



How to Annotate UML Shapes?

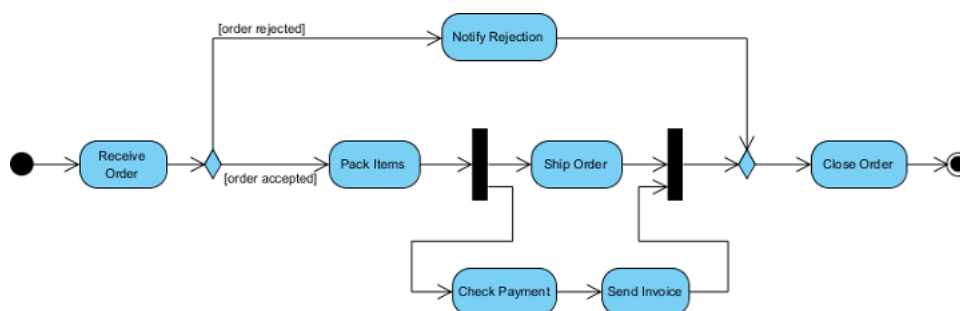
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When you want to provide additional information about a shape, or shapes, you may use callout. Callout is a special kind of shape designed for annotation purpose. It enables you to add viewable notes on diagram, which makes it different from other ways of annotation such as comments and post in PostMania.

Because callouts are placed on a diagram, everyone can see them when viewing a diagram. This may be good because this ensures that the important notes are being viewed, but this creates problem when a diagram is supposed to be viewed by someone or some parties who are not supposed to read the notes. Let's say you want to add a callout to a [business process diagram](#) to ask for a renaming of a business task (shape). While you want the callout be seen by the designer, you definitely don't want anyone else, especially the stakeholders to see it. So when you need to distribute the diagram to these people, you probably want to have the callout hidden in your printout. In this tutorial, we are going to share with you a tips that can easily hide away callout shapes on a diagram.

Creating an Annotation Layer

1. Download [Activity-Diagram-Example.vpp](#). You can also find this file at the bottom of this tutorial, under the **Resources** section.
2. Open the downloaded project file in [Visual Paradigm](#).
3. Open the [UML Activity Diagram](#) *Place Order*. You should see the Activity Diagram below:

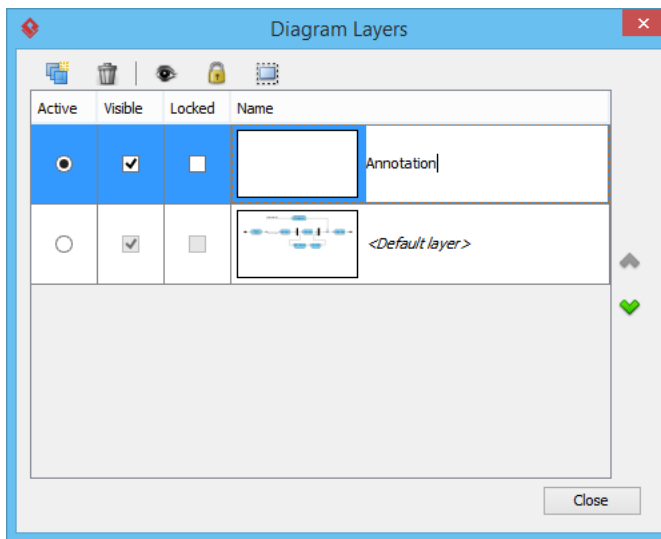


4. Select **View > Layers...** from the toolbar.
- 5.



This popup a **Diagram Layers** window. At the top of the window, click  to create a new layer.

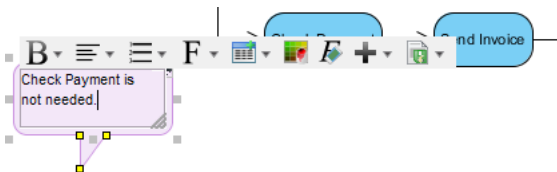
6. Enter *Annotation* as the name of the new layer.



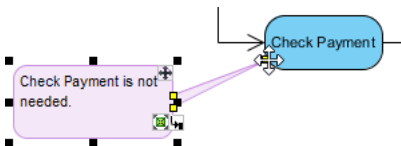
7. Click **Close** to confirm and return to the diagram.
8. The newly added layer is automatically set as the active layer. Shapes to be created will be put in this layer. Now, start creating the callout. Select **Callout** from the diagram toolbar.



9. Click on the diagram and enter *Check Payment is not needed* as the content of callout.



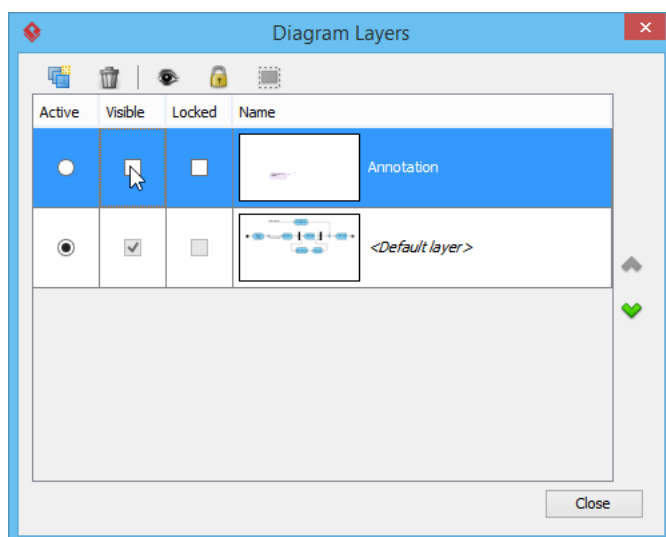
10. Make the pointer points to the *Check Payment* action.



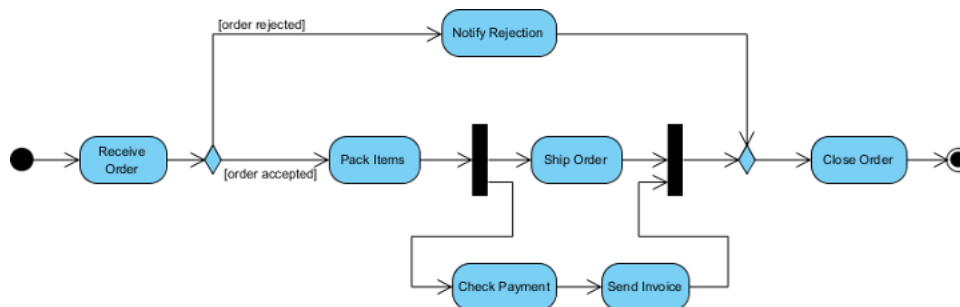
Hiding an Annotation Layer

By separating shapes into layers, you can show or hide particular kinds of shapes by showing or hiding the layer that own the shapes, which helps in delivering works to different types of users. With this example, you can export diagrams without annotations, and send user the result, while the internal copy can have the annotation existing. To hide a layer:

1. Open the **Diagram Layers** window again.
2. Uncheck the checkout in **Visible** column for the *Annotation* layer.



You will find the callout hidden in diagram.



Resources

1. [Activity-Diagram-Example.vpp](#)

Related Links

- [Tutorial - Presenting Business Process Model with Process Animation](#)
- [Full set of UML tools and UML diagrams](#)



Visual Paradigm home page
(<https://www.visual-paradigm.com/>)

Visual Paradigm tutorials
(<https://www.visual-paradigm.com/tutorials/>)