The Workday People Analytics Playbook

You're here because, like many others, you've come to realize you need at least two things in order to get meaningful insights out of your Workday people data:

1. All your HR and Workday data unified in order to achieve your People Analytics goals.

2. Advanced analytics in order to answer some of the toughest business questions you're being asked.

Many organizations we work with use Workday and we've made it our mission help them create insightful and powerful analytics with their data.

Why We Love Workday

Workday is a transactional platform designed to provide efficiency and effectiveness in data storage for the HRIS. It uses an object-oriented approach to store data, which is well-suited for its transactional use case. This approach is powerful when it comes to retaining the historical states of objects.

The platform offers basic reporting and snapshots that capture point-in-time data, and emphasizes fusing data with business logic. Workday's strength lies in its transactional fit for HRIS, but it was not created with the robust reporting and analytics capabilities HR teams need. For companies recognizing their need for comprehensive People Analytics, it's important to supplement Workday's strong operational features with advanced reporting, data orchestration, visualization, and predictive analytics.

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The Missing Piece: People Analytics

People Analytics has become an essential function in modern organizations, empowering companies to make informed, data-driven decisions about their workforce. A few key reasons why People Analytics is crucial include:

1. Improving organizational performance: People Analytics provides insights into employee **behavior** and **performance**, allowing organizations to identify areas for improvement and make changes that can drive better results.

2. Attracting and retaining talent: By understanding employees' **needs** and **preferences**, organizations can create a more attractive and engaging work environment, leading to higher employee satisfaction and lower turnover.







3. Making informed HR decisions: By analyzing workforce data, organizations can better address employee **development** and **job satisfaction**, resulting in more strategic and effective talent management and succession planning.

4. Improving diversity and inclusion: Through detailed analytics, organizations can gain a deeper understanding of workforce **demographics** and employee **experiences**, enabling them to foster a more equitable and inclusive workplace.

5. Enhancing employee engagement: With insights into employee satisfaction and motivation, organizations can create a more engaging work environment, leading to higher employee engagement and better overall performance.



Our mission at One Model is to accelerate your People Analytics journey.

Just a few of the People Analytics data points you may need but can't access in Workday include:

- Headcount over time
- Predictive models with machine learning
- Audit reporting
- Understanding hierarchies over time
- Pro-rata allocations
- Effective dating
- Joining data from previous HCM systems
- Combining core data with recruiting and survey data





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Why Workday Doesn't Work for People Analytics

Most ERP vendors, including Workday, were designed with a focus on managing people processes rather than possessing an analytics DNA. This lack of emphasis on analytics can lead to problems as organizations grow and mature in their People Analytics function, needing to perform time-trended and multi-dimensional analytics with data from various topics and periods. The limitations in Workday's analytics capabilities become more apparent in these scenarios, causing challenges for organizations seeking to analyze their data effectively.

Workday primarily records data based on effective dates and "from" dates, lacking "to" dates, making it difficult to engage in People Analytics fully. A deep understanding of intersecting time-series data is required to truly perform analytics, which cannot be obtained through simple Workday data extractions.

The concept of snapshots in time — where data is collected at a specific moment — is limited as it creates a static context that cannot be changed unless the entire data set is replaced. As a result, building a continuous perspective of events becomes challenging, and the accuracy and flexibility of the data is compromised.

Why snapshots are problematic:

• **Inaccuracy:** Snapshots may miss changes occurring between them, leading to outdated information.

• **Inflexibility:** Updating time contexts or objects requires replacing entire data sets.

• **Difficulty in Corrections:** Correcting data within snapshots is time-consuming.

• External Data Integration Challenges: Connecting external data to snapshots can be complex, often requiring assumptions or additional snapshots.

• **Increased Maintenance:** Managing snapshot data requires numerous reports (e.g., three years of monthly snapshots would need 36 reports).

Exploring Data Extraction Techniques From Workday

API

Getting data out of Workday is a common challenge faced by organizations. Unlike other systems, Workday does not provide a full history of an employee when queried through the API. Instead, it returns the information that is valid for that worker at a specific point in time.

To obtain a complete understanding of a worker's history, it is necessary to query for all the intersections of time for which history is required. This can be a challenging task, especially when it comes to identifying all the relevant points in time for each employee's record.

Working with the API can be difficult for several reasons. For instance, it may not be clear from the API or documentation which objects have been affected by a transaction as a single transaction can impact multiple workers, organizations, or both.







Additionally, if there is a back-dated change in a worker's data, all history must be recaptured. These complexities are the reason why our company has invested a significant amount of time in developing a connector for Workday, which goes beyond simply providing access to the API and helps users navigate these challenges.

RaaS Reports

"No RaaS report has ever been accurate for us ... it has even caused Workday to completely shut down."

-Prism user

As a Workday user, you know about RaaS reports. They are the most popular way to get information out of Workday, including popular People Analytics tools, which use an API to pull them.

Working with RaaS reports in Workday can seem like a simple solution to getting change data for business processes in snapshots. The reports can be generated daily, weekly, monthly, or semi-annually, and track changes such as promotions, demotions, and transfers. However, the effectiveness of the reports is limited to the specific business process being tracked.

For example, a change in management hierarchy may not immediately reflect in the employee data if the update is not captured in the RaaS report at the time of the change. This can result in incorrect headcount, gaps in data, and an out-of-sync organizational structure, reporting relationships, and cost structures.

What you may experience: [starting headcount] +/- [changes] <> [ending headcount]

Creating an effective-dated dataset is critical for advanced analytics and integrating other data sources, but this is difficult to achieve with RaaS reports.

For example, an organization may update its RaaS reports daily to reflect the current day, replace the data every seven days, and do a full replacement every six months. However, retroactive changes to the data can result in consistently outdated information that requires more runs to refresh previously pulled data.

In addition, it takes days to complete the RaaS process for large reports, which often hit a size limitation of 300 megabytes. To resolve this, the reports have to be segmented and stitched together, leading to a constant state of being out-of-sync with the true data structure.

Another aspect to consider when extracting data from RaaS reports is the format in which you choose to pull the data. You have the option to either pull it as an XML file or a CSV file. If you choose to pull the data as a CSV file, you may only receive a limited set of attributes and not all linking identifiers. However, if you opt for the XML format, the data will be structured as child objects that need to be unpacked for use. This factor must be considered when selecting the most suitable format for your needs and requirements.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

- Manager roll-ups
- Hierarchies over time
- Metric results can be misplaced or misreported





When Post–Extraction Causes More Headaches

Whether you're using an API or RaaS report, you may quickly find that the integrity of the entire People Analytics team is on the table.

The issues arising from these processes are:

1. Inconsistency in organizational structures and personnel assignments.

2. While the data appears correct at a high level, a deeper analysis reveals inaccuracies.

3. Back-dated changes are often overlooked, leading to outdated data for several months each year.

If you are not starting out with a basis of accuracy, then everything you do downstream has the potential to be compromised.

-Chris Butler - CEO, One Model



These backdated changes could refer to events that occurred two months or more in the past, further contributing to the validity of the data being called into question.

How often do you need to be embarrassed in a highstakes meeting from bad data before you scrap your current analytics solution? How often do you have before leadership scraps their People Analytics investment? Confidence is fragile with HR data — minor inaccuracies can generate significant problems for adopting and accepting People Analytics across the company.



What's the Solution?

Without a proper data export, you cannot even begin to think of the next steps, like bringing in data elements (i.e., performance and succession data) from other sources. To do this, you would need a proper effective-date data asset.

Let's dive into your options and what you need to consider in each.

Don't Become "Im-Prism'd"

The development of Prism stems from large data acquisition from the finance sector and was not specifically designed for human resources data. As a result, it lacks an interconnected structure and functions more like disconnected Excel spreadsheets, making it challenging to gain long-term insights and scale with multiple datasets.

Additionally, each visualization requires a separate query and data set, leading to low reusability and scalability, making it a high-effort task to build and maintain visibility. Investing in Workday's big data tools to solve these challenges is not recommended, as they will likely come with similar difficulties.

The biggest limitation of Prism is that it is not easily scalable, and you will also run into the same problem of connecting external datasets. Testimonies from three People Analytics leaders we've worked with who also had experience with Prism:

"It's business intelligence 1.0 ... we just can't use it."

"Not what we thought it was."

"Our technology team bought it but we've only found one narrow use case for it so far. We are not really using it."

"Not fit for the purpose of People Analytics."

"We thought Prism was a reporting solution. It's not."

-Prism users





Comparing One Model vs Workday Prism

Capability

- Multi-system integration
- People Analytics Data Modeling
- User Experience
- Predictive Analytics
- Open Platform
- Platform Flexibility
- Role Based Security
- Total Cost of Ownership

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The Pitfalls of Alternative Paths

Choosing Other Solutions

It is important to be cautious when considering other solutions that claim to access Workday data via API. In many cases, these competitors say they use the API, but they are only using the API to run RaaS reports, which can lead to limitations and difficulties identified above.

When you stack this on top of data metrics, measures, and models you cannot investigate, it can be difficult to determine where the issue is originating from. Is it from the model or the underlying data? Unfortunately, you cannot figure that out and you are left empty-handed.

In-House Build

Risks of Unsupported People Analytics

Do-it-yourself People Analytics is a slow, risky, and expensive endeavor. Building a custom solution from the ground up takes time, resources, and specialized knowledge that not every company has readily available.

Data Extraction Challenges

Attempting to extract data from RaaS reports can require a significant amount of manpower; likely several full-time equivalent employees and subject matter experts working for at least a year. In-house builds may also result in limited scope of data analysis, such as loss of historical updates.



Data Visualization and Security Concerns

When working with sensitive employee data, consider the security implications of your analytics solution:

- How can you prevent sensitive data from falling into the wrong hands?
- How can you create custom views for managers quickly and securely?
- How can you protect the privacy of your employees?

Start Revolutionizing Your People Analytics Operation with One Model

We can create Workday data that reflects changes by date, making data processes smoother. Our focus is on transparency and a proven method that reduces risks of going it alone. The Workday data model can be tricky, so we reformat it into a clearer structure. This includes organizing data into metrics, dimensions, and timebased formats, ready for insights.

Fundamentally Reconstructing Data Architecture

Our approach involves taking the existing structure, enhancing it, and fundamentally reconstructing the data architecture to solve your Workday People Analytics problem. The resulting dataset is perfect for delivering accurate and flexible reporting and analytics.

Transforming Time Into a Flexible Concept

We transform how time is represented in data, offering a more effective approach for reporting and analytics. Our process connects transactional events into a cohesive timeline, extracts event-specific details, and condenses the data into a time-stamped record set.

This approach makes time a flexible concept that can align with various constructs, such as calendars, fiscal years, pay periods, weeks, or custom intervals. By joining data at the daily level, we enable unmatched flexibility and precision, even when calculations involve millions or billions of data points.



People and the data behind them are complex, but putting all of your people data into one place doesn't have to be difficult. With One Model's People Data Cloud — we reduce the frustration and expensive data engineering time, so you can increase time spent on deeper insights.



Enhancing Data Security and Flexibility

In addition to providing accurate and flexible reporting and analytics, we also prioritize data security and visualization. We take the necessary steps to keep sensitive data from reaching the wrong hands and provide custom views for every manager quickly. Our data is also anonymized to protect worker privacy.

How One Model Does It Differently Than Everybody Else

Our solution did not appear overnight. It is the result of over 25,000 hours of work by subject matter experts and developers, creating a solution that is hard to replicate in-house. This extensive effort ensures a robust, flexible, and client-centered platform.

One Model provides a unique approach to delivering People Analytics capabilities by transforming data from HR and non-HR systems into a unified data model. This process creates an analytics-ready data asset that is ready for storyboards, predictive modeling, and data integration with other systems such as data lakes, Tableau, and Power BI.

Process Overview

The following steps illustrate how One Model achieves this transformation:

1. Extract data from Workday data sources using SOAP APIs.

2. Integrate data from secondary sources such as surveys, budgets, recruiting, learning, and spreadsheets.

3. Transform the data into an analytics-ready data asset for People Analytics.

4. Establish a data security model.

5. Enable storyboards, dashboards, and querying capabilities.

6. Enable One AI, One Model's machine learning predictive model builder.

7. Set up Data Destinations and Direct Connect for Tableau, Power BI, and other tools.

Dual Data Extraction

One Model's API and data transformation process is built-in and extracts all relevant transactional history, including retroactive changes. This process involves multiple steps, including consolidating data from various sources, such as worker and organization details. The API is complex, pulling over 1,000 objects into a single model.

One Model also has a direct connection to Workday Custom Reports or Raas reports to supplement the core data with custom attributes and calculated fields.

Handling Data Changes

One Model uses a smart approach to identify changes in the data and replace only the affected data, facilitating a changes-only feed and allowing for a near-real-time dataset.

Data Transformation

The raw data, which is in multiple objects and difficult to query, is transformed into an analytics-ready data asset. This process involves consolidating all the historical data, creating a table with all workers and their effective attributes, and slicing and dicing the data for out-of-the-box analytics. The resulting data includes movement and attrition rates, internal movements, diversity, workforce profile, and metrics definitions, all with transparency and security to ensure that only the right users have access to the information they need.

Data Handling

To handle the explosion of data from Workday extraction, One Model uses a GPU-powered database, allowing for the use of R and Python directly in the warehouse.



One Model Delivers

• **Data orchestration** - the process of combining, coordinating, and managing data from various sources to make it usable for analysis and reporting purposes

• **Data security** - the process of protecting sensitive information from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction.

• Visualization - the process of creating and presenting graphical representations of data, such as charts, graphs, maps, and dashboards, to help individuals understand and communicate insights from the data.

• **Data science** - an interdisciplinary field that uses scientific methods, algorithms, and systems to extract insights and knowledge from structured and unstructured data.

With the ability to extract your data out of Workday, One Model also gives you the flexibility to use it in any way you need. Whether it's feeding it into a data lake or providing it in a specific table form for a finance team, One Model has you covered. You can easily push tables and run queries, with options for sending the data to your desired destination, such as S3 or SFTP. This way, you can address all of your current data needs, and be ready for any future use cases that may arise.





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One Model Will Free Your Data From Workday

CHROs and HR Business Partners rely on the ability to leverage their Workday data to the fullest when making important people and business decisions. Workday Prism is a costly and limiting product because it cannot handle HR data beyond Workday. This challenges the entire organization, from business users to IT organizations, by creating a perpetual (and costly) cycle of data extraction, maintenance, and report modifications.

To overcome these shortcomings, many Workday users choose One Model because of its advanced data orchestration and brilliant ease of use as a complete People Analytics solution.

One Model helps HR leaders and organization executives make powerful, data-driven talent and business decisions by unlocking all your people data, no matter where it lives, and combining it with your non-HR data.

One Model's unique and efficient approach frees your data from Workday's challenging structures and time-consuming processes. The One Model platform extracts your HR data plus non-HR data then converts it into "analytics-ready data," so it is available for analytical Modeling.

Once we have extracted your data, you can deliver valuable People Analytics: multi-dimensional reports, insights, storyboards, analytics, AI and predictive models. Insights with this type of depth and confidence will drive better decision-making across your whole organization.

About One Model

One Model pioneered people data orchestration and flexible predictive models that empower large and rapidly growing companies to unlock transformative insights and data-driven workforce strategies. Built to reduce technical burdens for data scientists, engineers, and HR leaders alike, our platform is the most flexible and secure solution available today. We are committed to ethical data practices, ensuring unmatched security, privacy, and transparency, providing confidence in every decision powered by One Model.

Your Data. Real Answers.

Discover how we can help your organization thrive at onemodel.co

Contact us today to book your demo.

One Model is here to help.



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