



## Visual Project Organization

**Seitz, Peter**

*K+S Ingenieur-Consult GmbH & Co. KG, Nuremberg, Germany*

**Contact:** [p.seitz@KplusS-Ing.de](mailto:p.seitz@KplusS-Ing.de)

### Abstract

Highly complex projects concerning large, demanding, construction tasks require planning teams that are continuously growing bigger. For a project to be successful it is important that the core information is received by every party working on the project. Comprehensive project manuals or project descriptions cannot constantly be read by them due to the limited amount of time they have. This article shows methods on how to support the most important information on the project by publicizing graphs showing the optimal flow of information within the project team.

**Keywords:** communication; graph; information design, organization, knowledge; relaying information; project management.

### 1 Introduction

Planning tasks concerning construction projects are becoming more and more challenging. Besides the fact that the projects being tendered are continuously increasing in size, the demand regarding complexity, time line as well as target costs of these projects is also increasing.

To avoid interfaces, all-over planning is often tendered. This means that outer interfaces of the planner become less, which is to the advantage of the builder-owner, but the number of internal interfaces increases.

These growing demands on planning also increase the number of parties involved in the project. The contractor needs to not only coordinate the external planners of the involved technical crews, but also his own. Communication within the team is an important factor. Every party must know exactly who is responsible for which specific tasks and duties and where the required information will be coming from.

Therefore, it is sensible to find ways to document the most important project information efficiently so that the members of the group can access the required information quickly.

By using information design the flow of information can be extremely simplified. Information design is the illustration of information in a way

that effectively and efficiently helps to comprehend information. Graphic illustration of information usually requires much less space than in text form. The highly developed visual ability of a person to read is hereby taken into account.

The basis of a construction process in every case is a drawing. Engineers and planners are used to thinking visually. Planning details are often drafted on paper using a pencil in order to better explain a planning task during a discussion. The visual depiction makes it much easier and faster for the project team to understand the task and possible solutions to arising problems than in text form.

In order to emphasize the most important facts it usually suffices to complement the drawings using short keywords. When looking up this documented solution it will only take a short glimpse to comprehend the complex correlations because the visual processing of information in the brain is very fast and precise.

It is not always necessary to invest a lot of time reading in order to tediously familiarize one's self with the descriptions in text form. Documentation in text form is only required if a profound description is necessary. Also, it should be mentioned here that reducing information to the bare minimum of what might be considered important can lead to information problems.