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How to prepare for a Time & Attendance implementation

by Simon Roscoe of Muzulu Ltd

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Summary:

1. Understand the reasons for the implementation
2. Build a knowledgeable team that deeply understands and agree the schedules and rules
3. Harmonise the number of schedule and rules wherever possible.
4. Understand how the schedules and rules may require employees and or managers input to manage missing time and exceptions
5. Payroll interface needs to b considered both at a **technical** level and also at a **data** level.

When you start to consider implementing IFS Time & Attendance (T&A) there are several things you need to do before your consultant arrives on site if you are going to make the best use of their time and your budget.

The first thing is to consider *why* you are implementing T&A.

There are many reasons which may include:

A driver for payroll

Log attendance for H&S and attendance reasons

Fire Marshall logs

Employee Availability scheduling

Using T&A as a driver for payroll is probably the most complex. However, whatever your reason for implementing T&A, the next step is to put a team together who can help to implement the solution. It is here that the first challenge can present itself. Can you find someone in your organisation who understands the schedules and payment rules who can also drive the implementation?

Depending on the size and complexity of your organisation this may not be an easy task, especially where multiple sites, and even countries, are involved. You may have to involve several people from different sites/locations making sure that one person is nominated as the lead to drive the implementation forward.

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If you are migrating from an existing T&A system then hopefully the existing system can be analysed to discover the payment rules. It is where the current T&A system is manual, and paper timesheets are being completed, that taking the time to prepare and research the current schedules and rules will pay dividends. I have been in many a T&A implementation kickoff meeting where I'm discussing the existing schedules and rules with managers.

I have been in many a T&A implementation kickoff meeting where I'm discussing the existing schedules and rules with managers. At the start of the meeting they all agree that they know the schedules and rules around payments and overtime. A mere 15 minutes later they are having heated discussions about how overtime should be calculated.

The point here is that each manager may be interpreting the existing rules in different ways without anyone knowing this. Spending time prior to the implementation to investigate, fully understand and document the existing schedules and payment rules can save valuable implementation time.

The good news is that IFS T&A is very flexible and can handle just about any schedule and any payment rule; however, each schedule and each payment rule in IFS takes time to implement and having a situation where there are numerous different schedules and numerous payment rules with different overtime rules will quickly eat up your implementation budget. This is where, with some early groundwork, schedules can be harmonised and payment rules consolidated. This needs to be done well in advance of the implementation in order to allow HR to make these changes and consult with employees in a timely manner. Reducing the number of schedules and payment rules will considerably reduce the implementation time, meaning a reduction in implementation costs and easier management for HR later on.

The next consideration is how closely you interpret the rules to the T&A solution. What should happen if someone has 5 minutes missing from their weekly hours? Is it worth their manager following this up to enter a reason for the missing time? The answer will, of course, depend on the business.

However, having a T&A system that needs constant attention from managers may negate any positive benefits the T&A system may bring so consider having a T&A implementation with softer rules than the T&A handbook – this in turn might make you consider if the T&A rules are still appropriate…

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If T&A is going to drive payroll, how IFS interfaces, not only at a technical level but also at a data level, may need further work. Therefore, having a payroll resource available to define new wage codes in the payroll system may also be advantageous and will allow the IFS implementation to be speeded up.

The interface to payroll at a technical transfer level also needs considering; however, this is normally straightforward with numerous interface protocols available in IFS.

About the Author

Simon Roscoe is a founding partner of Muzulu Ltd, he has over 25 years of experience in implementing IFS including HR and Time and Attendance and worked directly for IFS for over 16 years as a consultant and solution Architect.

Simon specialises in HR, Supply Chain and Manufacturing as well as Asset Management and Maintenance.

About Muzulu

Muzulu is an IFS Silver Reseller and Authorized Services Partner based in Oxford. We provide industry leading IFS Consultancy interwoven with best of breed additional products, ensuring high satisfaction rates for both our customers and IFS

Our founding partners are all ex-colleagues from their time at IFS, but more importantly are good friends. The result is an excellent cohesive team who help businesses maximise their investment in IFS Applications, enabling growth, reducing cost and mitigating risk.

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