and easy to understand model.

Being able to convert your ideas, sketches and diagrams into a single coherent visual will bring clarity and common understanding quickly to your team.





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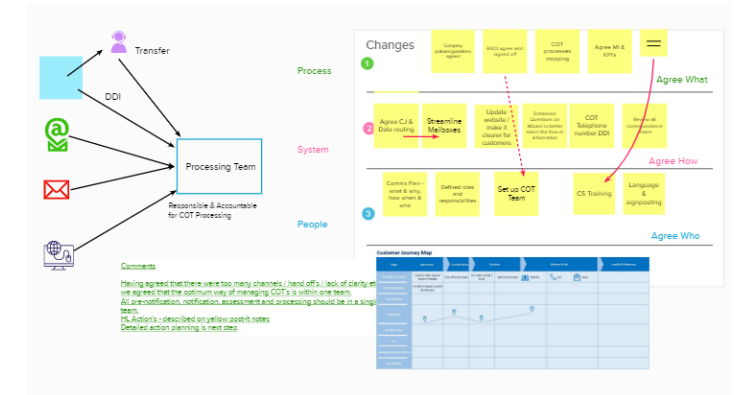
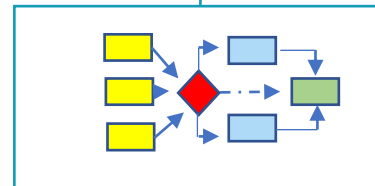
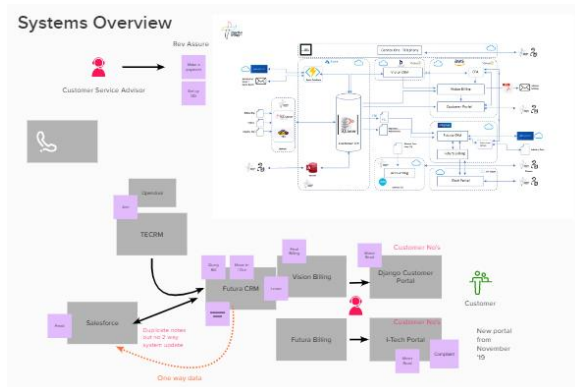
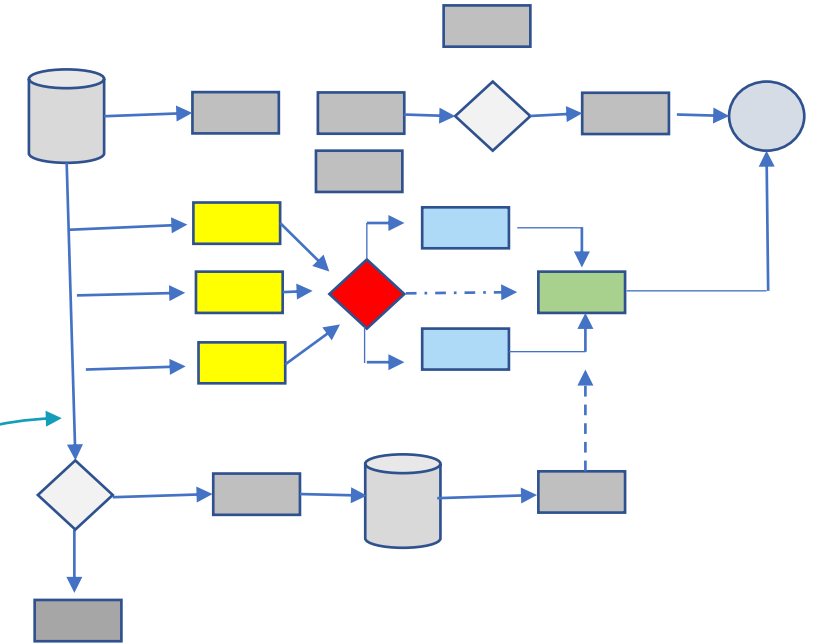
## System Understanding

Quite often in organisations there are so many world views and differences in understanding that it's difficult to get a collective grasp on the world.

It's far easier and faster to reach this common view through visuals. Working on this basis will help you and the group arrive at a common understanding of what initially looks to be complex.

Taking a step back will help you see how what you are working on fits into the wider picture.

Good questioning will help your group look at what you are working on in multiple perspectives  
Creating visual concepts on what this might look like will help



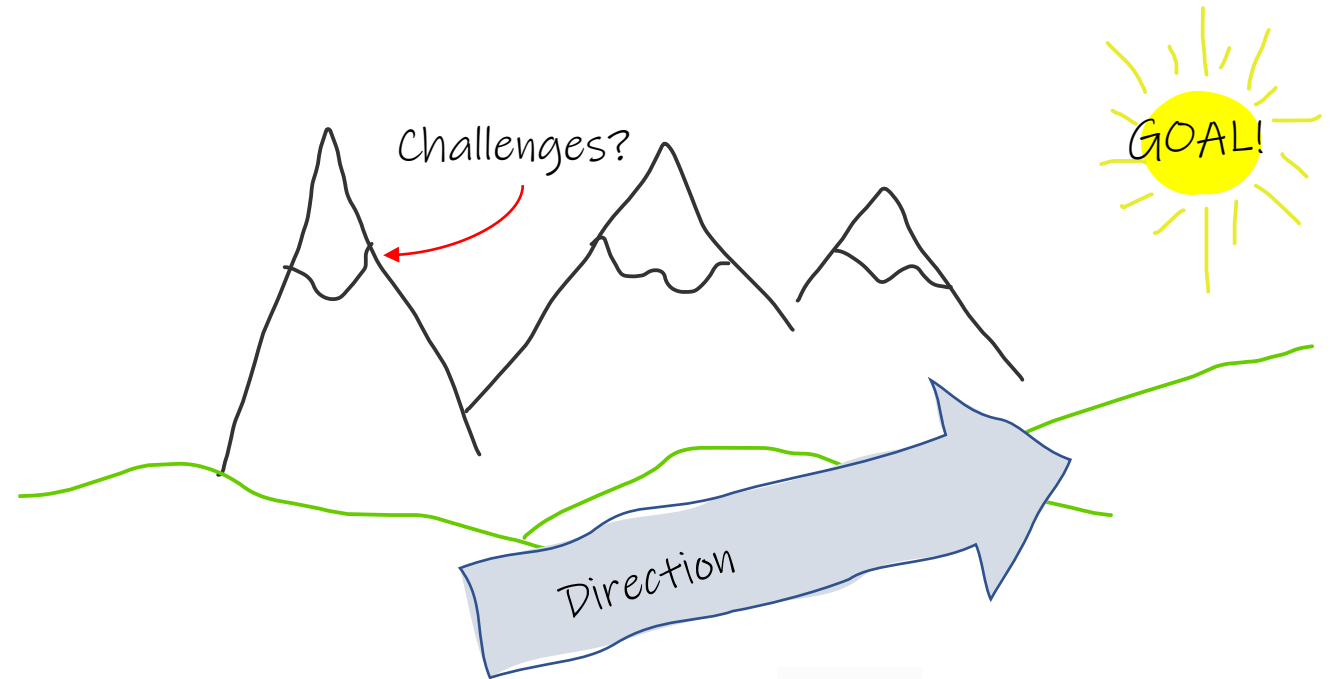
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## Drawing

Drawing is a great way to communicate and supports understanding. For example, Imagine if you're car had broken down and you were trying to communicate with a person who did not speak your language. Drawing a simple picture of a car with the bonnet up would tell them you had broken down... instantly.

Various types of visuals can be effective learning tools: photos, sketches, concept maps, illustrations, icons, and symbols, to name a few. It takes some practice and a willing team to start to work more with visuals – but the benefits are worth it. The effective use of visuals can decrease learning time, improve comprehension, enhance recall, and increase retention. Meaning you are more likely to achieve change and sustain change more successfully.

It's a fun way to work and quick sketches invite the group to think further and draw with you. Don't worry if you make mistakes either. Practice learning how to draw icons, small easy illustrations and large scale concepts. Creating a visual language means there is no room for interpretation or variation either. Basically, it's hard to argue with a picture!



### Our Toolbox



What systems shall we use?



How will we communicate?



### Principles



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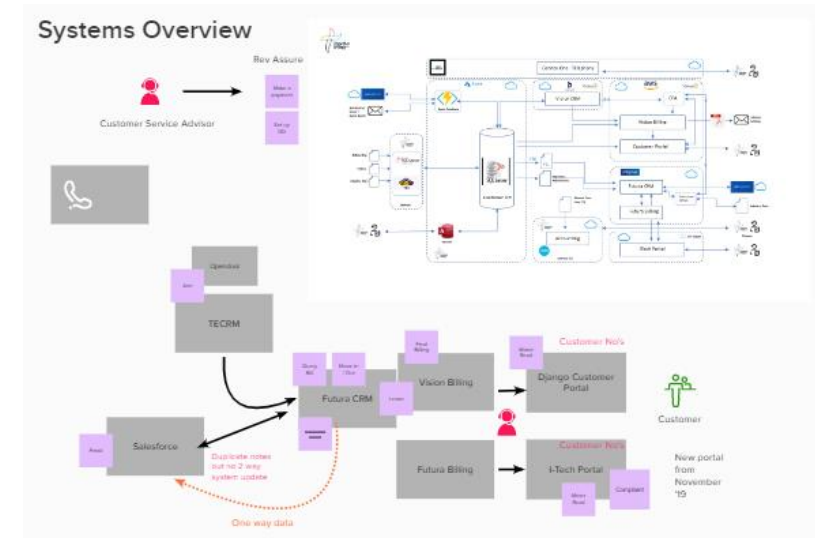
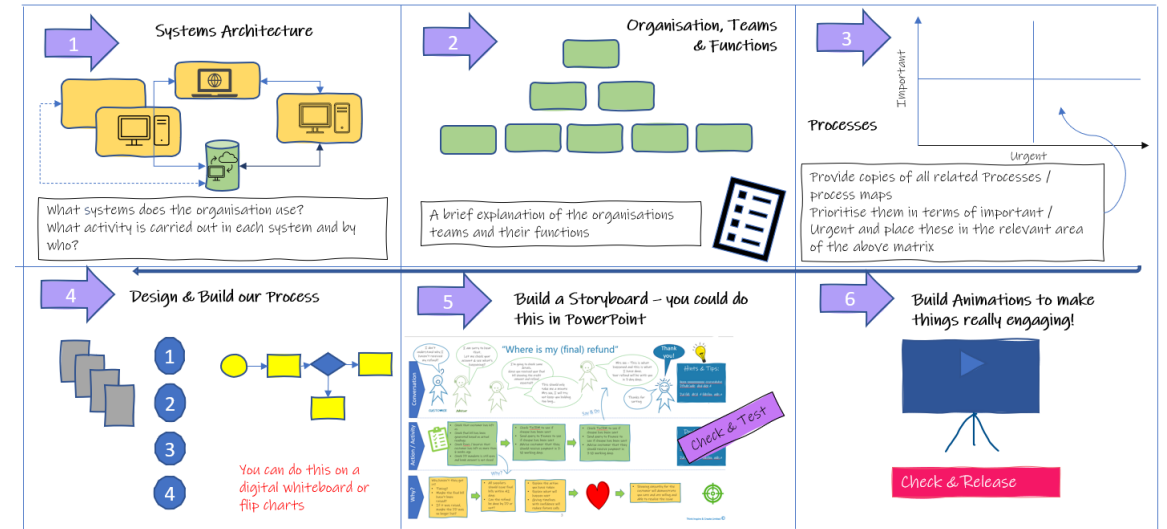
## Structuring

A good layout and flow of activity helps to navigate the eye through a complex process more easily. It has to be easy to see the sequence of steps, what naturally belongs together.

Using your writing skills to create short summaries of each of the areas to support the visuals should be enough to provide a clear direction of how the visual flows

The use of colours help to differentiate between each element so it's easy to see patterns and context along the process journey.

Using a sense of perspective it should be easy on the eye and provide a sense of movement, time and direction.



## Writing

Words will always form part of your visuals and learning preparation. Well formed and legible writing is essential for comprehension and engagement.

Not only must you be able to write clearly but you must be able to distill long sentences and paraphrase whilst retaining the essence of what's being said.

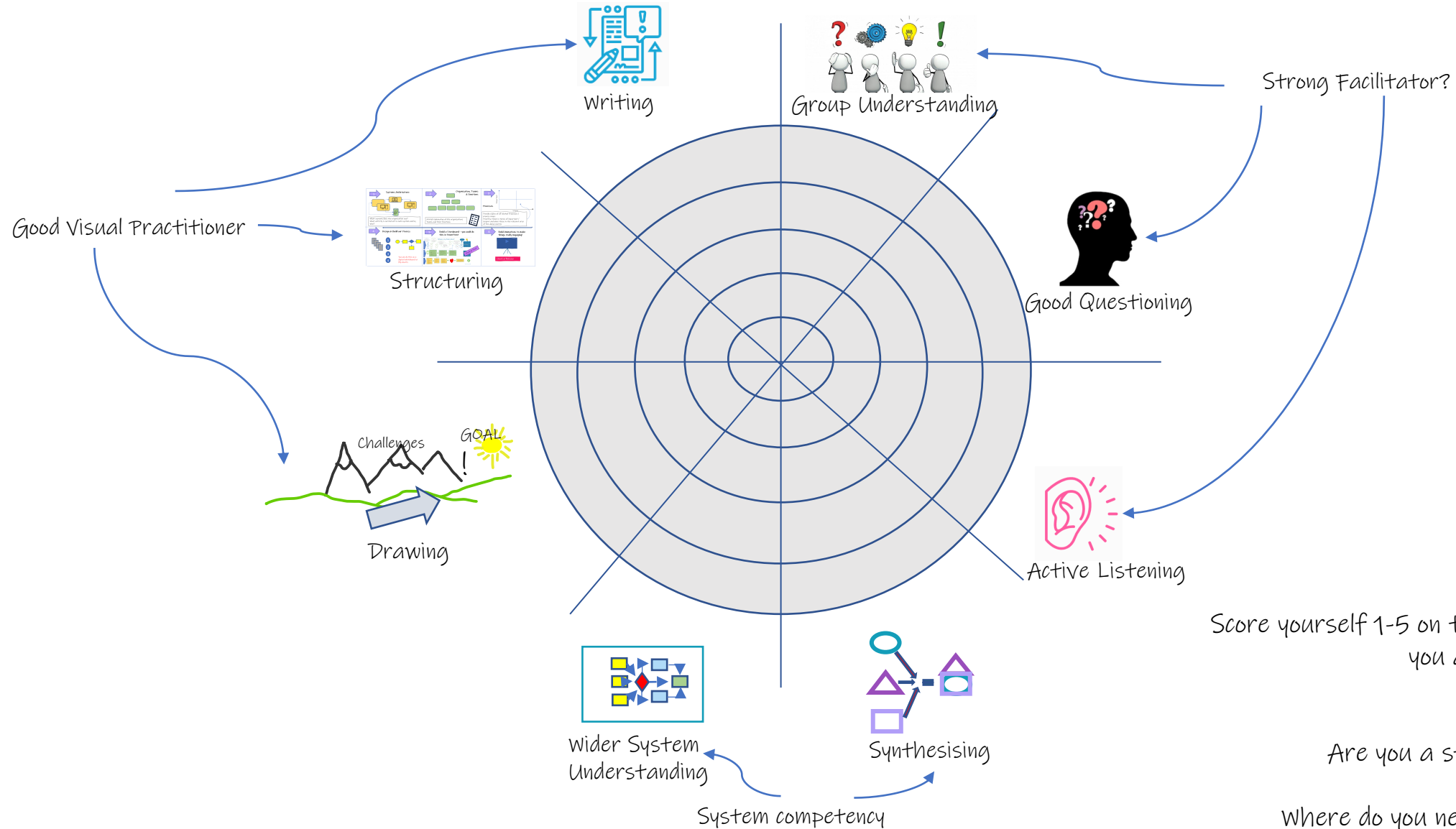
Repeat it back to ensure you have captured the purpose and meaning of what people are saying.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZÀÅ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
uvwxyzàåéîöøü&123  
4567890(\$£€.,!?)

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# The Eight Skills – Skills Wheel



Score yourself 1-5 on the Skill wheel the degree you are practiced at each skill 1 being the centre circle.

Are you a strong visual practitioner?  
Or a strong facilitator?  
Where do you need to practice your skills?