

The **6 Pillars** of Construction Workforce Management



Communication



Scheduling



Data
Management



People
Management



Forecasting



Actuals and
Analytics

PROCORE

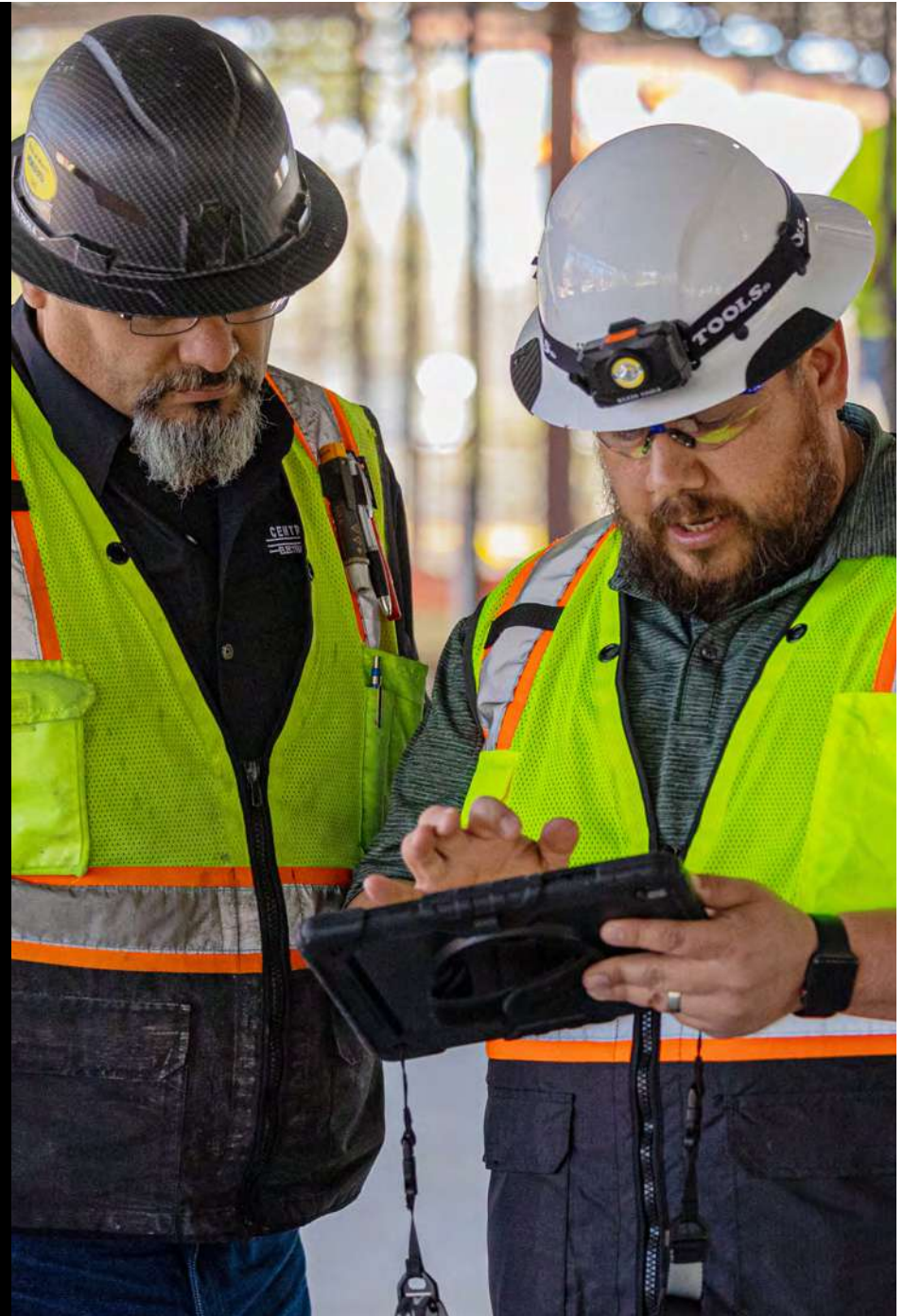




Table of Contents

03	Introduction
04	People, Process, Technology
05	The Six Pillars of Construction WFM
06	Communication
08	Scheduling
10	Data Management
11	People Management
12	Forecasting
13	Actuals and Analytics
14	Conclusion
15	Additional WFM Resources

Introduction

Workforce management (WFM) is an organizational approach used to optimize efficiency and effectiveness of employees. Used widely in numerous industries all over the world, this institutional practice is used by businesses to strategically optimize productivity.

In the construction industry, proper WFM means ensuring the right person is at the right place at the right time, creating the right plan. Contractors across the globe are practicing WFM, but most are doing so unknowingly and unequipped, which means their processes are often fragmented, unstandardized, redundant, and high risk. In turn, this creates miscommunication, inaccurate scheduling, mismanaged data, and wasted time. Unable to properly forecast or analyze data, contractors waste time and money with outdated, analog practices, creating an industry-wide gap.

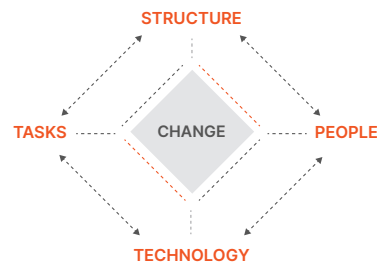
Fundamentally, there are six pillars that support WFM: communication, scheduling, data management, people management, forecasting, actuals and analytics. When done correctly, these pillars create alignment within an organization and uncover new efficiencies.

Before we dive deeper into each pillar, let's start with the groundwork that's necessary before implementing a true WFM practice at your construction company.

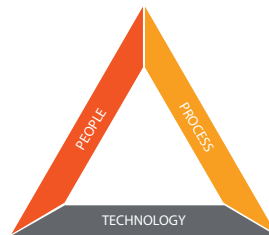
“Cloud-based workforce management is a great tool to help you get the right people, in the right place, at the right time.”

People, Process, Technology

What's the foundation for WFM? The [People, Process, Technology](#) framework, also known as PPT.



Leavitt's Diamond Model



Golden Triangle

In the 1990s, a security technologist named Bruce Schneier championed PPT, turning it into a business practice “near mantra.” Each leg must be robust and well-executed, working together to support successful WFM.



People: Who should be involved

People are centric to business and construction operations. Without people, nothing gets accomplished.



Process: How it should be done

Standardized processes create predictability and efficiency. Progress is obstructed without process.



Technology: Enable people, support process

The tool must fit the task. Technology should simplify processes and amplify effectiveness.

A Brief History

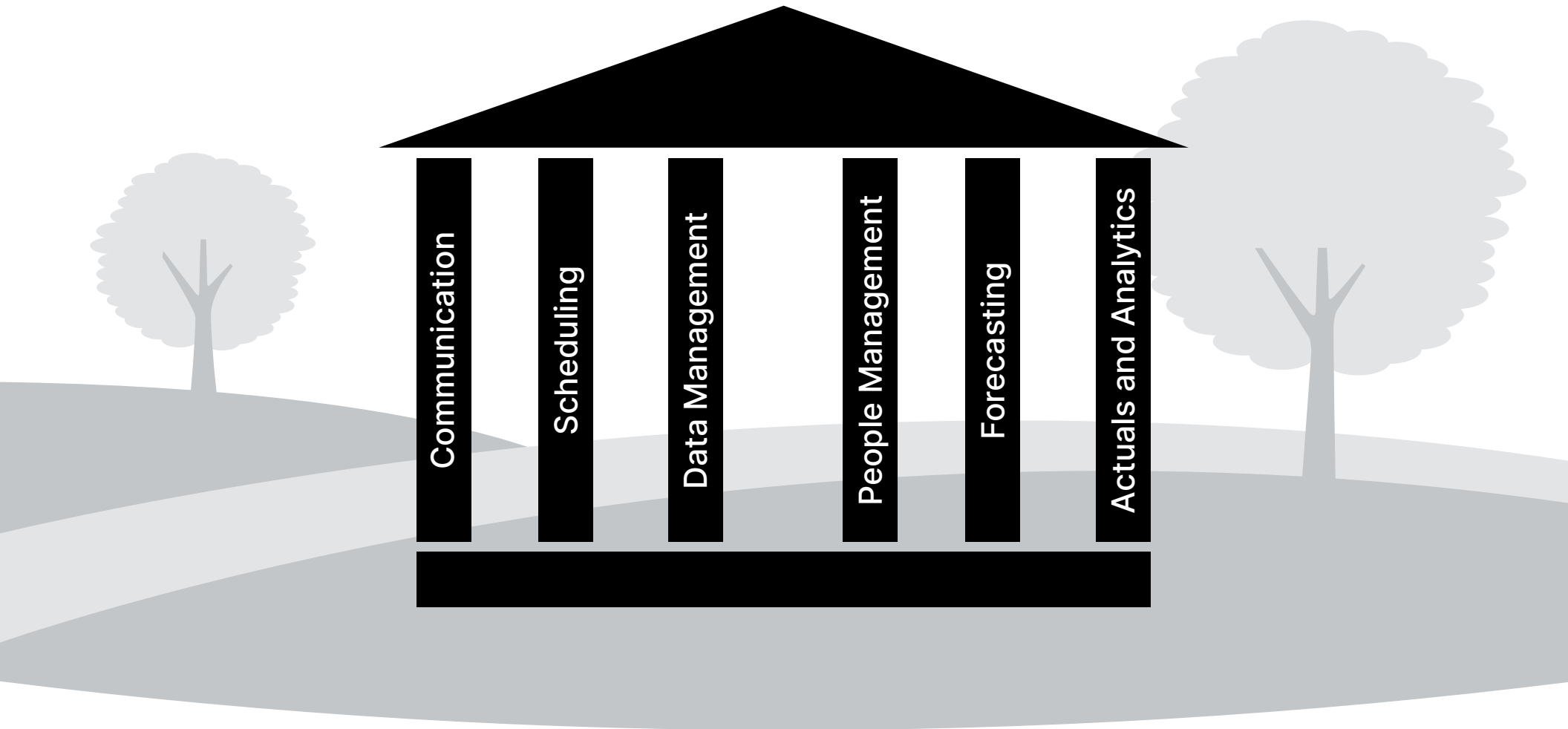
In 1964, Dr. Harold Leavitt, an American psychologist of management, developed a business management model called Leavitt's Diamond Model, made up of four aspects: people, tasks, structure and technology. Over time, Leavitt's Diamond was reimagined into people, process, and technology, often as a Venn diagram or 'golden' triangle that combined tasks and structure, into process. Sometimes referred to as a “three-legged stool,” the PPT model continues to be an important framework of effective organizational management to this day.

Together, these three legs create responsibility, accountability, and feasibility across the board for the practice of WFM to start settling in.



The 6 Pillars of Construction Workforce Management

While there are several aspects to proper WFM, it is done most successfully using these six key pillars:



Pillar #1: Communication

Sharing Information Individually or Company-Wide

Communication is a key factor for every contractor, on every job. Information and requests are often made in frustrating email threads, unanswered phone calls, numerous text messages, or on a piece of paper that's likely to get thrown away or lost. Without the ability to instantly communicate with all stakeholders, contractors have no insight into the reception of information or dispatch of new assignments.

With construction WFM, contractors gain peace of mind knowing all their people are seeing the same picture in real time and know where they are supposed to go. Every team member can be communicated with via a quick text message anytime, anywhere.

Alignment in communication between the field and office means everyone is on the same page and focused on what they do best. Instantaneous connection with cloud-based WFM allows for a constant source of open communication between all parties involved.



You might be asking yourself...

"How do I make requests?"

"How do I know someone is coming available?"

"How do I dispatch or send assignments?"

"How do I alert everyone of scheduling changes?"

We have 7,000 workers all over the country. It's hard to communicate and get the message out consistently with all of them. Workforce management has helped with this problem.

- Drywall Contractor

Pillar #2: Scheduling

Who is Where and When

Assigning the right people to the right jobs at the right time — that's the end goal of scheduling. [According to ForConstructionPros, over 40% of contractors say “scheduling and dispatching problems impact project timelines and budgets on a daily basis.”](#)

For most contractors, keeping track of their people happens on whiteboards, excel spreadsheets, in-house solutions, or even on paper. They might have the schedule done by 8 a.m., verified on-site by 9 a.m., distributed by 10 a.m., and inaccurate by noon. This happens every single day. The slightest incorrect adjustment or formula change can ruin the whole schedule, leaving no real way to get a live look-in on progress or even better, a look-ahead.

Construction WFM ensures the right people are on the right projects at the right time. With this technology, scheduling happens in real time, providing holistic insight for all stakeholders to see who is currently available, who is on vacation or who is going into overtime.

With this visibility, contractors no longer have to worry about assigning too many or too few people to a project since they can

see the daily burn per person, per job. There's no more wondering about who's up-to-date on qualifications or who's the best person to work on high-priority jobs. These details are included for each person and assist you when dragging, dropping, and completing your schedule.



You might be thinking...

“Are there too many or too few people on this project?”

“Who should be coming and going from my project?”

“Who is currently available?”

“Who will be off or out?”

It never occurred to me that scheduling and managing your labour resources were different processes with different needs, until I was manually tracking all of it.

- General Contractor

Pillar #3:

Data Management

Accurate, Integrated, Timely Information

Data is the lifeblood of construction. If information is siloed and unreachable, there is no manageable way for the field and office to communicate or share project updates. This can also affect financial stakeholders, with no insight into staying on budget or on time. Human error like fat finger mistakes plagues data entry in every organization, including construction.

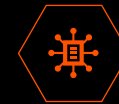
"If your data is siloed and only accessible by certain people within an organization, this can create bottlenecks and lead to poor decision-making when key personnel do not have access to all the information needed."

- Matt Hardison, [Construction Dive](#)

Forced to rely on whiteboards, in-home software solutions, and spreadsheets, contractors are limited with frustrating and inefficient data management methods.

Construction WFM keeps your data secure, accurate and allows everyone to read from the same sheet of music.

With a single source of truth for data, every stakeholder can access project information with the proper permission levels. This cloud-based solution allows for the field and office to stay in contact in real time, accessing key data on a tablet, computer, or smartphone. With digital WFM, contractors are supplied with a meticulous history to look back on that informs their decisions on future projects, bids, and laborers.



These questions may often be top of mind:

"Who is currently in my workforce and roster?"

"Am I currently on budget?"

"Is my information and data in real time?"

"What is my source of truth for my people and projects?"

Construction workforce management is taking human error away from us by manually uploading data. Now we are able to import all this information and nobody's having to do the mind-numbing work.

- Electrical Contractor

Pillar #4: People Management

Who is Who on Your Roster

Having the right person on the job starts with knowledge of who is certified to work on specific assignments. Many projects require specialized training, experience, or background checks. Most contractors play a costly guessing game of assigning labour to projects that may not be certified or their certifications have expired and need to be renewed.

With construction WFM, contractors can confidently know who is certified and who needs to have more training, as well as when these specialized certifications will expire. With specific notes and tracking of individual employees from one project to the next, digital WFM provides insight into who needs to be retained, trained, or released.

Even better during an unprecedented labour shortage, WFM can empower your leadership team with information about potential company leaders based on trackable and reliable data. Contractors no longer have to make their best guess — they have real data about their people and how they're progressing.



You might be trying to keep track of:

“Who is certified or has experience?”

“Who do I release or retain?”

“Who needs training or development?”

“Who comes from where? Union? Division?
Temp? Traveler?”

Those people you're putting out there, they are your future. The better you communicate with them gives you an opportunity to be able to form that long-term relationship that's a lot stronger than some companies where systems may be more disjointed.

Pillar #5: Forecasting

The Plan (Projects and Workforce) for Today, Tomorrow and Beyond



In this age of labour shortages, having the ability to plan ahead can make or break your business. For many contractors, the uncertainty that surrounds who will be assigned to future projects can be an ongoing stressor and a detrimental downfall to your business. Contractors often struggle to have insights into how their backlog will be staffed. It gets worse when they lose or have to turn down valuable projects due to labour shortage, which can damage relationships with clients.

With construction WFM, contractors can confidently plan for their backlog and proactively know where their people are going next. If contractors worry about having enough people to staff future projects, they can look into how flexible their current staff can be and if they need to start hiring.

HR can be easily updated when new hires are incoming, allowing for better training with more notice. With straightforward forecasting, teams can look weeks, months, and even years ahead.



You might be racking your brain, wondering:

“Where are my people going next?
Do I have enough?”

“Who will be available or needs a home?”

“What projects are starting or in my backlog?”

“Who and when do I need to hire?”

By using the workforce management forecasting tool, we can ensure that we’re keeping our team employed and that they know that they’ve got a future with us.

- Electrical Contractor

Pillar #6: Actuals and Analytics

Verification and Refinement

After a project is done, contractors look back and collect what historical data they can, observing what went well, and what went wrong. However, this process is typically fragmented, and in many cases, there may not even be a way to collect and house all of this data. If someone made a mistake or if a team member should be praised, there might not be any kind of process in place to communicate this.

Construction WFM holds people accountable and creates a path of success to ensure you stay on budget. Clear, holistic data into a completed project's lifecycle allows teams to look back, take note of success factors, budget adherence, schedule conflicts, or wins and overall plan completion.

Managing project documentation is a key aspect of WFM, with every stakeholder's contributions duly noted in the project's history.

With digital WFM, you can learn from past projects to help you refine planning for future initiatives with information that typically gets misplaced or forgotten.



After a job's said and done, you might ponder:

"Am I coming in over, at or under labour budget on projects?"

"Who should have been responsible or was accountable?"

"Was the plan followed?"

"What were success factors or inhibitors?"

We've always wanted to do this. A digital platform has organized the way we do workforce management. It's gotten everything into a more centralized platform.

- Electrical Contractor

Conclusion

When combined, these six pillars can successfully support construction WFM from preconstruction to closeout as you move from one project to the next. In the age of the labour shortage, your team can fight the statistics and make the most of the talent you have.

With improved communication, contractors know who they have on staff and how to properly schedule them to the best advantage of all stakeholders. Data at contractors' fingertips means that information and personnel can be instantaneously and professionally aligned and managed. Whether looking ahead with forecasting or analytically taking a look back, digital WFM presents a holistic view of project information.

With construction WFM, your organization can go from fragmented processes and confused personnel to aligned and on-time with the right technology, helping you get the right person at the right place at the right time.

“The benefits of doing better workforce management include efficiency and better communication between the field and office. This gives our superintendents better control of their labour and better tracking of their labour on job sites.”

- Mechanical Contractor



Workforce Management Resources

Construction WFM can take on a different shape from one contractor to the next based on type of work, current workforce capabilities and more. Take control of this opportunity and start your construction WFM journey today.



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