

## The Planning Trap

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### *Why Better schedules Don't Fix Unready Work*

For many maintenance organizations, improving performance often starts with one familiar target: better planning and scheduling. Better job plans. Better backlog management. Better weekly schedules.

These are all worthwhile efforts. But there is an uncomfortable reality that many planners quietly understand. Even the best schedule will fail if the work itself is not ready.

On Thursday afternoon, the schedule may look perfect. Labor hours are balanced, crews are assigned, and work orders show as ready in the system.

Then Monday morning arrives and reality begins to intervene. The permit is still waiting for approval. Materials have not arrived. The equipment isolation plan needs revision. Suddenly the carefully prepared schedule begins to unravel.

Most planners spend their days trying to prevent exactly this scenario. They chase down permits, verify materials, confirm drawings, and coordinate with operations.

But the systems available to them rarely answer the most important question: Is the work truly executable in the field?

For decades the answer often came from experience. Veteran planners remembered which jobs always ran into trouble. They recognized equipment tags and recalled how similar work played out in the past. That knowledge helped them quietly adjust schedules before problems appeared.

Today many organizations are losing that institutional memory. As experienced personnel retire, the organization still has the data—but not always the insight.

This is where modern analytics can help. By examining historical work execution, maintenance teams can begin to see patterns that influence readiness. Which jobs consistently slip the schedule? Which prerequisites are commonly missing?

When those patterns become visible, planning becomes far more reliable. Instead of simply producing a schedule, planners gain the ability to evaluate whether work is truly ready before it appears on the weekly plan.

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— Mike Jordan, CEO, Procex Technology