

## Visual Controls Notes

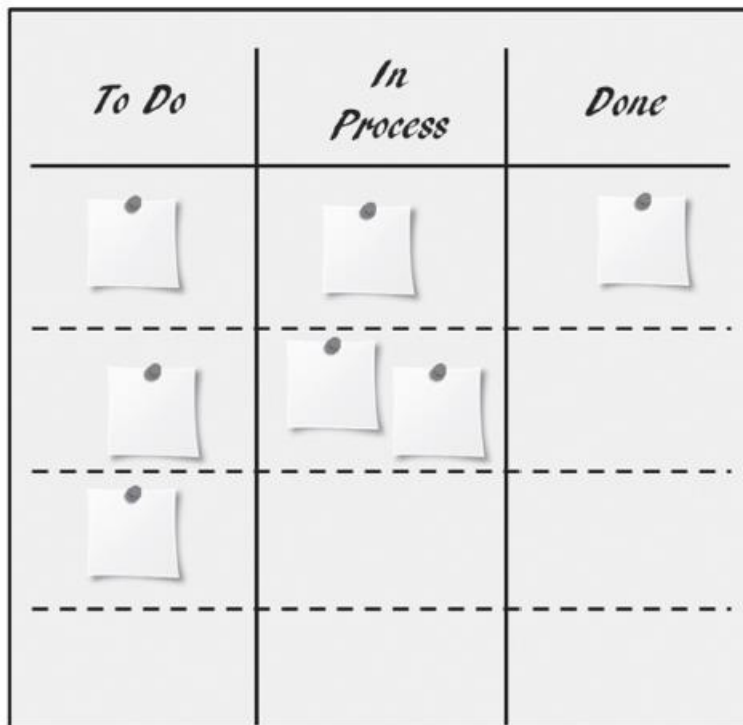
### 1) What are Visual Controls?

Visual controls are devices which provide visual feedback to workers at the place of work

Three main types of visual controls:

- a) **Current “real-time” status** of the process
- b) **Prior performance** of the process
- c) **Work guides** such as signs, markings and instructions

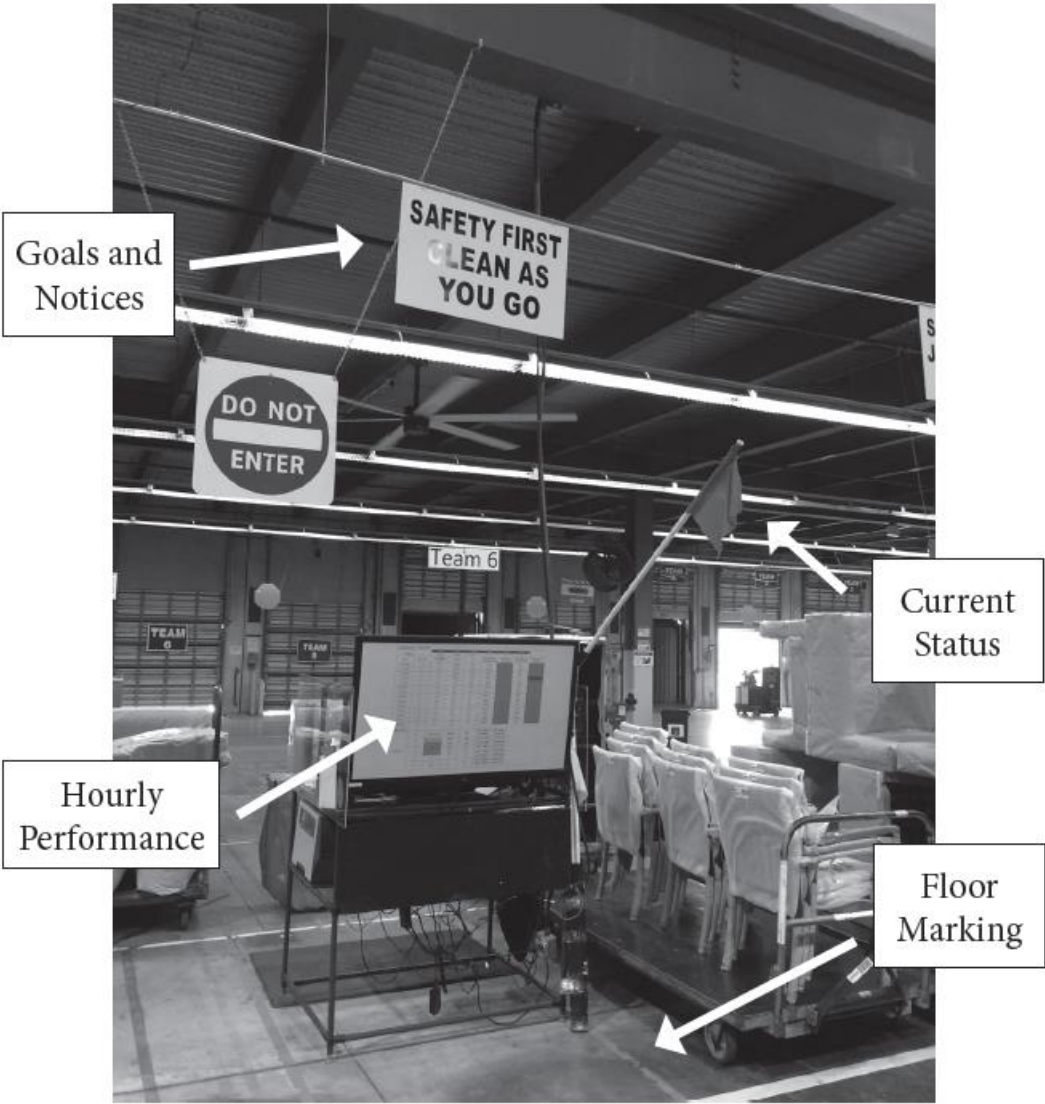
**Current real-time status** devices include flags, lights, clocks, display boards. See “Current Status” flag on City Furniture Example and “Kanban Status Board” example below.



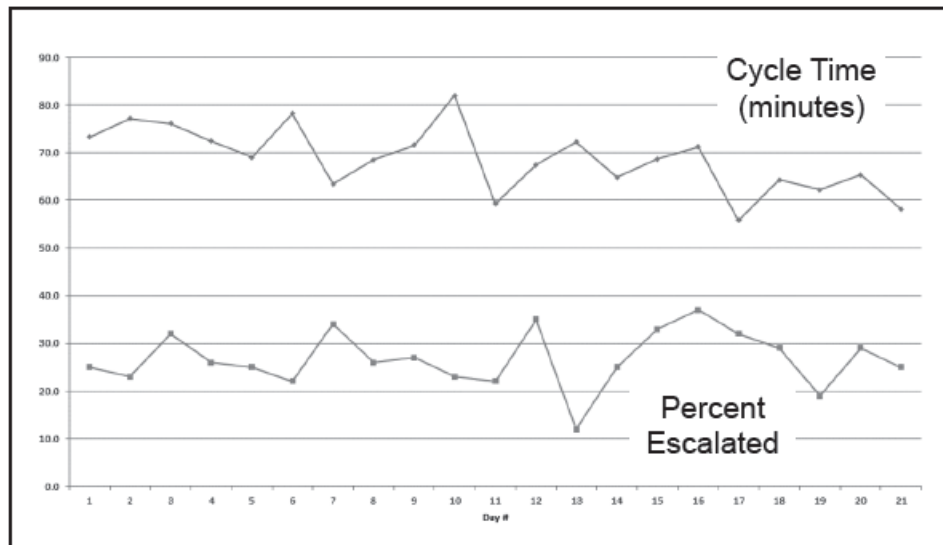
KANBAN STATUS BOARD

**Prior performance** devices include monitors, charts and display boards. See Run Chart picture below and “Hourly Performance” monitor on City Furniture Example below.

**Work guide** devices include signs, banners, floor/wall markings and instructions. See the “Safety First” banner, “Do Not Enter” sign, and “Floor Marking” on the City Furniture Example picture.



CITY FURNITURE EXAMPLE



RUN CHART

**2) How do visual controls contribute to the Lean management system?**

Visual controls support both cycles of the Lean system: the culture-building cycle and the work improvement cycle.

In the Lean culture-building cycle, visual controls are a key practice in the “Empowering” activity.

In the Lean work improvement cycle, visual controls as part of the Visualizing activity. They provide information needed by workers to identify waste and improve work processes.

**3) How to organize and implement visual controls?**

Visual controls should be simple, accessible, legible, easy to interpret and located at the place of work within easy reach of workers.

Use the workers’ perspective when designing visual controls to give them the right information, at the right time and at the right place.

It is the managers’ job to set up the visual controls and then to get workers involved in using, maintaining and updating the visuals.