

Project Performance Metrics Setup Checklist

How to Use This Checklist

- ✓ — This checklist is designed to be completed as a one-time setup to establish consistency across your firm. Once in place, these foundations make it significantly easier to track metrics, identify trends, and improve project performance over time.
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Define What You Will Track

- Select the core financial metrics your firm will use across all projects
- Confirm clear definitions for each metric so they are interpreted consistently
- Align leadership on which metrics matter most for decision-making
- Set target ranges or benchmarks for each metric based on your firm's goals .

Standardize Project Financial Structure

- Ensure every project has a defined contract value and billing structure
- Establish a detailed project budget, including labor and expenses
- Define project phases or milestones for tracking progress
- Assign clear responsibility for project financial performance

Align Time, Cost, and Billing Practices

- Standardize how time is tracked across teams and roles
- Ensure billable vs non-billable time is clearly defined
- Align billing schedules with project milestones or progress
- Confirm how expenses are tracked and allocated to projects

Centralize Your Data

- Identify where project, financial, and billing data currently lives
- Consolidate data into a single system or source of truth where possible
- Reduce reliance on disconnected spreadsheets and manual processes
- Ensure data is updated consistently and in a timely manner

Build Visibility and Reporting

- Set up standard reports for WIP, profitability, budget vs actuals, and billing
- Ensure reports can be accessed easily by project managers and leadership
- Define a consistent format for reviewing project performance
- Validate that data is accurate before relying on it for decisions

Establish a Review Cadence

- Define how often project financials will be reviewed (weekly, monthly, etc.)
- Identify who participates in project performance reviews
- Create a simple structure for discussing performance and variances
- Send out calendar invites for the next 6-months of review meetings

Create Alignment and Accountability

- Share key metrics with project managers and relevant team members
- Ensure teams understand how their decisions impact project performance
- Align expectations around budget, scope, and financial outcomes
- Reinforce accountability for managing projects within defined targets

Complete Your First Baseline Review

- Run reports across all active projects using your defined metrics
- Identify projects that are over budget, underperforming, or at risk
- Highlight trends across clients, project types, or teams
- Document key findings to establish a baseline for future comparison