



Collaborative headcount planning metrics

Designed to drive alignment across Finance,
Talent, and Business Leaders

This cheat sheet highlights the most important metrics every FP&A, Talent, HR and Business Leader needs to track in order to collaborate effectively on workforce planning. These metrics are carefully chosen to:

Help bridge
cross-functional
silos



Support
strategic hiring
and budgeting



Align headcount
decisions to
business outcomes



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT METRICS

FORMULA

Planned vs.
actual
headcount
variance %

=

(Actual – Planned)

Planned

x 100

Planned vs.
actual start
date

=

Actual start date – Planned
start date

Workforce
budget
variance %
(Total comp)

=

(Actual – Budgeted)

Budgeted

x 100

Revenue per
employee

=

Total revenue

Total FTEs

Recruiter
capacity

=

The average number of
reqs managed or filled per
recruiter over the last X
periods

WHY IT MATTERS?

Measures hiring execution vs. plan and drives accountability.

Finance

Talent

Business leaders

WHO CARES MOST

Identifies delays or accelerations affecting budget and ramp.

Finance

Talent

Tracks over/under spend on headcount and promotes budget control.

Finance

Ties headcount to productivity and company performance.

Talent

Business leaders

Identifies the number of reqs a recruiter can manage or fill in a given period

Finance

Talent

Business leaders

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY METRICS



HOW TIME-TO-FILL AND TIME-TO-START CAN IMPACT START DAY VARIANCES:

"We noticed early on that we were consistently missing our hiring targets due to aggressive hire dates. Our finance and recruiting teams collaborated to analyze historical time-to-hire and time-to-start data by team and region. We found that certain roles (i.e., Account Executive vs Software Engineer) had varying time-to-fill metrics, while the time-to-start was materially different between the US and Europe. We leveraged this analysis to design a formulaic approach to forecasting future hiring, which led to a 40% decrease in start date variance, and we began to hit our hiring targets.



AARON SOLOMON
STRATEGIC FINANCE MANAGER AT DOCKER



FORMULA

Time-to-fill = $\frac{\text{Job close date} - \text{Job open date}}{\text{Number of hires}}$

Best-in-class companies fill roles within 30–45 days of getting approval to hire

Time-to-start = $\frac{\text{Start date} - \text{Offer accept date}}{\text{Number of hires}}$

Attrition forecast vs. actual = $\frac{\text{Actual attrition} - \text{Forecasted attrition}}{\text{Total hires}}$

Backfill rate = $\frac{\text{Number of backfills}}{\text{Total hires}}$

WHY IT MATTERS?

Reflects recruiting pipeline efficiency and hiring team performance.

Talent

Business leaders

Helps spot post-offer bottlenecks and supports onboarding planning.

Talent

Improves forecast accuracy and reduces surprise backfills.

Talent

Finance

Reveals how much hiring is replacing lost employees vs. driving growth.

Finance

Talent

Hiring time variance = Actual time to hire – Planned time to hire

Helps evaluate how well hiring timelines are being met.

Talent

MORE WAYS TO USE THESE METRICS:

Segmenting calculations by different groups can help you uncover deeper insights. For example, calculating time-to-fill by level can help you determine if it takes longer to fill Manager roles than IC roles, or if it takes longer to fill an IC1 vs. an IC6.

It can also be beneficial for larger companies to segment total workforce costs based on geolocation. For example, you may want to calculate total workforce costs for remote vs. in-office or hub employees. Global businesses can benefit from examining workforce costs by different countries or regions.



EMILY SUNG-SIMON
SENIOR RECRUITING OPERATIONS MANAGER AT POSTMAN



COMPENSATION & COST METRICS

FORMULA

Average cost per head (by function/team) =
$$\frac{\text{Total compensation}}{\text{Total employees (by team/function)}}$$

Annualized comp impact of open reqs =
$$\left(\frac{\text{Planned annual salary of open role}}{\text{Days open}} \times \frac{365}{365} \right)$$

*Use the above formula to calculate impact of individual roles, then add totals to see impact of all open roles.

WHY IT MATTERS?

Helps with understanding cost structure and team resourcing.

Finance

Business leaders

Forecasts future payroll impact of current openings.

Finance

Talent

$$\text{Total workforce cost (FTE + contractors)} = \text{Salaries + Benefits + Contractors + Bonuses + Taxes}$$

Offers a full view of labor costs beyond headcount alone.

Finance

HR

$$\text{Compensation variance \%} = \frac{(\text{Actual} - \text{Planned})}{\text{Planned}} \times 100$$

Overpaying erodes budget efficiency, while underpaying risks losing top candidates.

Best-in-class organizations keep compensation variance under 3%.

Finance

HR

$$\text{Competitive compensation by job function} = \text{Internal compensation} - \text{Market benchmark compensation}$$

Shows whether your pay scales align with market benchmarks.

HR

Talent

Best-in-class companies maintain competitive alignment within 2% of market rates.

$$\text{Employee movement vs. new hire cost} = \frac{\text{Forecasted cost of net new hire} - \text{Cost of internal transfer or promotion}}{\text{Forecasted cost of net new hire}} \times 100$$

Comparing the all-in costs of internal employee promotions or transfers to the forecast cost of a net new hire can help determine if a business should focus more or less on promoting from within.

Talent

HR

$$\text{Base comp \% of total comp} = \frac{\text{Base comp}}{\text{Total comp}} \times 100$$

Helpful to ensure benefits, taxes, and other fringe costs are not getting out of control, or at least to understand where there costs are coming from

Finance

HR



FORWARD-LOOKING METRICS

FORMULA

Ramp-to-productivity timeline = $\frac{\text{Date at full productivity} - \text{Start date}}{\text{Start date}}$

Workforce forecast accuracy (%) = $\left(1 - \frac{(\text{Forecast} - \text{Actual})}{\text{Actual}}\right) \times 100$

Future cost forecast (by start date) = $\text{Future hires} \times \text{Monthly compensation}$

WHY IT MATTERS?

Estimates when new hires begin delivering value.

Business leaders

Talent

Measures planning discipline and improves collaboration.

Finance

Talent

Anticipates when and how much new hires will cost.

Finance

TEAM CONVERSATION STARTERS

Use these prompts to turn metrics into alignment-driving conversations:

1. Are we hiring for roles that align with our top business goals?
2. Where are we consistently off in our headcount or comp planning?
3. Which teams are under or over resourced given expected outcomes?
4. How can we improve the accuracy of our workforce forecasts next quarter?
5. Are Talent, Finance, HR and Business Leaders aligned on growth vs. backfill priorities?

TeamOhana makes this data visible, actionable, and collaborative.

This cheat sheet is just the start. Want to bring it to life? [Request a demo](#) and see how collaborative workforce intelligence brings Finance, HR, Talent, and Business Leaders together.