

# Workplace Visibility Playbook

Do you want to become more recognized for your contribution and accomplishments at work? This playbook serves as a structured self-guided journey, enabling you to:

- 🧠 Understand cognitively the change you want to make (Head)
- 💖 Feel emotionally connected to it (Heart)
- 👍 Practically implement it (Hands)

Use this playbook as your personal companion to reach the desired level of workplace visibility. You can use it in any way that works best for you. You can answer all the questions at once or just a few at a time as your visibility goals evolve.

## Part 1: 🧠 (Head)

### What is it and how much do I have it

Workplace visibility is measured by how much your work/contribution is noticed, acknowledged, and valued by your organization.

#### Q1: How visible am I today?

Choose the level(s) that best describe(s) your situation. You may be visible at different levels for different things you do. To answer this question, you can reflect on:

- Do my colleagues and other key decision-makers recognize and value my work?
- Am I the person my colleagues turn to for help with important tasks?
- Does my work contribute to the company's key goals, like revenue generation, market expansion, or creating a better workplace culture?

- Minimal Visibility  
Only direct coworkers know who I am and what I do.
- Local Visibility  
Recognized within my whole department or division; known among peers and some supervisors.
- Cross-Functional Visibility  
Well-known and respected across multiple departments or teams.
- Strategic Organizational Visibility  
Influence and recognition extend throughout the entire organization; involved in strategic decision-making and shaping the organization's future.
- Industry Visibility  
Recognized beyond the organization in the wider industry or public domain; known as a thought leader, innovator, or influential figure in the field.

**Q2: What part of my work is recognized by the organisation?**

Imagine how other people would talk about you and your achievements. For example, how would your boss make a case for promotion on your behalf? How would your colleague introduce you to people who don't know you yet? You could also seek feedback from your managers and coworkers about your strengths, weaknesses, and achievements to answer this question more objectively.

**Q3: Do I have sufficient workplace visibility to achieve my career goals?**

How happy are you with your current level of visibility? What is the desired level of visibility?

What is the cost of doing nothing about your workplace visibility?

What are your short-, mid-, and long-term career goals?

Examples of how visibility can positively influence a career:

- Getting recognized for the great work you are doing
- Being involved in the right projects that fit your personal strength and development goals
- Having more leverage to negotiate a salary increase or ask for a promotion
- Gaining more organisational influence and actively shaping decision-making

## Part 2: (Heart)

### Emotions and preconceptions about workplace visibility

Q4: How do I feel about being more/less visible? How do I feel about self-promotion? What are my pre-conceptions about workplace visibility?

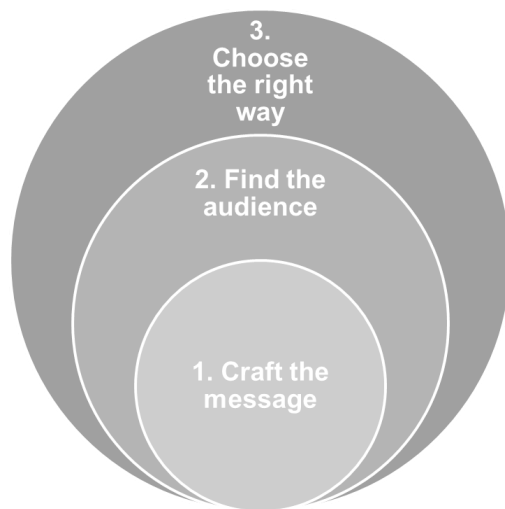
- How do you feel when you receive too much or too little recognition for what you do from your coworkers and managers?
- How did your past visibility efforts go? Did you have positive or negative experiences promoting your work?
- Does self-promotion come naturally to you? How do you feel about others engaging in self-promotion?

## Part 3: 🙌 (Hands)

### What will I do to reach the desired level of visibility?

Gaining visibility is like building a brand. You need a distinct and positive identity coupled with a compelling narrative. Over time, you promote this identity and story to an audience that can help you achieve your career goals. Done right, you foster recognition for who you are and what you do, and establish connections for personal and professional growth.

The three steps of building workplace visibility are:



#### Q5: Craft a personal message

- Like a good brand claim, your personal message should effectively communicate the unique value of you in a way that is credible, relevant and resonates with the target audience.
- It also should be forward-looking. Not only should you include past achievements, current skillsets, and competencies, but also future aspirations and goals. Only in this way will the visibility you build best serve your personal and professional development goals.

**Q6: Find my audience**

- To whom should you become more visible? Who do you need to achieve your career goals?
- What are your relationships with peers, supervisors, decision-makers, and influencers? You can find a free tool for mapping out your professional network in additional materials section of this playbook.

**Q7: Choose the right way**

- What will you do in the next 3-6 months to reach the desired level of visibility? Structure your activities in two categories:
  - Big splashes: All-hands meetings, team meetings, presentations and awards at industry or company events, and more
  - Small drops: Regular work updates via email/internal communication channels, attending and speaking up in meetings, LinkedIn/other social media posts, small talks, connecting and networking with new people, and more

**Q8: Overcoming obstacles**

- Identify obstacles that may make it challenging for you to reach the desired level of visibility. Divide them into personal challenges (personality, time constraint, communication style etc.), organisational challenges (job design, your higher-ups and peers, company culture), and cultural/societal challenges (gender dynamics, values, and beliefs)
- For the solutions, think creatively about experimenting with unfamiliar ways of getting things done and try them out. Distinguish between things you can influence and things you need to accept as they are.

My Challenges	Solutions/Experimenting with new ways

### Additional materials

- HBR article: [How to Become More Visible at Work](#) by Nicole D. Smith and Angela Cheng-Cimini
- HBR Women at Work Podcast: [Step into the Spotlight](#)
- Book: [Working Identity: Unconventional Strategies for Reinventing Your Career](#) and video [Fresh approaches for leadership success](#) by Herminia Ibarra
- [How Women Rise](#) by Sally Helgesen and Marshall Goldsmith and short video series:
  - [Habit 1 - Claim your achievements](#)
  - [Habit 2 - Draw attention to what you contribute without feeling like a jerk](#)
  - [Habit 5 - Enlist allies from day 1](#)
- Forbes article: Don't Let Remote Work Derail Your Career: 3 Ways To Enhance Visibility by Tracy Brower

### Bonus material:

- [Better Networks](#) by ESMT Berlin - Boost your career by mapping and improving your professional network. Join the waiting list to get a free trial of the tool.

This tool was developed for educational purposes by [Nan Guo](#) from [ESMT](#) European School of Management and Technology GmbH, Berlin, Germany.

Our mission is to **get more women into leadership positions.**

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