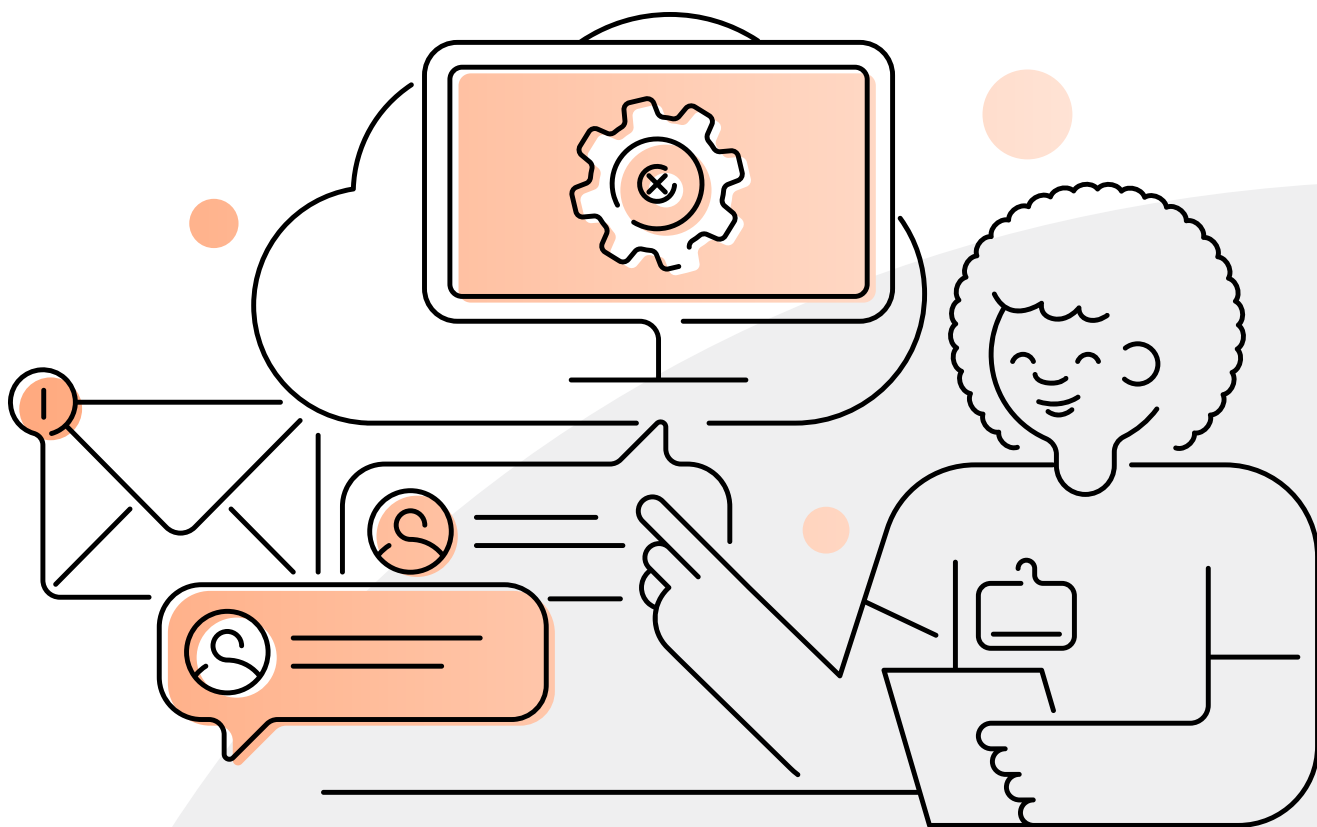


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# Alight's guide to deploying Workday Adaptive Planning



Dear Reader,

Welcome to Alight's Guide to Deploying Workday Adaptive Planning. You are likely reading this guide because you are considering Workday Adaptive Planning as a possible solution for your planning needs. The goal of this guide is to help you get the best from your investment.

You will have choices to make in terms of product, deployment approach, design and use of your new solution. This guide provides information and recommendations on how to get the most out of each stage of this journey. It is based on the cumulative experience of the Carlson Management Consulting team. Prior to and since being acquired by Alight in January 2019, the team has performed more than 650 deployments and optimisations of Workday Adaptive Planning (formerly Adaptive Insights) with clients internationally in a broad range of industries. With the acquisition of Carlson Management Consulting, Alight has the strongest Workday Adaptive Planning capability in the Workday ecosystem and offices across the globe including USA, Europe and the APAC region, and we're ready to help you on your journey to success with Workday Adaptive Planning

We wish you the best with your project and hope that Alight can contribute to its success.

Sincerely,  
Ethan Carlson

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## Preparing for deployment

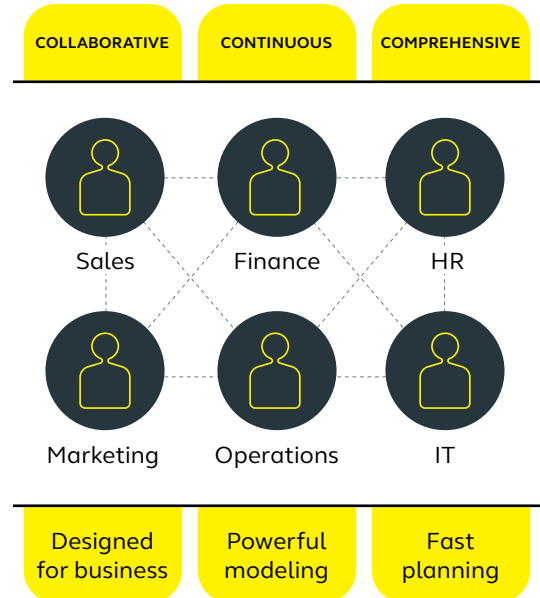
From the outset a clear articulation of the pain points of your current system and processes will inform your analysis of alternative solutions, but you should also take into consideration the opportunity you have to make a step change in your existing planning process, facilitated by your new solution.

As we reflect on and look beyond the traumatic start of this decade, we can see that the need for agility in business is paramount. When the global pandemic has been defeated a hugely competitive and dynamic corporate landscape will remain. Planning systems and processes must deliver to the needs of this landscape to ensure businesses survive and thrive. In our view they should be:

- Continuous rather than periodic
- Comprehensive, reflecting all the drivers of value creation in your business
- Taking advantage of advances in data management such as artificial intelligence

Considering these factors will help you to select the right technology and ensure long term success for your chosen platform. There are some more thoughts on getting the most out of your new planning system later in this guide.

### Requirements for Business Agility



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## Building the foundations for success

Deploying any new enterprise software solution requires considerable investment in time, money, and resources. For most organisations, these are scarce, so from the outset you will want to ensure you are drawing down on them as effectively as possible. Being organised and thinking through your requirements at the outset will provide a foundation for success. Be sure to consider the views and needs of the people who will use the solution on a day to day basis as well as those who use the outputs in decision making.

A clear articulation of the pain points of your current system and processes will inform your analysis of alternative solutions, but you should also take into consideration the opportunity you have to make a step change in your planning process, facilitated by your new solution.

While organisations have differing priorities, here is a short list of project objectives that we've developed with our customers to ensure they derive maximum benefits from their Workday Adaptive Planning investment:

- Eliminate the use of error-prone spreadsheets where possible
- Standardise and optimise finance practices across the organisation
- Ensure that budgets are aligned with strategy
- Streamline data flow through application integration
- Empower budget stakeholders and other constituents in the process

- Identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for driver-based budgeting
- Implement rolling forecasts and other finance best practices
- Enable self-service reporting, dashboards, and balanced scorecards

Building executive sponsorship and stewardship of the project at this stage, and then maintaining it through the duration will stand you in good stead. Typically, this would involve the CFO, Vice President of Finance, or Finance Director, depending on the size of your organisation.

Sponsor advocacy will be important in securing funding. Using Workday Adaptive Planning as an example you will need to budget for software subscription fees and the cost of your ongoing support model as well as the cost of deployment. The deployment cost is dependent on several variables including which modules are going to be used, your Workday Adaptive Planning instance strategy, the scope of business process redesign, the number of connectors for integration, and the training approach, as well as the general complexity of your organisation. Having your sponsor be part of the project governance is also likely to bring benefits whereby they can easily monitor progress and help ensure the project delivers to plan.

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## Develop a Request for Proposal

The Request for Proposal (RFP) is a means to convey your goals and expectations to prospective vendors, and levels the playing field for their responses. Managed well, it will generate a good indication as to the varying deployment approaches, costs and differentiating factors that those vendors can bring to your organisation. It can also help determine how realistic your expectations are and uncover any gaps in your project planning.

Spend time really detailing the project scope so there are no surprises later in the process. Being as specific as you can will help you find the right vendor. Create thought-provoking open questions so that the answers can help you properly assess potential vendors.

You should include information that helps ensure you receive serious rather than speculative bids and allows vendors to give you high quality responses on which you can assess them. The RFP should be comprehensive yet concise. It should include the following:

- Project Overview
- A brief outline of your business
- The goals of your project
- Scope of the work required to deliver these goals
- Target delivery timetable
- Possible roadblocks that you are aware of, such as pain points to be addressed or internal resource constraints foreseen
- Your preferred approach to training

- The Chart of Accounts and a set of sample reports
- A list of source systems that will provide data into the new planning system (including which ones with which you wish to automate data integration)
- Budget expectation /constraints, plus whether you are specifying a Time and Materials or Fixed bid approach
- What you are looking for in potential vendors and how they will be assessed
- Instructions on the format of the vendor response
- Any compliance requirements

Spend time really detailing the project scope so there are no surprises later in the process. Being as specific as you can will help you find the right vendor. Create thought-provoking open questions so that the answers can help you properly assess potential vendors.

As you review their responses, look out for details of the knowledge skills and experience of the people who would be working on the project, case studies or references from customers who have been through the same journey as you, awards that the deployment partner has won, and the long term support models available. Is this partner in it for the long haul or does their support stop the minute you go live?

You should be prepared to sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) and provide access to your existing models, financial information, current and future requirements, and key staff so that vendors can build enough understanding of exactly what your challenges and goals are. This way you can expect bids to be more specific and accurate, and therefore more comparable.

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## Deployment options

Workday Adaptive Planning is a user-friendly system that can be deployed more quickly and at less cost than legacy corporate performance management systems. However, careful planning in identifying the human capital required to deploy is very important.



## External assistance

The external route focusses on acquiring expert knowledge and experience to secure project success. Workday Adaptive Planning has an ecosystem of highly qualified partners that specialise in the deployment and optimisation of their software solutions. Partners are tiered at Platinum, Gold and Silver levels based on their track record and number of deployments. Some partners are regional while others service clients nationwide and internationally. A benefit of working with a partner is that they often have highly trained and experienced staff that have worked on many deployments. They may also have staff with extensive knowledge of finance and accounting. Most partners offer the flexibility for fixed-price or time and material projects. Aside from an RFP exercise some considerations for evaluating Workday Adaptive Planning partners include the following:

- How long have they been a Workday Adaptive Planning partner?
- How many deployments have they performed?
- Are they able to help optimize your platform? If so, how many clients do they partner with?
- What partner tier level are they?
- Have they won any awards or other recognition from Workday?
- Are their staff Workday Adaptive Planning Certified?
- How many staff do they have that are focused on Workday Adaptive Planning deployments?
- Do the staff have an extensive background in corporate finance?
- Do they offer both onsite and virtual services to match your needs?

- Does the partner use internal staff or outsource to contractors?
- Do they have customers in your market?
- Has the partner integrated with other systems (e.g. Enterprise Resource Planning) that you have?
- Do they have access to project management resource as well consulting?

Partnering with Alight gives our clients access to a consulting team of former CFOs and finance leaders as well as unparalleled capabilities with Workday Adaptive Planning.

The external route to deployment focuses on acquiring expert knowledge and experience to secure project success. A benefit of working with a partner is that they often have highly trained staff that have worked on many deployments.



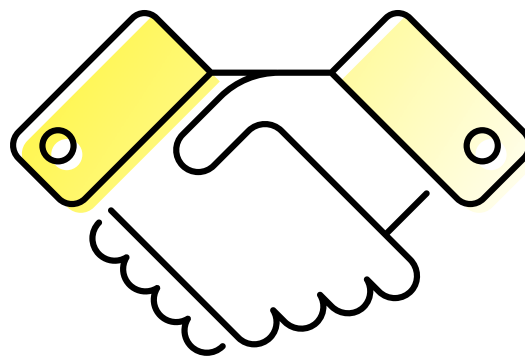
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## External assistance

A list of Workday Adaptive Planning partners can be found at the following [Link](#). Workday also maintains a Professional Services group. More information about their services can be found [here](#).

At Alight, we hold one of the highest levels of Workday Adaptive Planning accreditation, Platinum Premier. Partnering with Alight gives our clients access to a consulting team of former CFOs and finance leaders as well as unparalleled capabilities with Workday Adaptive Planning. We have completed over 650 Workday Adaptive Planning deployments and we have 55 Workday Adaptive Planning certified consultants spread across the USA, Europe and the APAC region.

With an unwavering belief that an organisation's success starts with its people, Alight is a leading cloud-based provider of integrated digital human capital and business solutions. Leveraging proprietary AI and data analytics, Alight optimises business process as a service (BPaaS) to deliver superior outcomes for employees and employers across a comprehensive portfolio of services. At Alight, we help organisations of all sizes, including over 70% of the Fortune 100.



## Internally staffed

Internal deployments use a company's internal resources to manage and deliver the solution to users. The main perceived benefits are that it reduces cost while immediately cultivating skills and experience in the solution.

In some cases, this may indeed be the case, particularly if any team members have previous experience with Workday Adaptive Planning. Larger organisations with skilled teams and resource availability sometimes take this course. Typically, companies that do so will seek application training before beginning a project to create a scalable knowledge base.

There are however risks to the approach, such as:

- Sub-optimal design
  - Driven by delivery and cost objectives design optimisation may be sacrificed
  - A focus on making it work — probably replicating existing current processes
  - Missing opportunities to improve and innovate
  - Broader goals of adoption and advocacy can suffer
- Any difficulty encountered in build is likely to stretch limited capability and capacity, causing
  - delays
  - the need for additional short term resource, adding unforeseen cost
- Inability to leverage best practices from a certified partner

The risk of project failure is therefore somewhat higher than engaging with a partner with certified consultants. Indeed, we have found that companies that deploy internally have a higher rate of seeking external assistance later to re-deploy the solution.

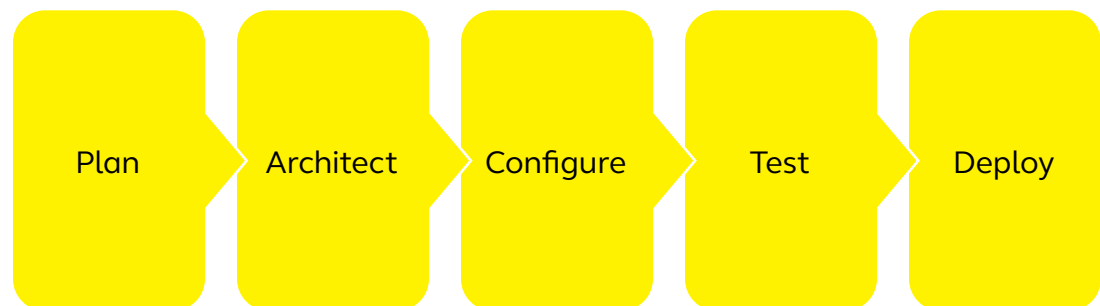
Some considerations for evaluating the internally staffed approach include:

- Creating sufficient capability
  - How many team members have recent experience deploying and using Workday Adaptive Planning?
  - Does your team have adequate understanding of Workday Adaptive Planning features to ensure your design makes full use of its capabilities?
  - Does your team have adequate technical knowledge to design the systems integration and data flows?
  - Can your team allocate the time outside of their day-to-day responsibilities to successfully deploy the solution?
  - How can you fill any capability gaps?
- Deployment planning
  - Do you have a project management methodology that is well suited to Workday Adaptive Planning deployments?
  - Do you have an aggressive timeline for completing the deployment?
  - Do you have a fallback plan in case the deployment does not progress smoothly?
  - Have you considered engaging a Workday Adaptive Planning partner to develop a hybrid deployment approach?

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## Deployment methodology

A comprehensive deployment process creates the conditions for successful projects that can be scaled across even the largest organisations. The Alight methodology, developed through our extensive experience, is summarised below. While summarised sequentially Alight would look to optimise the plan by running some elements side by side in a set of sprints, for instance taking a particular model (Revenues or Workforce for example) completely through the Configure and Test phases. The precise scheduling of the phases would be agreed during the Architect phase.



These phases are supplemented by Workday Delivery Assurance, a series of Project, Product and Technical checkpoints that ensure consistency of deployment and mitigate project risks. This would form part of the overall risk management of the project, see section on Risk Management.

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## Deployment methodology

The phases are broken down below in more detail.

### Plan

- Assemble team and hold kick-off meetings
- Develop an understanding of the company's strategic vision and establish critical success factors for the project
- Assess business processes, reporting requirements, technical infrastructure, and resources
- Define optimal business processes/workflows

### Architect

- Design and integration workshops
- Review all requirements, structure and modules in detail
- Develop and document the processes, information workflows, reports, user roles, and models
- Define business readiness criteria
- Incorporating finance and systems best practices, provide a detailed project plan

### Configure

- Create core system structure
- Build integrated financials with historical and test data
- Develop models, calculations, and assumptions. Create and populate key supporting schedules. Create reports, dashboards, and scorecards
- Develop and assign user roles/permissions of the solution based on the design
- Create integration touch points to ensure automated/efficient data flows

### Test

- Training materials and delivery
- Test cases and UAT
- Issue resolution
- Fine tune solution based on end user feedback

### Deploy

- Roll out solution to end users
- Go-live support
- Provide ongoing optimisation support as business and processes evolve

## Project roles and resourcing

The specific roles required to deliver your solution will depend on the scale, complexity and timelines of your project. Where Alight is the deployment partner a typical project structure would have the following roles and accountabilities:

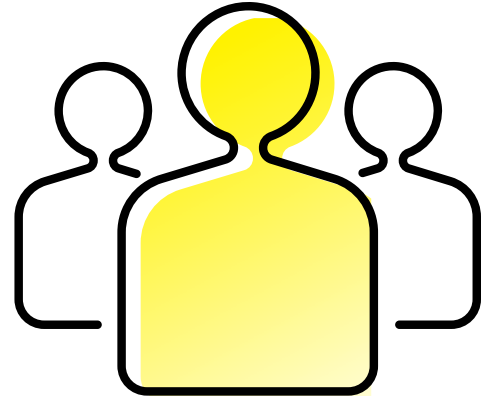
- Engagement Manager — client relations
- Project Manager — successful and timely deployment
- System Architect — overall design
- Deployment Consultant(s) — build resource
- Integration Consultant(s) — build and manage integrations

Whatever your deployment approach identifying and recruiting the appropriate internal resources for your project is critical to overall success.

For an externally supported deployment the project team typically includes 2 or 3 FP&A resources with one being the primary point of contact. You will also want an IT resource that can assist with systems integration, although their involvement should be minimal. The inclusion of other functional experts, e.g. from Operations, HR, or Sales, may be required depending on the scope of your solution.

When working with a deployment partner, your team will be responsible for providing data as requested, participating in design discussions, system reviews, data population of the model, and testing.

Failure to follow through on these responsibilities could delay the project deployment. Typically, total customer required effort is 5 to 10 hours per week spread across the entire team.



## Risk management

Strong governance and process are key to managing the various risks associated with your deployment. This applies from the initiation of the project, through vendor/partner selection and then execution.

Tackle key decisions early to reduce risk — make or finish key plan and program design decisions before you start the deployment project

You should consider establishing a steering committee chaired by the executive sponsor to oversee progress and manage risks and issues arising. In any case your project manager should maintain processes to identify, assess and manage risks and make these available to project / steering group meetings as appropriate.

Based on Alight's extensive experience we would recommend the following actions to reduce risk:

- Tackle key decisions early — make foundational design decisions early. Make or finish key plan and program design decisions before you start the deployment project.
- Ensure data readiness — where is your data stored and how clean is it? Do you have common standards? What will be required to clean your data for conversion?
- Review foundation data models, chart of accounts, business processes and hierarchies — assess the current state of these and other key architectural elements

- Identify integrations — develop/refine your integrations inventory and identify opportunities to reduce or simplify integrations
- Define project resources — start project planning early, identify resource requirements, fill key roles and plan for project team training
- Define your operating model — the support model internally and with external partners

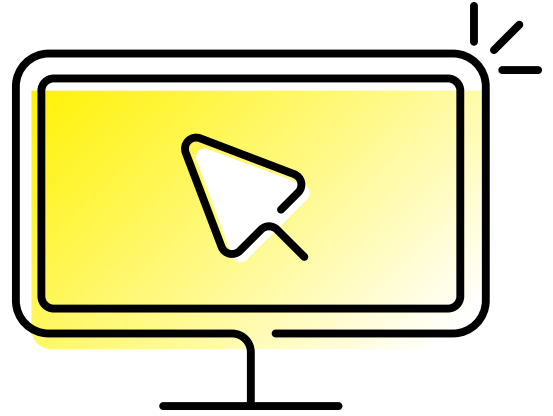
A Workday Adaptive Planning deployment in partnership with Alight brings the additional benefits of Workday Delivery Assurance, a series of Project, Product and Technical checkpoints that ensure consistency of deployment and leverage common tools and expertise to help mitigate project risks.



## Virtual deployment

Alight's delivery model has long been a measured balance of on site and virtual activity, successfully optimising delivery and cost for our customers. This experience has provided a robust platform for the continuation of business during the Coronavirus pandemic. Alight has seamlessly transitioned to a technology enabled fully virtual deployment approach continuing to employ engagement best practices such as maximum meeting durations. Alight has successfully completed a significant number of end to end deployments using this model.

While the Alight methodology has been proven to deliver deployment success, there are other approaches that may also work well. Should you take the route of working with a Workday Adaptive Planning partner, make sure they have a proven repeatable process that is validated by reference clients.



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## Training

Training is vital to end user adoption of the Workday Adaptive Planning system or any other planning solution. You should develop a training curriculum as well as documentation. Typically, training will be organised for administrators as well as end users. Administrator training is for “super users” who are tasked with new model development or modifications to existing models. They are often the go to people for questions from end users. Sometimes, companies will opt for a train the trainer approach where their administrators will train end users.

If you work with Alight as your deployment partner training will be offered onsite as well as remotely. With remote training you or your partner should record the sessions so they can be reviewed later or by new staff. As part of a support agreement, you may be entitled to periodic training for new releases or modules that you wish to deploy. You should also consider attending Adaptive Live, the user conference that Workday Adaptive Planning hosts annually. This event features workshops, training on new functionality, as well as networking with peer users from other organisations.



*Adaptive Live is a great opportunity to meet users, partners and the Workday Adaptive Planning team.*



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## Documentation

Documentation of the project is important and serves to capture the new processes and steps necessary to ensure end users are using the system correctly. Documentation should be a living resource, not filed away and never reviewed. As updates are made to your evolving solution, these changes should be recorded in the documentation.

Documentation is also helpful for new staff to gain an understanding of features and processes. Documentation typically comprises the following:

**Project plan** — this detailed document includes all the stakeholders, activities, required resources, and timelines for your project. The plan is typically formulated during the Discovery & Design phase of the project after thorough scoping has been completed.

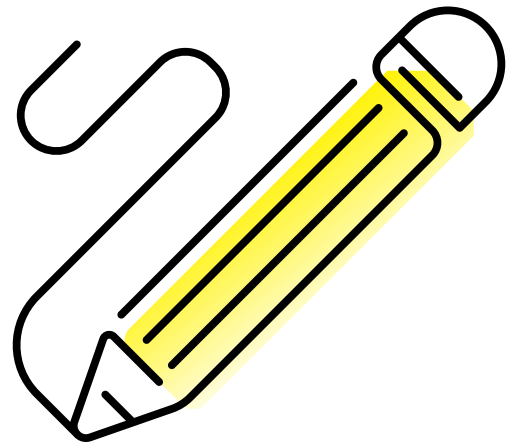
**Design document** — this document outlines the overall structure (levels, dimensions, and accounts) and the supporting schedules that will populate the budget model with data. Additionally, this document specifies the reports that will be built and the overall data flows within the system (including from external data sources). It is often updated through the build process to reflect the actual design of the system as it matures.

**Administrator document** — this document is provided to super users who will be able to make changes within your Workday Adaptive Planning system. Contents would include, for example, creating new levels, adding GL accounts, adding dimensions, creating formulas, and managing versions.

**Import document** — this document provides instructions on how to import various types of data into your Workday Adaptive Planning system.

**User document** — this document provides an overview and instructions for end users working with your configured Workday Adaptive Planning system. In addition to basic information about logging in and navigation, it provides detailed instructions on how best to work with your system and its features.

If you are working with a deployment partner, they should maintain up-to-date documentation and make changes as necessary for you. Ideally, they should have a support portal which enables your team to access the latest versions of documentation on demand.



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## Integrating with other systems

As part of your project, you will need to identify your source systems and the type of data that you wish to import. A key objective in deploying Workday Adaptive Planning is automating the transfer of data between core and peripheral systems, improving efficiency and security. By integrating Workday Adaptive Planning with other systems, your organisation will reduce the amount of time taken manually copying and pasting data from spreadsheets and other applications into your Workday Adaptive Planning system. Furthermore, you will eliminate errors while ensuring people are working with the latest data and can more effectively and rapidly make business management decisions.

Adaptive Planning Connectors are highly configurable and customisable. With Connectors, customers can automate data import, with a fast and simple approach to synchronising system data. Connectors can be run on-demand, or as a scheduled task on a routine basis.

The Workday Adaptive Planning Connectors are highly configurable and customisable. With Connectors, customers can automate data import, with a fast and simple approach to synchronising system data with their Workday Adaptive Planning product. Connectors can be run on-demand, or as a scheduled task on a routine basis. For integrating with hosted source systems, the Connector is hosted from the Workday Adaptive Planning servers. For on-premise source systems the Connector is installed in the customer's environment as a Windows application on a desktop or virtual machine and initiated locally.

Whether hosted or on-premise the Connectors use the same approach to automated data connection and integration, known as Extract, Transform and Load.

**Extract:** The first step takes data directly from the underlying GL or other enterprise system database, or through Application Programming Interfaces (APIs).

**Transform:** The next step changes, or transforms the data extracted (accounts, plans, dimensions) to match the customer format used in the Workday Adaptive Planning application.

**Load:** Once data has been transformed it is packaged into an XML file and uploaded via a web service, using SFTP (Secure File Transfer Protocol). Credentials are automatically checked at both ends to ensure security. A log is generated, confirming successful upload, and noting any discrepancies (e.g. new or un-matched accounts).

The data import processes that you deploy should be included in your Import Document.

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## Alignment with Workday ERP

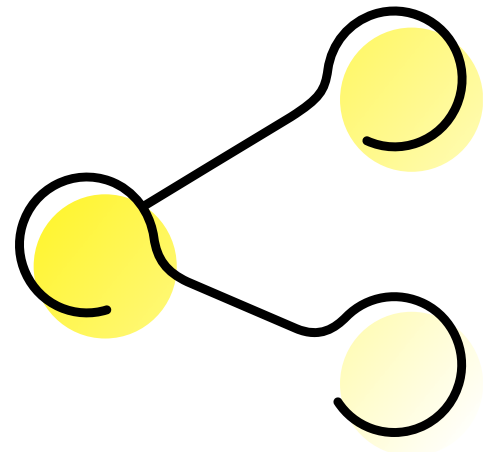
Workday Adaptive Planning is part of the Workday suite of applications, and Alight has the strongest Workday Adaptive Planning capability in the Workday ecosystem. This means that if your organisation currently has a Workday ERP, or is investing in one, the benefits of seamless alignment between your Workday ERP and your new (or existing) Workday Adaptive Planning instance can be redeemed to best advantage in partnership with Alight.

At Alight, we have developed a pre-built solution using best practices for Integration with Workday which allows you to source all metadata and data into Workday Adaptive Planning for an end to end integration solution.

For new Workday Adaptive Planning deployments we recommend a full end to end solution, the components of which may include:

- Financial Management, HCM, Payroll, and any set of transactions
- All Org structures (Levels, Cost Centres, CoA) and planning dimensions (Customer, Product)
- Drillback functionality from Workday Adaptive Planning through to Workday

At Alight, we have developed a pre-built solution using best practices for this configuration which allows you to source all metadata and data into Workday Adaptive Planning for an end to end solution. The pre-built solution provides 25+ prebuilt reports, 30+ staging tables, 100+ transformation codes that are reusable, 25+ loaders and 10+ tasks for scheduling.



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## Post deployment: ongoing support

Buying a new software system is in some ways like purchasing a new car. After you start using it, you need to maintain it to ensure optimal performance.

Following a successful deployment and roll out to business users your new planning solution becomes more and more business critical. After you start using it, you need to maintain it to ensure optimal performance. At Alight we see business continuity and service availability as critical to the performance of the organisation. Having completed more than 650 projects worldwide using Workday Adaptive Planning, we have first-hand knowledge of how important these solutions become.

Product support is generally provided by the software vendor, in this case Workday. This covers bug fixes, upgrades, or any other issues with the product and is included with your software subscription. Workday Adaptive Planning typically has two update releases each year that include new functionality and feature enhancements.

Application support is generally provided by the company who deployed the solution with you and covers the developed solution, models, reports etc. This is why it's key to ask the question at RFP stage, so you know if your chosen partner can support you after go-live and if so, what support options they have available. Not only does this service cover the solution you have, but there is also scope to think about what you may need in the future through understanding potential future business requirements.

Alight's Support Solution covers the following:

- Dedicated support access
- Assistance with operational escalations and troubleshooting
- System optimisations, functional and technical configurations
- Integration issues if relevant
- Training and documentation
- Assistance with reporting
- New feature exploration
- Knowledge transfer
- Annual health check
- Model development up to the agreed hours per annum
- Provision of ticketing system for call tracking
- Dedicated Enablement Manager for escalation of issues
- Regular analysis of support time utilised

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## Six tips for successful planning solution deployments

### 1. **Clearly define your goals.**

If you don't know where you want to go, then how are you going to get there?

While it sounds obvious, it's very important to establish a key set of objectives with your deployment. For these reasons, it's a good idea to have at least a high level understanding of the features and capabilities of the Workday Adaptive Planning modules that you will be deploying. This will help inform your list of attainable objectives. Also, you may wish to consider prioritising certain goals and phasing in others after the initial deployment. Some goals, particular those that involve a cultural shift, may take considerably more time to establish and benefit from the momentum that your initial deployment can give. Don't forget, make sure goals are measurable.

### 2. **Empower your stakeholders.**

In addition to the core deployment team you will want to involve, when and where appropriate, a broader range of stakeholders who will be using and benefiting from your Workday Adaptive Planning system. With their contribution to the project, you will also be ensuring greater buy-in prior to actual deployment and ongoing development. As you incorporate their feedback, you can also expect to resolve any unanticipated issues with processes that may arise. The formation of a User Forum can be a good way of capturing the views of your users.

### 3. **Maintain momentum.**

A risk in any project is that the deployment loses steam as time progresses. People may have to focus on urgent business issues or even just their day-to-day responsibilities. Perhaps someone from the team leaves the organisation. Whatever the reason, it's important to keep team members engaged and moving forward. Establishing a timeline for the project and sticking to it helps keep the project moving forward.

### 4. **Ensure proper training and communication.**

Training is already mentioned in this guide. It can't be over-emphasised how important proper training is to get the full value out of your Workday Adaptive Planning investment. Workday Adaptive Planning is designed with the end user in mind and can generally be learned quite quickly. Super users should plan on a minimum of twelve hours of training. It's generally a good practice to include overview training in the discovery phase of a project to give team members an understanding of core functionality. Sufficient end user training can often be accomplished within a day. It's quite common for super users to contribute to testing, which is another opportunity to learn the system. Good training will support your overall communication of the changes you are making, building advocacy and user adoption.

## Six tips for successful planning solution deployments

### 5. Think outside the box.

Deploying Workday Adaptive Planning is an opportunity to redefine performance management within your organisation. Finance isn't just about managing the numbers, it's also about leadership and being a partner to the rest of the organisation. Part of this is being able to speak the language of stakeholders within your company and assist them on the path of improved performance within their operational areas. A key aspect of this is tracking the non-financial KPIs which assist other parts of the business in gauging areas such as customer turnover, product defects, employee satisfaction and other workforce related metrics. With creativity you can impact your organisation by applying Workday Adaptive Planning capabilities in non-traditional areas.

With creativity you can impact your organisation by applying Adaptive Planning capabilities in non-traditional areas.

### 6. Track the right metrics.

Many organisations track too many metrics. This is an issue because it adds time overhead for the finance team without delivering the value that makes it worthwhile. As a rule, if the metric does not allow you to gauge whether you are executing on your strategy, then you should consider eliminating it. Generally we recommend limiting the number of metrics to no more than 12 at any level of the organisation. Consider the illustration below for examples of metrics.

### Track the right metrics for success

Focus on 6 – 12 key drivers and metrics. Remember, quality not quantity

#### Finance

- Sales/Margins
- ARR/MRR
- ROI on customer acquisition
- ROI/ROE

#### Customer

- Customer retention rates
- Customer satisfaction
- Lifetime value of customer

#### Operational

- Product defects
- Utilisation rates
- System outages/uptime

#### Employee

- Employee satisfaction
- Absence
- Measures of diversity

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## Four deployment hazards to be avoided

### 1. **Poor project timing.**

The timing of your project is an important consideration. Make sure that your staff will be able to dedicate adequate time to the project. It should be scheduled to avoid traditionally busy times such as the year-end financial close as well as holidays and times of the year when people frequently go on vacation. Do an internal assessment of the availability of the right people with the right technical and leadership skills, and consider how they will be needed across the phases of the project. To satisfy the technical end, there is training which your deployment partner should provide and which Administrators should complete prior to the project kick-off.

If you are deploying any other systems that will integrate with Workday Adaptive Planning, make sure that you have enough time to complete them ahead of your Workday Adaptive Planning deployment.

### 2. **Insufficient project scoping.**

Clear and precise project scoping is critical to ensuring a project is completed on time and within budget. Establish and consider the requirements of all stakeholder before agreeing those that will be in scope. Include a level of detail in your project scope and RFP that enables a deployment partner to estimate the resources required to accomplish your goals within the established timeframe. This discipline will help avoid scope creep which can cause delays, cost overruns, and acrimony.

Consider any changes that are planned in the near term to other systems that will impact your Workday Adaptive Planning design, such as a new ERP deployment or organisation restructure. This will minimise the time and expense to rework your Workday Adaptive Planning instance.

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## Four deployment hazards to be avoided

### 3. **Vague chain of command.**

It may seem obvious to have a project manager who is the main point of contact and accountability, but sometimes this leading role is distributed among several team members or not identified at all. The risk here is that project coordination can suffer, especially as projects often have overlapping activities taking place which require nimble, focused management. Lack of coordination can mean that important decisions are made in a silo without other team members being aware. It can also lead to breakdown in important links with stakeholders from accounting, finance, operations, and IT about what is needed and what you plan to deliver. The need for clarity also applies to any deployment partner. They need to have a peer project manager that can sign off on deliverables as they are completed.

### 4. **Failure to prioritize.**

For successful timely deployments, less is usually more. As part of your project planning document it's important to identify what you need now and what can wait until later. This also applies to adding end users. During the deployment, while a broader group of stakeholders should have input on the project, only the members of the project team should have access to your Workday Adaptive Planning development instance. Post deployment it may be a good idea to limit users to your core budget and finance managers initially then add other stakeholders later. This will save a considerable amount of time in training and free up time for your administrator after your critical go-live requirements are met. The broader team can then engage on the other project phases (e.g. additional Budget Reports/Models) and train additional end users.

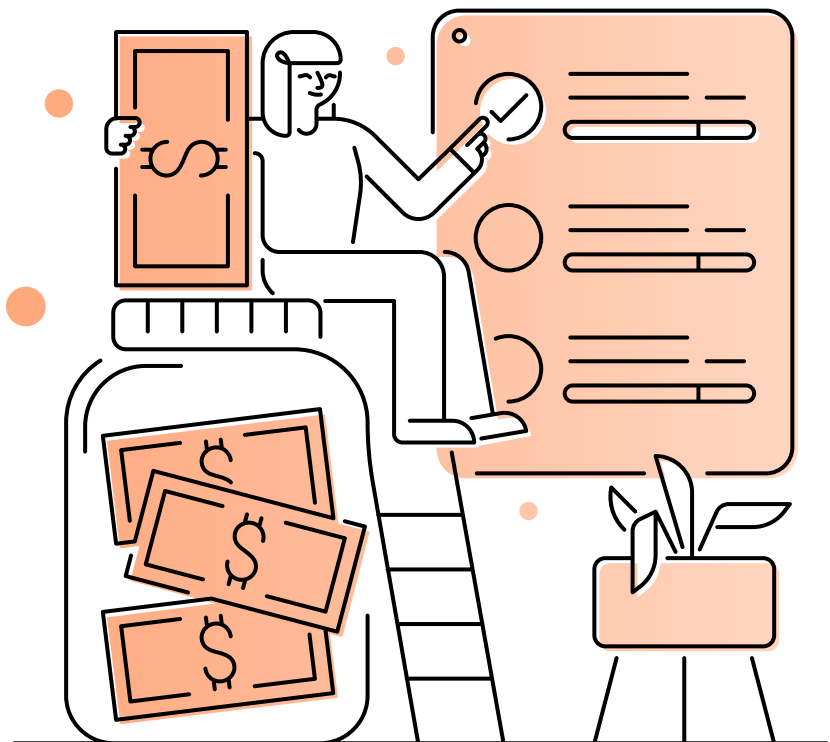
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## Implementing finance best practices

Deploying Workday Adaptive Planning is not only an opportunity to deploy a cutting-edge corporate performance management solution, it's also an opportunity to improve and streamline processes. When working with clients, we often focus on the key areas described below.



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## Aligning budget to strategy

One of the key reasons for ineffective budgeting is the disconnect between the budget and the company's broader strategy. While it seems like an issue of common sense, most organisations' budgeting process is not truly aligned with its strategy and key participants are unable to clearly articulate the connections. Aside from the mechanics and technology involved in budgeting, there is a human factor behind this problem – mainly, most companies do not have a culture of inclusion. Strategy is often a discussion that takes place at the executive level but unfortunately the resulting insights and decisions made are not permeated through the rest of the organisation.

Without knowledge of company strategy, the stakeholders who create and manage budgets do not know how they can impact it and where to most effectively allocate their spending and investments.

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In order to better align budgets with strategy, here are some steps we recommend:

1. Start every budget cycle with executive-level participation and insight into company strategy. Make sure it is clear how your strategy translates to business tactics and how every employee's action and role has a direct impact on the success of this strategy. While almost every company has executive offsite sessions and develops or modifies a strategic plan, often the strategic objectives are not

translated into the tactics of the business, the annual budget or financial forecast. The problem is that the individuals responsible for strategy and vision are not always the same people involved in creating the budget. Even when they are, the exercises are often not connected.

Every member of the company needs to know how their role and actions help the company achieve its goals. The discussion of budgeting should be viewed as the mechanism to allocate resources to achieve strategic results. The budget is the conclusion of the strategy process. It is validation that the tactics will drive success and should not be perceived merely as a compulsory exercise. Executive management needs to drive this connection from the top.

2. Include a long range plan early in the budget cycle. Budgets are typically for one year, which is an arbitrary range of time. Many business initiatives take longer than 12 months to deliver results and therefore the annual budget provides an incomplete picture. Make sure your annual plan is simply a subset of the long range (3-5 year) business plan. Inclusion of the long term plan ensures that the tactical elements of the budget align with the long term goals of the organisation. An added benefit is that the longer term plan enables individuals to focus on strategy as the annual budget is often viewed as the mechanism for bonus compensation. An unfortunate consequence is that it then becomes subject to "sandbagging". Inclusion of the long term plan, and validating that the near term fits within it, is key to aligning the budget with company strategy.

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## Aligning budget to strategy

3. Measure and communicate metrics critical to success. Surprisingly, many companies perform a budget exercise but have not identified the performance indicators which measure the success (or failure) of their budget and strategy. These KPIs include both financial and non-financial measures as often times the non-financial metrics are the early indicators of success. These metrics should be well defined, clearly measurable, and frequently published. Once you create these metrics, if you are intent on building a culture of inclusion, it is critical that this information flows unimpeded to key stakeholders. By frequently communicating the metrics that define success employees are better able to determine whether they are on target and can make adjustments based on this real time information.
4. Validate goals against key metrics and market data. Are your goals attainable in light of the economic and competitive environment? If your market is flat and you are projecting 30% growth, what are you doing that makes this attainable? Clearly articulate how your organisation is positioned relative to your market and competition and how you are using your assets and allocating them in a manner to succeed. This type of exercise is typical within a marketing department but, similar to strategy, this information does not always find its way through the organisation. It is critical not only for this assessment to occur but also that there is a mechanism in your process to have it shared throughout the organisation to better inform business decisions.

Validate goals against key metrics and market data. Clearly articulate how your organisation is positioned relative to your market and competition and how you are using your assets and allocating them in a manner to succeed.

5. Revisit planning and strategy as necessary. It's not uncommon for companies to set unrealistic expectations based on previous performance. Often market conditions change leaving past plans unrealistic. Make sure you have a mechanism for reviewing your plans and adjusting, if necessary on a quarterly basis. By periodically reviewing plans and strategy, companies can course-correct before a problem becomes a crisis and ensure that measuring results against your plan remains relevant and insightful.

All of these elements form the basis for creating a culture of inclusion, visibility and empowerment that is essential to aligning budgeting with strategy. This is the foundation to creating business value within the finance function.

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## Rolling forecasts

In today's dynamic data driven business environment static planning processes characterised by long cycle times, top down data flow and a focus on purely financial metrics are no longer fit for purpose. "Active" planning processes by contrast are inclusive and continuous so they can keep up with the pace of change and all the people in the organisation who know what is going on. Rolling forecasts are a key element of an active planning culture.

A rolling forecast:

- Identifies opportunities and risks in a dynamic business environment
- Enables driver-based planning and "what if" scenario analysis
- Provides the flexibility to redirect resources and priorities to better align with strategy
- Facilitates a culture of inclusion and empowerment

The rolling forecast allows finance professionals to identify opportunities and risks that contribute to or imperil success. It allows you to better monitor the pulse of the company so that more timely decisions can be made to ensure the company is moving forward according to plan. When a variance is found, you can then drill down to determine the underlying cause and make the appropriate adjustments.

Active planning processes are inclusive and continuous so they can keep up with the pace of change and the people in the organisation who know what is going on. Rolling forecasts are a key element of an active planning culture.

In order to develop an efficient rolling forecast process, you need to identify the key variables that drive your business and the timing of their impact on operations. If your highest revenue-generating product includes a raw material whose cost is sensitive to volatile commodity prices, you will want to include that material cost as a driver. You can then create "what if" scenarios projecting multiple cost points of that material to envision the future impact on COGS and margin. While there is a tendency to go into great detail with drivers, be sure to focus on the main ones to make the rolling forecast manageable.

Another component of rolling forecasts is that you should frequently import actuals into your model for variance analysis and to ensure you are on track. This underscores the importance of having a budgeting and forecasting system that integrates with the repository of the actuals data (e.g., an ERP system). By integrating actuals with forecast you will identify issues early on which will allow you to refocus your priorities and resources as necessary.

While it would seem that more frequent forecasts would consume additional time and resources, designed and managed well they actually save time in the overall planning process. A more efficient and automated rolling forecast enables the finance organisation to focus on more value-added analysis and decision-making. The ability to course-correct as necessary allows your company to be more proactive and flexible in aligning operations to strategy.

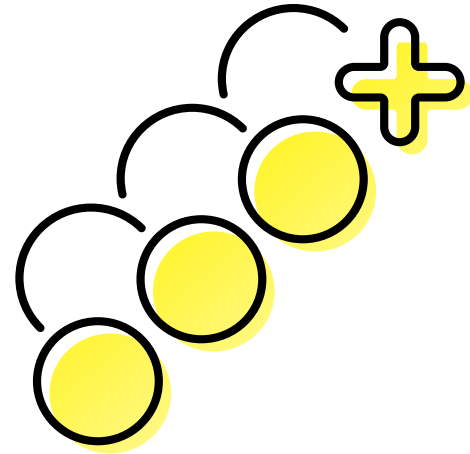
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## Rolling forecasts

Finally, an important consideration when implementing rolling forecasts is to engage more stakeholders in the process. Budget owners need to participate and provide the objective data that feeds the forecast. By being inclusive, you will cultivate a feeling of empowerment that individual budget owners can effect positive change. It is vital to then communicate the updated projections (and strategy) to the broader organisation so that everyone is working “singing from the same hymn sheet”.

The frequency of the forecast is defined primarily by the dynamism of your particular market, the drivers of your business, and your ability to readily incorporate actuals into the forecast. While all companies are different, if your company is doing bi-annual or annual forecasting, you should seriously consider the benefits of moving to a more frequent rolling forecast.

Implementing a rolling forecast process requires careful planning and execution and should not be approached casually. Consider phasing it into strategic areas of the business first and then deploying more broadly as the value of improved insight and decision-making is realised.



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## Managing the important numbers: KPIs

A question that invariably arises when deploying Workday Adaptive Planning is — which metrics should we be tracking? Planning solutions like Workday Adaptive Planning with its Elastic Hypercube Technology can quickly manage huge amounts of diverse data, but in answering the question we steer the discussion to priorities and strategy. In our experience, KPIs are an excellent means for ensuring that budgets align with strategy. Specifically, what are the factors necessary for companies to improve competitiveness over both the shorter and longer term? Where should they be focusing their time, effort, and investment? For example, a company may wish to prioritise cost efficiency, safety, compliance, quality, or delivery. Or take workforce planning to another level by planning for skills management, measures of diversity, engagement and productivity, as well as workforce expense.

The discussion about KPIs can get overwhelming as it can often be varied based on the industry as a whole or the company in particular. There are several financial as well as non-financial metrics that can and should be closely managed. For the purposes of this post, let's focus on some of the financial KPIs that can be applied broadly across manufacturing. Not surprisingly, they involve measurements around units. For manufacturers, as an example, here is a shortlist of must-have KPIs:

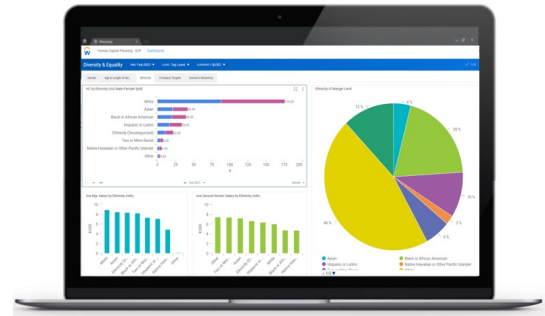
1. Cost volume profit analysis: Also known as CVP, this analysis goes beyond break-even analysis, which is essential in its own right. CVP is particularly valuable for ascertaining short-term goals in profitability as production is planned or projected to scale. It does have limitations as it assumes there won't be changes to fixed and variable cost. It also assumes that all units will be sold, which as we all know doesn't always happen. However, it does provide guidance for aligning production with profit targets.

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## Managing the important numbers: KPIs

2. **Manufacturing cost per unit (without material):** This KPI is very handy because it addresses costs that are generally under a manufacturer's control. In its most basic form, it is the cost of direct labour plus overheads divided by units. As material costs usually fluctuate, they are not included in this analysis. This is a great measure of manufacturing efficiency, as it allows companies to gauge the effects of any process improvements they put in place.
3. **WIP inventory/turns:** A frequent priority among manufacturers is inventory management; more specifically lean inventory. With improved, integrated technology in the areas of CRM, ERP, MRP, and Supply Chain Management, it is possible to have real-time insight into demand, production, and inventory. It's a goal of many world-class manufacturers to accelerate the velocity at which inventory turns, thereby lowering carrying costs.

In order to make KPIs understandable to those who need to be in the know, we recommend making them available in self-service dashboards. Dashboards present a visual interpretation of the data and thus are more easily consumed and acted upon.



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## Conclusion

Deploying Workday Adaptive Planning offers the opportunity to take financial planning and analysis to a new level. However as described in this guide, it is not purely a technical solution you are deploying. It is an enabler for changing the culture of financial planning, empowering a broader group of stakeholders, and positioning the finance group as leaders within your organisation. With careful planning, resourcing, and deployment execution, Workday Adaptive Planning can be one of the best investments your company makes. All of us at Alight wish you the best as you embark upon your Workday Adaptive Planning journey!





## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Looking for more information to kick start your project? Feel free to contact us for sample documentation including the following:

- RFP Templates
- Project plans
- Design documentation
- Admin and end user training documentation
- Dashboard and report samples

### Contact details

Learn more about deploying Workday Adaptive Planning in partnership with Alight by talking to an expert today.

Email us at [workday.solutions@alight.com](mailto:workday.solutions@alight.com) or visit us online at: [alight.com/workday-adaptive-planning-implementation](https://alight.com/workday-adaptive-planning-implementation)

## About Alight Solutions

With an unwavering belief that a company's success starts with its people, Alight Solutions is a leading cloud-based provider of integrated digital human capital and business solutions.

Leveraging proprietary AI and data analytics, Alight optimises business process as a service (BPaaS) to deliver superior outcomes for employees and employers across a comprehensive portfolio of services. Alight allows employees to enrich their health, wealth and work while enabling global organisations to achieve a high-performance culture. Alight's 15,000 dedicated colleagues serve more than 30 million employees and family members. Learn how Alight helps organisations of all sizes, including over 70% of the Fortune 100 at [alight.com](https://alight.com).

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