

THRESHOLDS OF STAFF READINESS IN ECONOMICS: AN ENGINEERING MODEL FOR SYNCHRONIZING AN EMPLOYEE'S ACCESS TO WORK



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ABSTRACT

The article examines the organizational contradiction that arises between the formal formalization of employment relations and the employee's actual readiness to perform the assigned work. **The objectives of the development focus on:** The signing of an employment contract, the issuance of an order, and the assignment of a personnel number confirm the emergence of employment relations, but in themselves do not guarantee that the employee has been assigned a workplace, provided with the necessary access, issued with the necessary tools, has their qualifications confirmed, has received training, has completed safety procedures, and has ensured the correct transmission of data to the payroll system. As a result, the organization may simultaneously consider the employee to be hired and yet be unable to fully utilize their labour. **The methods and approaches used include:** To address this problem, the authors propose the concept of the threshold of personnel readiness to control state of the personnel process in which documentary, organizational, qualification, production, digital, resource, and calculation conditions are aligned and allow an employee to begin work without critical personnel gaps. **The results of the study present:** A seven-circuit model of readiness has been developed; formulas for integral and diagnostic assessment have been proposed, as well as indicators of the synchronization gap between the planned start date, the actual start of work, and the moment when full readiness is achieved. Special attention is paid to the digital gateway for personnel readiness, which does not replace the decision of the manager responsible but combines the confirmations of various participants in the personnel event. **The main conclusions prove that:** It is shown that the digitalization of hiring should culminate not in the creation of a personnel document, but in the confirmed inclusion of the employee in the human and production circuit of the organization. The proposed model can be applied when designing processes for hiring, transfer, admission after training, return from a long-term absence, and changes in job functions.

Keywords: personnel process engineering, personnel readiness, personnel event, access to work, employee on boarding, organizational human resource framework, digital personnel process, organizational synchronization, electronic personal file, personnel risk

JEL classification: J24, M12, M54, C61

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INTRODUCTION

The moment when employee is hired can be recorded quite clearly in most organizations. There is an application or some other basis for the hire, a personnel decision is made, an employment contract is drawn up, an order is issued, and a staff number is assigned. From the perspective of personnel records management, the process appears to be complete. However, the operational reality often yields a different verdict. An employee may be officially listed as hired but may not have access to the information system. The manager is expecting them to be on shift, but the workstation is not prepared. Training is scheduled for after the start date. Personal protective equipment has not been issued.

The accounting system lacks a schedule. The security department has not yet completed the check. No mentor has been assigned. Formally, the person is already within the organization, but in practice, they remain on its threshold. The opposite situation is no less dangerous. The production demand is so high that they are trying to allow the candidate to start operations before the paperwork, briefing, qualification check, or provision of the required access rights are completed. In this case, speed is achieved not by shortening the process, but by transferring its incompleteness to the workplace. The organization saves hours at the outset and then incurs legal, production, and settlement debts.

The approach involves viewing activities as a system of interrelated inputs, actions, outputs, responsibilities, and control mechanisms. It is the interaction of processes, rather than the presence of individual regulations, which determines the system's ability to consistently achieve the planned outcome (ISO Standard No. 9001:2015, 2015). The requirements for occupational health and safety management also stem from the need to identify and control risks, rather than from the formal presence of individual documents (ISO Standard No. 45001:2018, 2018). Research on organizational socialization considers the following as the immediate outcomes of a new employee's integration: role clarity, task mastery, social acceptance, and the perception of fit with the work environment (Sabev, 2019A, Sabev, 2019B).

These outcomes develop over time and depend both on the newcomer's behaviour and on the actions of the organization and its representatives (Bauer et al., 2025). Consequently, formalizing the employment relationship and full-fledged adaptation do not coincide. Between them, there is an intermediate but significant point — readiness for a safe and organizationally supported start to work. The aim of the article is to develop an engineering model that makes it possible to determine what elements make up an employee's personnel readiness, how the moment when it is achieved is established, and how an organization can control the gap between the planned and actual start of work. The methodological basis of the study consists of system and process approaches, an event-based model of the personnel process, functional decomposition, analysis of organizational risks, and the logic of control gates.

THEORETICAL PART

Understanding of Problems of Staff Readiness for Labor Sphere

The main contradiction in the hiring process is that its legal outcome and its organizational outcome are measured differently. The HR department assesses completeness based on the presence of the required documents and the entry of data. The department head assesses it based on the person's ability to perform the job. The IT department assesses it based on the creation of an account. The occupational safety specialist assesses it based on the completion of mandatory procedures. The payroll department assesses it based on the presence of correct payment terms, schedule, and grounds for accruals.

Each participant has rights within their own area. The error occurs when the local completion of one section is taken to mean the completion of the entire personnel event. The employment contract confirms the formalization of the relationship, but it does not replace the qualifications. Assigning a personnel number does not grant access to the production system. Conducting instruction does not mean that the employee has been provided with equipment. The creation of a position does not confirm that a workstation has been prepared. The order records the decision, but it does not automatically implement it.

Within the framework of personnel process engineering, the outcome of the hiring process is proposed to be defined not as "a formally employed employee," but as an employee who is legally, informational, productive, and economically integrated into the organization. This formulation changes the very point at which the process is considered complete. The personnel document remains a mandatory element, but it ceases to be the sole proof of readiness (Sabev, 2018, Sabev, 2021). Studies of formal on boarding indicate that structured on the job training can contribute to the development of competence and role clarity. At the same time, a systematic review conducted in 2023 revealed a limited number of comparable studies, and the authors assessed the reliability of the overall evidence base as low. Therefore, it cannot be claimed that the presence of any formal adaptation program automatically leads to an increase in productivity or staff retention (Frögéli et al., 2023). This limitation is of fundamental importance. The engineering model should not turn into yet another universal checklist that is filled out for the sake of reporting. What is being checked is not the mere presence of an action, but its result. It is not enough to state that an instruction has been sent to the employee. It is necessary to confirm that he has received the information required to perform the specific work. It is not enough to submit an access request. Active access with the correct permissions is required.

The threshold of personnel readiness should not be confused with full professional adaptation. An employee may be ready to start working, but may not yet possess the speed, confidence, and informal knowledge of the environment that develop later. Modern studies of socialization also show that mastering a new role is a complex process involving the interaction of the newcomer, the supervisor, colleagues, and the organizational environment, rather than a one-time introductory procedure (Bauer et al., 2025).

Detailed Examination of the Issue of an Employee's Readiness to Work: The Discrepancy Between Reality and Declared Standards

The author's position is that personnel readiness should become an independent outcome of the process. It lies between the formalization of the employment relationship and subsequent adaptation. This is where the organization answers a simple but uncomfortable question: can this person start this job on asset date without a critical organizational gap? Employee readiness cannot be reliably determined by one document or one status in the personnel system. It consists of independent circuits, each of which has its own owner, a source of confirmation, and a set of risks.

Table 1. The difference between formal documentation and personnel readiness

Process status	What has been confirmed	What has not yet been confirmed	What has not yet been confirmed
The candidate has been approved	A decision has been made regarding the intended employment	The emergence of labour relations and the readiness of the workplace	Waiting for a candidate without a final decision
The employment relationship has been formalized	A legal basis for labour has been established	The presence of all production, digital, and resource conditions	Paid downtime or early vacation
The workplace has been prepared	The unit can accept a person	Completion of documentary and mandatory procedures	Actual work without full formalization
All critical conditions have been confirmed	The employee has reached the threshold of staff readiness	Long-term adaptation and achievement of normative performance	The risks associated with the subsequent adaptation period
The employee has been adapted	The tasks, role, and interaction with the team have been mastered	The stability of the result over a longer period	An erroneous assessment of adaptation based on a single indicator

Source: ISO 45001:2018

The article proposes to identify seven contours of personnel readiness: documentary, organizational, qualification, safety contour, digital, resource, and calculation. The documentary framework confirms the existence of a proper basis for the employment relationship and specific working conditions. The organizational framework links a person to a position, department, supervisor, schedule, and workplace. The qualification framework indicates whether the employee meets the established requirements or, on what legally and organizationally defined basis, they are undergoing training.

The safety framework encompasses more than just briefing. Its purpose is to confirm that the risks associated with the specific work have been considered, the necessary procedures have been completed, and the employee may be allowed to carry out operations within the scope of their training. The digital circuit provides access to systems, data, and electronic tools, but at the same time limits authority within the scope of

the job function. The resource circuit confirms the availability of equipment, tools, personal protective equipment, premises, transport, or other material conditions. The calculation circuit ensures the correct reflection of the schedule, payment, additional payments, compensation, and other conditions affecting accruals.

For critical conditions, it is advisable to use threshold logic rather than average logic. If each circuit is denoted by the variable C_i , which takes the value 1 when readiness is confirmed and 0 when it is absent, the overall status can be determined using a linearly written formula: $G = C_1 \times C_2 \times C_3 \times C_4 \times C_5 \times C_6 \times C_7$. Here, G is the final personnel readiness. If at least one critical circuit is not completed, the value of G becomes zero. This is a rigid model, but it has practical value.

The average value should not conceal a critical defect. The presence of an employment contract, a uniform, a staff number, a supervisor, a workplace, and access does not compensate for the absence of mandatory safety clearance. For analytical observation, a more lenient index can be used: $I_a = w_1r_1 + w_2r_2 + w_3r_3 + w_4r_4 + w_5r_5 + w_6r_6 + w_7r_7$, where r_i is the degree of fulfilment of the corresponding contour, ranging from 0 to 1; w_i is the weight of the contour; the sum of the weights equals 1. The index shows how far the process has progressed towards readiness. However, it should not automatically grant access. The result of 0.93 looks convincing in the report, but the remaining 0.07 may indicate a lack of medical clearance or critically necessary qualifications. Statistics likes to average things out, but safety does not.

The composition of critical circuits may vary. For an office worker, resource readiness will include a computer, a workplace, and corporate access. For a production profession, this may be supplemented by special clothing, tools, access to the premises, a shift schedule, medical requirements, and knowledge testing. What is universal is not a specific checklist format, but the principle: the composition of readiness is determined by the nature of the work and the risks associated with the workplace.

Standards of Workforce's Readiness in Sphere of Human Capital

Standards in the field of human capital involve measuring a wide range of parameters that are within an organization's control, including work for decomposition, productivity, health, safety, and other characteristics (ISO Standard No 30414:2025, 2025). The current version of ISO 30414 was updated in 2025 and sets out the requirements and recommendations for reporting and disclosing information about human capital.

The proposed model complements this approach at the level of an individual personnel event: it measures not only the state of human capital but also the readiness of a specific employee to enter the work process. Each readiness loop is completed at its own point in time. A labour contract can be signed several days before the start date. Access is granted on the morning of the first working day. Special clothing is issued after arrival. Training is scheduled for the following week. The schedule is submitted to the payroll system after the personnel event is closed.

Formally, all actions relate to a single intake, but in practice they unfold as several asynchronous processes. In the engineering model, the moment of full readiness is determined by the latest of the critical confirmations: $T_{ready} = \max(T_{doc}; T_{org}; T_{qual}; T_{safe}; T_{dig}; T_{res}; T_{count})$. Until the last critical stage is completed, the employee has not reached the personnel readiness threshold. It follows from this that accelerating only the personnel paperwork does not necessarily reduce the overall time required to get a person up to speed. A quick order does not yield production results if, after it, it takes another three days to establish access and determine the work location.

It is proposed to define the difference between the planned start date and the moment of full readiness as a synchronization delay: $D_{sync} = \max(0; T_{ready} - T_{plan})$. If the employee started before reaching readiness, a period of premature access occurs: $D_{prev} = \max(0; T_{ready} - T_{fact})$.

A positive value of D_{prev} means that the employee spent some time in the work process under an unresolved critical condition. This does not always prove a violation of the law or the occurrence of damage. It serves as an indicator requiring a substantive review: which specific conditions were not resolved and whether it was essential for the work to be performed. Let us consider a typical situation at an industrial enterprise. The organization needs weight. The candidate has been approved, the contract has been signed, and a personnel number has been assigned.

On the day of the start, it turns out that access to the weighing system has not been established, training on how to use the program has been scheduled for two days from now, and the shift supervisor has not received confirmation that the new employee has been assigned. The HR department considers the hiring process to be complete. The production department sees a person who cannot be assigned to a workstation on their own. The problem here is not the absence of individual actions. They have been planned. The flaw lies in their sequence. The start date for work has been set earlier than the date when readiness is expected. Another scenario arises when a production department asks a candidate to be present during operations in advance, to familiarize themselves with the equipment, or to perform certain actions while the personnel processing is still ongoing. The motive is clear: the department needs a person. But the need does not negate the process architecture. On the contrary, it should be set in advance.

Partial approval requires separate regulations. Sometimes an employee may indeed perform a limited set of safe actions until training for the main function is completed. However, such a decision must be formalized: the permitted actions, timeframe, supervisor, mentor, restrictions, and basis for payment must be defined. Otherwise, "temporary familiarization" quickly turns into full-fledged work without the appropriate status. The cost of unsynchronized acceptance can be represented as follows: $C_{gap} = C_{idle} + C_{repeat} + C_{recalculation} + C_{access} + C_{risk}$.

The costs may include paid unused time, reprocessing of documents, correction of accruals, unscheduled work by IT and HR specialists, delay of a production operation, and the expected consequences of identified risks. At the same time, the expected risk can be calculated as the sum of the probability of the event and the

number of possible losses: $Crisk = \Sigma (P \times L)$, where P is the estimated probability of an undesirable event; L is the estimated number of losses.

This assessment remains probabilistic. It does not prove that damage will necessarily occur. Its task is to show that personnel inconsistency has an economic dimension and cannot be considered solely as an internal inconvenience for the HR department. An attempt to solve the problem with a single, general table usually yields a temporary effect. The table quickly turns into yet another data source that needs to be manually reconciled with the HR system, the training system, access management, the time sheet, and email. An engineering solution should connect the confirmations, not create copies of them.

Possibility for Proper Result's Achievement Through the Proposed Model

To achieve this, it is proposed to use a digital personnel readiness gateway – a control mechanism that collects the statuses of critical workflows and generates a single decision on the employee's readiness by the set date. The gateway does not have to be a separate information system. It can be implemented within a personnel platform, an electronic document management system, a corporate portal, or an integration module. Its purpose is not to store all primary data, but to receive confirmed signals from their owners. For example, the personnel system confirms the formalization of the relationship. The organizational management system for assignment to a position and department. Training platform for completion of training. Occupational safety and health management system – completion of mandatory procedures. Identity management system – creation of access. Material supply department for issuance of resources. Accounting system for receipt of payment terms and schedule.

The key feature of the gateway is to preserve the owners of the decision. The system should not independently declare a person qualified solely because a file with an undefined name has been uploaded. It records the confirmation of the authorized participant and saves it in the personnel event history. The quality of the data cannot be reduced to the absence of typos. The classical data quality model includes internal reliability, relevance to the task, clarity of presentation, and accessibility to the user (Wang & Strong, 1996).

In the personnel process, this means that a correct surname in an incorrect employee profile is not high-quality data. Just as the correct tariff (transmitted after the calculation is closed) no longer provides the required result. Each gateway confirmation must contain at least the employee identifier, the personnel event identifier, the type of condition, the status, the date and time, the source, the person responsible, and the reason for the change. This structure allows you to generate an event log (journal).

The journal opens opportunities for process analytics. Process mining methods use event data to reconstruct the actual flow of processes, verify compliance with the established model, and analyse time deviations (Van der Aalst, 2016). In the context of employee hiring, this allows you to see not only the average duration of the process but also the actual sequences: which actions are more likely to be delayed, which stages are performed retroactively, and where bypass routes emerge. However, the event log does not automatically eliminate

defects. Poor quality time stamps, formal confirmations, and actions performed outside the system can create a false picture. Process analytics studies specifically indicate that the order and timestamps of events do not always reliably reflect the causal sequence (Van der Aalst, 2021).

Therefore, the digital footprint must be compared with the content of the process, rather than taken as an absolute truth. For the gateway, it is advisable to establish the following statuses: “planned” — the decision on admission is in preparation; “in progress” — mandatory circuits have been started; “conditionally ready” — the main procedures have been completed, but a formalized restriction is in effect; “ready” — all critical conditions have been confirmed; “blocked” — a mandatory condition is missing; “approved” — the manager has confirmed the actual start of work; “deviation” — the actual start does not correspond to the readiness status.

The “conditionally ready” status should not be used as a convenient loophole. It requires a specific list of permitted actions, a validity period, an accountable supervisor, and a condition for lifting the restriction. A digital gateway built without such logic will quickly become a pretty indicator that everyone will learn to turn green. Personnel engineering begins where the status colour is confirmed by the actual state of the process. The implementation of a personnel readiness model should not start with programming, but with an analysis of specific jobs and personnel events. A universal form (the same for a director, driver, weighed, accountant and electrician) would be either overly cumbersome or dangerously superficial.

In the first stage, a list of professions and positions is identified for which unsynchronized access creates the greatest consequences. Production jobs, functions with increased safety requirements, material responsibility, access to resources critical information, or a complex payment system may be given priority. In the second stage, the actual process is reconstructed. Not the one recorded in the regulations, but the one that the employee follows. To do this, documents, system events, interviews with participants, and actual deadlines are compared.

In the third stage, mandatory frameworks are established for each group of jobs. At the same time, it is determined which conditions are critical and which can be completed after the start of work without creating an unacceptable risk. At the fourth stage, owners of the confirmations are assigned. The owner is not responsible for filling out the general checklist, but for the accuracy of their area. The IT department confirms access, the manager confirms the workplace, the HR function confirms the documents, and the training centre confirms the training results.

At the fifth stage, the readiness point is determined, and the escalation route is designed. If the critical condition is not met by the target date, the system should not merely display a red status but should route the issue to the person capable of making a decision: reschedule the date, change the access mode, speed up the preparation, or cancel the personnel action. On the sixth stage, a pilot test is carried out. The state of the process before and after implementation is compared using uniform indicators. To draw a conclusion, it is necessary to consider changes in the volume of hiring, the composition of professions, the seasonal workload, and the

organizational conditions. A simple reduction in the average timeframe does not yet prove the effectiveness of the model if the number of complex procedures has also decreased.

At the seventh stage, the model is integrated into the overall personnel system and the electronic personal file. The employees' history should contain not only the decision to hire, but also confirmation of the moment when they were organizationally ready to start working.

Additional Discussion about Model's Interpretation and their Compliance with International Labour Standards

The indicators should be analysed together. An increase in the share of items ready by the planned date can be achieved by artificially shifting the planned dates to a later period. A decrease in the number of premature allowances may be accompanied by an increase in downtime. A reduction in the number of returns sometimes does not mean an improvement in data quality, but rather a refusal by participants to record errors. Therefore, the assessment should combine time, quality, cost, and risk. Recommendations for measuring the effectiveness of occupational safety systems also stem from the need to create monitoring, measurement, analysis, and evaluation processes, rather than limiting oneself to a single indicator (ISO Standard No 45004:2024, 2024; Lein et al., 2015).

Scientific validation of the proposed model can be conducted through a quasi-experimental comparison of comparable departments or through an analysis of a single process before and after implementation. Dependent indicators may include the duration of synchronization delay, the proportion of premature approvals, the number of recalculations, the labour intensity of corrections, and the number of first day incidents. However, causal inference will require caution. The indicators may be simultaneously affected by changes in the size of the HR department, the introduction of a new information system, the seasonality of hiring, changes in the production program, and the composition of the employees being hired. The correlation between the implementation of the gateway and the improvement in performance does not prove itself that the improvement was caused solely by the gateway.

The weak point of the model remains the risk of excessive bureaucratization. If applied incorrectly, the organization may create seven new approvals instead of one working process. Therefore, confirmation should be generated where the relevant action occurs, rather than being transferred to an additional form. If the training system already records the completion of a course, the employee should not be required to bring a printed certificate to the HR department. Integration should reduce the evidence chain, not duplicate it. The second limitation is related to human behaviour. A manager interested in ensuring an employee's prompt return can formally confirm the readiness of an unprepared workplace. This means that digital monitoring does not replace managerial responsibility and spot checks. The third limitation lies in the inability to fully formalize social readiness.

The appointment of a mentor can be confirmed by status, but the quality of interaction between the mentor and the newcomer is not reduced to a mark. Studies on socialization show the importance of support from managers and colleagues, social acceptance, and the active interaction of the new employee with the organizational environment (Bauer et al., 2025). Therefore, the readiness threshold should ensure the start of work, but it should not claim to measure the entire complexity of adaptation.

CONCLUSION

Organizations usually know the employee's date of hire well, but it understands much less well the date when the employee is ready to work. Between these two points lies a segment of the personnel process that rarely has a single owner. The documents have already been completed, the person has already been included in the staffing numbers, costs have already been incurred, but the production function has not yet received a fully qualified employee.

The first conclusion: The proposed model of the threshold of personnel readiness transforms this problem from the category of everyday organizational failures into a subject of engineering design. Readiness is viewed as the result of synchronizing seven circuits: documentary, organizational, qualification, safety, digital, resource, and calculation. The last completed critical circuit determines the actual moment of readiness. The scientific contribution of the article lies in the delineation of three states: the formalization of labour relations, readiness to begin work, and subsequent adaptation. These states are related, but not identical. Formalization creates the basis. Personnel readiness ensures the possibility of a safe and organizationally supported start.

The second conclusion: Adaptation fosters the stable integration of a person into work and the team. The practical contribution lies in the development of a threshold model, indicators of synchronization gap, and the architecture of a digital gateway that combines confirmations from participants in the personnel event. Such a gateway changes the criterion for completing the hiring process. The process ends not when the last document is placed in the electronic file, but when the organization can prove that a specific person is prepared for a specific job under specific conditions.

The third conclusion: At the same time, the model should not turn into a mechanism for thoughtless standardization. Not all jobs require the same conditions, not every delay creates an equal risk, and not every element of adaptation can be digitally recorded. Future research should focus on testing the model in various professional groups, identifying the composition of critical circuits, assessing the economic consequences of unsynchronized tolerance, and investigating the relationship between the readiness of personnel on the first day and subsequent adaptation outcomes.

The main conclusion can be formulated very concretely: an accepted employee and a ready employee are not always having the same organizational outcome. HR process engineering must eliminate this gap before

it turns into downtime, recalculation, an incident, or a persistent habit of circumventing the established procedure.

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