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5 STEP GUIDE TO CREATING VISUAL INFORMATION

65% of the population consists of visual learners. [2]

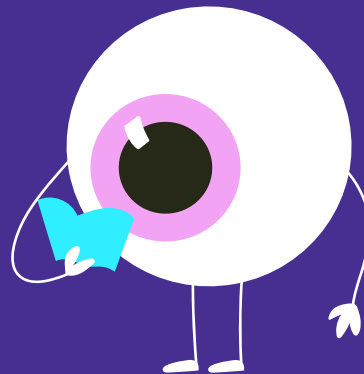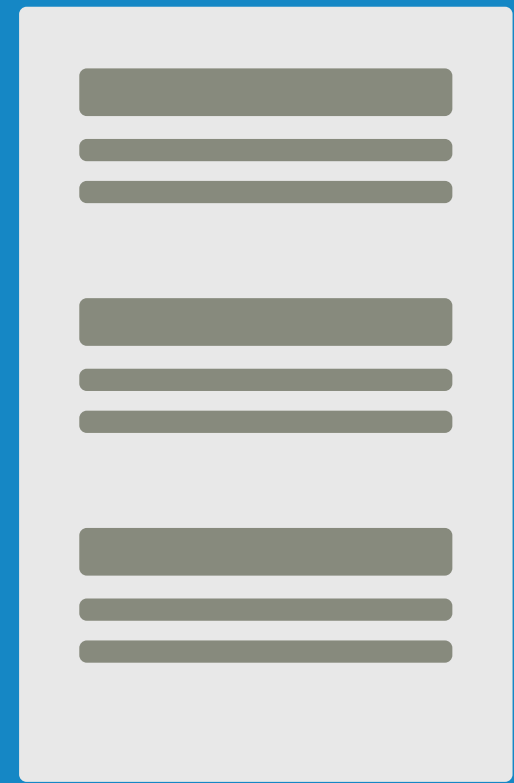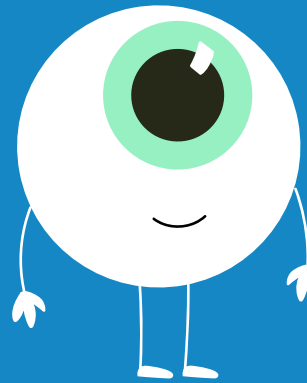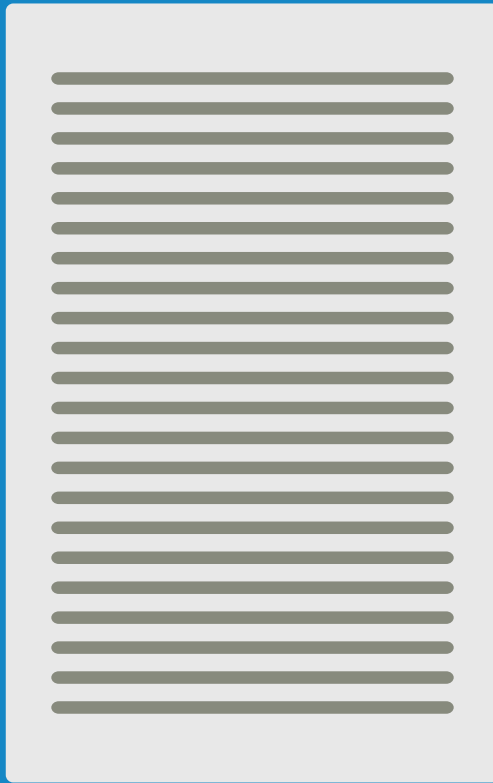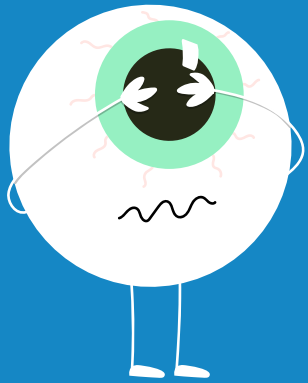---

As humans we love visuals. Visuals are engaging, powerful, and help us learn information quickly. So why is so much of our information in the workplace made up of text based presentations, manuals, and documents?

Visuals have the ability to simplify complex information, and get learners up to speed faster. In fact, a study by Levie and Lentz showed that adding illustrations to text increased understanding of a concept 98% of the time. [1]

This short guide will give you 5 steps to transform your existing information into something highly visual that's easier to consume and comprehend, leading directly to increased productivity, and more efficient teams.

1

BREAK LONG AND TEXT HEAVY INFORMATION INTO SMALL CONCISE PIECES

—

"If I had more time I would have written a shorter letter" (3)

Ever heard this quote before? Shortening your information to make it more concise will take some time and effort but will absolutely pay off in the long run. If you ever feel like you're leaving out too much consider this: people only ready about 20% of text on most web pages (4), so when it comes to text, the shorter your information, the better. We recommend avoiding the "fluff" and sticking to the critical components.

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2

ADD SOME COLOUR

Just like visuals, humans love colour! But it's not just something we like, it's also something that can help us learn faster and more effectively. Studies have shown that when tested, adding colour to information improves memory by about 8%.[4]

1 Use colour to make your information easier to find. For example, consider how your information is sorted. Whether it's by department, topic, or product type, adding colour can help you and your team find the information you're looking for faster.

2 Use colour to make your information easier to consume and understand. For example, in your process documentation you may want to assign a specific colour for different types of actions, and use bright colours like red or yellow to highlight when something is really important.

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3

LAY YOUR INFORMATION OUT LOGICALLY

The layout of your information takes the reader down a path that should logically follow from one section to the next. You'll want to avoid things that force the reader to do a lot of scrolling back and forth, or make them question where they should go next.

A logical layout is especially important for your "how to" and process documentation, and can mean the difference between your processes being followed or ignored.

This is where step 1 (breaking long information into small concise pieces) becomes absolutely critical. When your information is broken down into small bite size pieces, it's much easier to arrange it logically, and experiment with different layouts to see what works best for your team.

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4

USE SHAPES AND SYMBOLS

In the earliest days, humans used cave paintings and hieroglyphics to communicate information, and while seldom used by people today, there are still many shapes and symbols we use to communicate information. Shapes help us understand concepts much more quickly than text. Consider the example below.
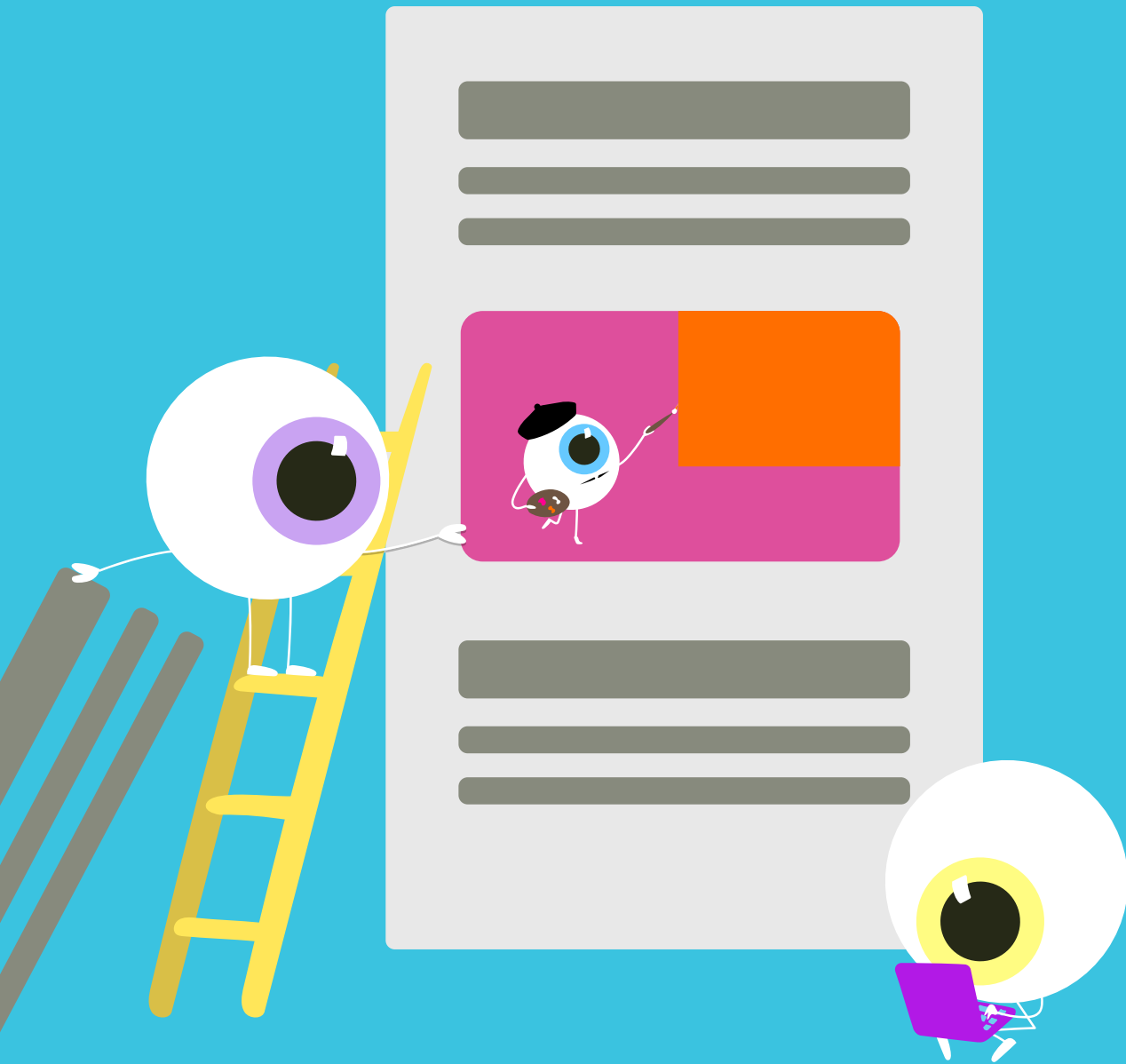
Visual vs Text

A circle is a curved line within a closed plane which every point is equal distance from the center.

When it comes to shapes and symbols in your information the possibilities are endless. Incorporating them could be something as simple as adding in emojis to convey tone, or matching up shapes with a specific action or activity like we mentioned in step 2 with colour.

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5

ADD IMAGES AND SCREENSHOTS

You've likely heard the phrase "A picture is worth a thousand words", and when it comes to your information, this theme is extremely relevant. While an image may not replace exactly 1000 words of your text, it can really help with step one, when you're trying to make your information shorter and more concise.

Getting started with screenshots is simple because nearly every computer has some type of screenshot creator already built into the system, whether it's a Mac, or PC.

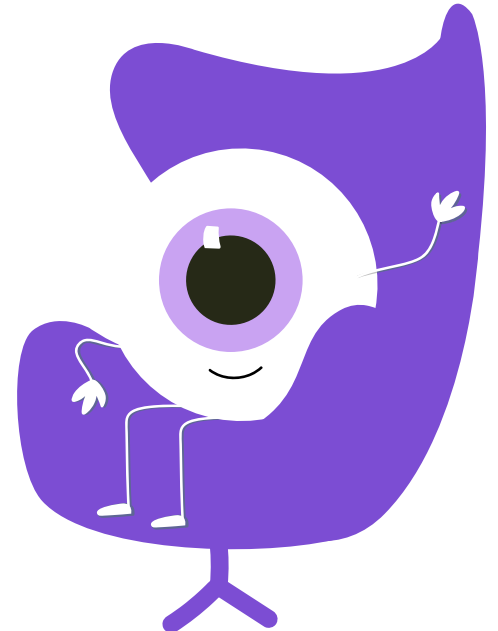# **Get started creating visual information and enable success**

Want to leverage visual information but aren't sure where to start? Let us help. At ProcedureFlow, we help organizations across the globe create visual information to shorten training time, improve efficiency, and reduce operating costs.

Talk to our team to get started today.

hello@procedureflow.com

1-888-827-3918

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Sources

1. *Words Versus Pictures: Leveraging the Research on Visual Communication.* **Dewan, Pauline**. *1, s.l. : The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research, 2015, Vol. 10.*

2. **Louis, Molly St.** *How to Spot Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic-Learning Executives. Inc. [Online] August 1, 2017. https://www.inc.com/molly-reynolds/how-to-spot-visual-auditory-and-kinesthetic-learni.html.*

3. **Medland, Dina.** *'If I Had More Time I Would Have Written A Shorter Letter' - Integrated Reporting. Forbes. [Online] October 21, 2013. https://www.forbes.com/sites/dinamedland/2013/10/21/if-i-had-more-time-i-would-have-written-a-shorter-letter-integrated-reporting/#62c8e1067473.*

4. *The Contributions of Color to Recognition Memory for Natural Scenes.* **Wichmann, Felix A., Gegenfurtner, Karl R. and Sharpe, Lindsay T.** *3, s.l. : Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition, 2002, Vol. 28.*

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