

# The Workday Deployment Readiness Checklist

Nine readiness checks, a simple scoring model, the red flags that sink go-lives, and a pre-kickoff pre-mortem. Distilled from 25+ years leading 75 ERP and Workday programs as the independent voice in the room.

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### INSIDE THIS GUIDE

1. The nine readiness checks, with why each one matters
2. A simple 0 to 3 readiness scoring model and bands
3. The red flags that quietly sink go-lives
4. The seven-question pre-kickoff pre-mortem

## How to use this checklist

Run it twice. First in Phase Zero, to size the gaps before you commit to a date. Again 60 to 90 days before go-live, as a hard gate. Check only what is genuinely true: a half-built integration is not a check. Then score each section, total it, and take the honest readiness band to your steering committee.

### THE SCORE

Score each of the nine sections from 0 to 3. 0 not started · 1 in progress · 2 mostly there · 3 ready. Add them up, for a maximum of 27.

<b>24 to 27</b>	<b>Ready.</b> Hold the date and run the pre-mortem to be sure.
<b>17 to 23</b>	<b>At risk.</b> Real gaps. Close them before you commit the date in writing.
<b>16 or below</b>	<b>Not ready.</b> The date is a wish, not a plan. Reset scope or timeline now.

## The nine readiness checks

### 1 Data conversion

*More go-lives are sunk by data than by software. Run conversion as reconciliation, not loading.*

- A named business data owner is assigned, not just a technical lead.
- At least three mock conversions are planned, with a final mock error rate under 2 percent.
- Finance reconciles control totals to the dollar before sign-off.

**Red flag.** Conversion is still owned only by IT three months in.

### 2 Adopt the platform, do not bend it

*Every customization is a tax you pay twice a year, forever.*

- Every customization is inventoried and justified by real differentiation.
- Adopt standard is set as the default decision.
- The twice-a-year regression impact of customizations is estimated.

**Red flag.** A backlog of must-have customizations that no one has regression-tested.

### 3 Security by design

*Security bolted on after the build is the quiet reason testing slips.*

- Security roles are designed alongside business processes, not after.
- Security test scripts are built and run from day one.
- Segregation of duties is reviewed before testing.

**Red flag.** Roles are still being defined when testing is supposed to start.

### 4 Reporting

*Reporting is a workstream, not an afterthought, and it is where adoption is won or lost.*

- The legacy report inventory is audited against actual run logs.
- Reporting and analytics has its own workstream, requirements, and test cycle.
- Critical reports are rebuilt (custom reports, calc fields, Prism) and tested.

**Red flag.** No one can produce the real list of reports people actually run.

### 5 Integrations

*Every handshake is a point of failure, with an owner or without one.*

- There is a full inventory across EIB, Core Connector, Studio, and PECL.
- A single business owner is named for each integration.
- Each is tested at production-like volumes, with monitoring and alerting in place.

**Red flag.** Integrations are only ever tested with sample data.

### 6 Adoption and change

*The system can run perfectly and still fail the people who depend on it.*

- Role-based, hands-on enablement is planned for each audience.
- Adoption metrics are defined for the first 30 to 60 days.
- Communications run as a sustained campaign, not a one-time launch.

**Red flag.** Training is a single webinar the week before go-live.

## 7 SI partnership

*If you cannot run it without your integrator, you have not gone live, you have gone dependent.*

- Active knowledge transfer starts in Week 1.
- An internal owner can explain each functional pillar unaided.
- A roll-off and transition plan is agreed up front.

**Red flag.** No internal person can explain a core pillar without the SI in the room.

## 8 Sequencing

*Big-bang versus phased is a risk decision, not a calendar decision.*

- Big-bang versus phased is decided deliberately, not by the calendar.
- Trade-offs and blast radius are documented.
- The executives who own the consequences have signed off.

**Red flag.** The date was set before the sequencing decision was made.

## 9 Go-live is the midpoint

*The first real payroll, close, and open enrollment are the actual test.*

- Hypercare is staffed through the first real cycles (payroll, close, enrollment).
- A Workday Center of Excellence is stood up before go-live.
- A regression cadence is in place for two feature releases a year.

**Red flag.** The team plans to stand down the week after go-live.

## The pre-mortem to run before every kickoff

Imagine it is a year from now and the program failed. Answer these seven questions honestly, while the problems are still cheap to fix.

- 1 Data.** Who owns conversion, and what is our error-rate target by mock load? Can we start cleanup now?
- 2 Customization.** What standard are we tempted to break, and is it worth regression-testing twice a year?
- 3 Security.** Are roles being designed with the business processes, or bolted on later?
- 4 Reporting.** What is the real list of reports people use, verified against run logs?
- 5 Integrations.** Have we inventoried every handshake and named an owner for each?
- 6 Adoption.** What adoption metric will we watch in the first 30 to 60 days?
- 7 Sequencing.** Is big-bang versus phased a deliberate, signed-off decision?

### Spotting these red flags in your own charter?

Every month I open a few slots for a complimentary 30-minute deployment review: an unbiased read on your timeline, sequencing, and resource plan, before your parallel run hits a wall.

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