

# Monthly Job Review Playbook

## Agenda + Minimum Packet Definition

A practical, repeatable cadence that aligns Project Managers and Accounting around one set of numbers and one set of actions.

### What this playbook is

A simple operating rhythm for reviewing jobs, validating forecasts (EAC), and preventing margin fade and cash surprises.

### What this playbook is not

A new ERP, a complex dashboard build, or a heavy reporting burden.

### Toolkit components

- Monthly Job Review meeting agenda and facilitation guide
- Minimum viable report packet definition (the 4 core pages)
- Pre-work expectations (who updates what, by when)
- Optional add-ons (use only after the MVP is stable)
- Excel templates (Cover Sheet and Tabs A–H) that match the packet definition

Implementation promise: Run this cadence for two cycles with the MVP packet and you should see shorter meetings, clearer decisions, and fewer unpleasant surprises.

## WHY MONTHLY JOB REVIEWS WORK

The job review meeting is where operations and finance either align—or drift apart. A good process does three things every month:

- Validates the forecast (EAC) with real drivers, not gut feel
- Connects profit and cash (billing position, change orders, AR/retainage)
- Forces clear actions with owners and due dates

### Operating principles

Principle	What it means
Standard packet	Every PM uses the same packet format. No custom versions in the meeting.
Pre-work required	Forecasting is done before the meeting. The meeting is for decisions, not data entry.
Explain the delta	Any material change in EAC, margin, billing position, or CO pipeline requires a simple driver explanation.
One-page summary	If the summary cannot fit on one page, it is not a summary.
Follow-ups roll forward	Open actions carry into next month until closed.

*Definition: EAC | EAC (Estimate at Completion) is the best current estimate of total job cost at completion, based on costs to date plus forecast cost-to-complete by major cost category.*

### How the Excel packet supports this page

- C Job Cost Review: Validate forecast assumptions and explain the EAC delta month over month.

- D Change Order Log: Track CO dollars at risk and the next action to convert to billings and cash.
- G AR Retainage (optional): Add when cash visibility is a recurring leadership topic.

## ROLES AND CADENCE

A predictable cadence removes friction and reduces the end-of-month scramble.

### Roles

Role	Primary responsibilities in the job review cadence
Project Manager (PM)	Updates cost-to-complete assumptions, validates change orders and billing blockers, and presents drivers of change.
Project Controls / Estimator (optional)	Supports production quantities, productivity assumptions, and scope review; helps validate remaining quantities.
Accounting	Closes job cost, prepares preliminary WIP, flags coding issues and unusual movements, and documents decisions.
AR / Billing	Updates billing status, open AR and disputes, retainage exposure; owns collections action items.
Operations / Executive (facilitator)	Runs the agenda, enforces standards, assigns owners and due dates, and escalates risks.

### Recommended close timeline (example)

Day	What happens	Owner
Day 0–1	Post job cost (AP, payroll, equipment, burden). Resolve major coding issues.	Accounting
Day 2–3	PMs update cost-to-complete and key assumptions; update change order statuses.	PMs
Day 4	Accounting prepares preliminary WIP and flags exceptions (margin, billings).	Accounting
Day 5–7	Monthly Job Review meetings (structured agenda). Decisions and actions captured.	Ops/PMs/Accounting
Day 8–10	Finalize WIP and issue financials; carry forward follow-ups.	Accounting/Leadership

### How the Excel packet supports this page

- 0 Cover Sheet: Facilitator uses this to set job order (risk first) and track follow-ups.
- H Job Health (optional): Optional portfolio risk scan to prioritize meeting time.

## MONTHLY JOB REVIEW MEETING AGENDA

Target duration: 60–120 minutes, depending on number of active jobs and complexity.

Time	Agenda item	Purpose / facilitation notes
5 min	Open and standards	Confirm reporting month, packet version, meeting goals, and that pre-work is complete.
10 min	Portfolio scan (cover sheet)	Highlight top risks, jobs needing escalation, cash constraints, and prior month follow-ups.
10–15 min per job	Job review — run the packet in order	Use the minimum packet first: A Summary Sheet, C Job Cost Review, D Change Order Log. Add B Contract Extract only if contract terms are driving risk. Focus on: what changed, why it changed, and what action is required.

10 min	Billing and cash focus	Review under/over billings, retainage concentration, disputed AR, and actions to unblock billing/collection.
5 min	Decisions and action register	Confirm decisions, assign owners and due dates, and identify items to carry forward.
2 min	Close	Confirm next meeting date and required escalations.

### Facilitator rules (keep the meeting productive)

- Ask for drivers, not explanations. Example: “What changed since last month and what is the dollar impact?”
- Do not allow forecasting live in the meeting. If pre-work is incomplete, assign a due date and move on.
- Escalate early: if a job is Red on any major risk, assign a specific recovery action.
- Document decisions and action owners in real time.

### How the Excel packet supports this page

- 0 Cover Sheet: Use for portfolio scan and action register; capture owners and due dates live.
- A Summary Sheet: Each job discussion starts here; requires a clear job story and top risks.
- C Job Cost Review: Use to validate forecast assumptions and explain EAC delta.
- D Change Order Log: Use to drive CO actions and prevent revenue leakage.

### MINIMUM VIABLE REPORT PACKET (MVP)

Start with the MVP packet for two monthly cycles. Add optional pages only after the team consistently prepares the MVP on time and the meeting stays focused.

Packet page	What it answers	Excel tab
Cover Sheet	What is changing across the portfolio? What decisions and follow-ups are required?	0 Cover Sheet
A. Summary Sheet (one page per job)	Where are we on contract value, forecast gross profit, billing position, and key risks/actions?	A Summary Sheet
C. Job Cost Review	How do budget, cost-to-date, and cost-to-complete roll into EAC and variance?	C Job Cost Review
D. Change Order Log	What change order dollars are at risk and what is the next action owner?	D Change Order Log

### Minimum packet standards

- One-page Summary Sheet per active job (force prioritization).
- EAC changes must cite 1–3 drivers (production, commitments, labor productivity, scope, pricing).
- Change Order Log must include status and next action owner (no orphaned change orders).
- Carry forward unresolved follow-ups from prior month.

Contract Extract (Tab B) is used when contract terms are driving risk (retainage, notice requirements, liquidated damages, allowances/contingencies). It is typically created once per job and updated only when terms change.

### OPTIONAL ADD-ONS (ADD ONLY AFTER THE MVP IS STABLE)

Add one optional page only if it directly solves a recurring problem. Do not expand the packet until the MVP packet is on time and consistent for two cycles.

Add-on	When it helps	Excel tab
Commitments detail (subs/POs)	Expose buyout gaps, scope gaps, and pending commitments; grounds forecasts in real commitments.	E GC Commitments
Labor productivity / earned hours	Catch labor-driven margin fade early; useful for labor-intensive scopes.	F Sub Productivity
Job-level AR / retainage detail	Identify cash bottlenecks, disputes, and retainage concentration; assign collection actions.	G AR Retainage
Job health scorecard (Green/Yellow/Red)	Fast portfolio risk scan to focus leadership time; aligns to your risk conversation.	H Job Health

### How the Excel packet supports this page

- B Contract Extract: Use only when contract terms create real financial risk.
- E GC Commitments: Add when buyout gaps and scope gaps drive forecast surprises.
- H Job Health: Add when leadership needs a fast portfolio scan to prioritize time.

### START HERE

Run better job reviews in 30 days (without a new reporting system)

Most job reviews do not fail because people do not care. They fail because everyone shows up with different numbers and different reports. This toolkit fixes that with one simple rule: one packet, one meeting rhythm, one action list—every month.

### What you will do first

- Pick a pilot set (today): Choose 5–10 active jobs, including at least one job that is messy (change orders, productivity drift, billing delays, or schedule risk).
- Assign owners (today): Facilitator (Ops/Executive), PMs (job story + cost-to-complete + CO status), Accounting (close job cost + exceptions), Billing/AR (billing blockers + AR/retainage as needed).
- Run the MVP packet for two cycles (weeks 1–2): Use only Cover + A Summary + C Job Cost Review + D Change Order Log. Keep the meeting strict and driver-focused.
- Distribute one packet 24 hours before the meeting: Export the relevant Excel tabs to a single PDF and send it ahead of time. The meeting is for decisions—not forecasting live.
- Add only what solves a recurring problem (week 3+): Add one optional page at a time after the MVP is consistent.

### What to avoid (seriously)

- Do not customize the packet per PM.
- Do not add more reports until the MVP is stable.
- Do not re-forecast in the meeting—assign follow-ups and move on.

### What success looks like

- Shorter meetings
- Clearer drivers behind margin changes
- Fewer surprises in WIP and cash
- A living action list with owners and due dates

### MVP tabs to use in weeks 1–2

- 0 Cover Sheet: Portfolio scan and action register.

- A Summary Sheet: One page per job; job story + top risks.
- C Job Cost Review: EAC validation and variance drivers.
- D Change Order Log: CO pipeline and next actions.

## **EXCEL TAB QUICK GUIDE (MONTHLY JOB REVIEW PACKET — TABS A–H)**

Purpose: Use these tabs to build a consistent monthly meeting packet. Start with the MVP tabs for two cycles, then add optional tabs one at a time.

Recommended packet order: 0 → A → C → D → (B as needed) → (E/F/G/H as needed)

### **0 Cover Sheet — Portfolio scan + action register**

Owner: Facilitator + Accounting

- Sets the meeting order (risk-first).
- Tracks decisions, follow-ups, owners, and due dates.

*Tip: Use live during the meeting. If it is not on the Cover Sheet, it usually will not get done.*

### **A Summary Sheet — One page per job (the job story)**

Owner: PM (with Accounting support)

- One-page snapshot: contract, forecast GP, billing position, top risks, next actions.

*Tip: Start every job here. Keep it to one page to force prioritization.*

### **B Contract Extract — Use only when contract terms drive risk**

Owner: PM + Project Admin (as needed)

- Key terms that create financial risk: retainage, notice requirements, LDs, billing terms, allowances/contingencies.

*Tip: Create once per job; update only when terms change.*

### **C Job Cost Review — Forecast validation (EAC discipline)**

Owner: PM owns assumptions; Accounting owns cost accuracy

- Validates budget, cost-to-date, remaining cost, and how they roll into EAC and variance.

*Tip: Any material EAC change requires 1–3 drivers.*

### **D Change Order Log — Protect revenue + speed up cash**

Owner: PM (with Project Admin support)

- Tracks CO pipeline: unpriced → submitted → approved → billed → collected.
- Forces next action + owner so COs do not stall.

*Tip: Every meaningful CO line needs a status and next action owner.*

### **E GC Commitments — Commitments & exposure summary (subs/POs)**

Owner: PM + Procurement (Accounting supports)

- Use when buyout gaps, scope gaps, and pending commitments drive forecast surprises.

*Tip: Highlights exposure and drives buyout/commitment actions.*

**F Sub Productivity — Labor productivity & earned hours tracker**

Owner: PM / Field leadership

- Use when labor productivity is a primary driver of margin fade (subs or self-perform).

*Tip: Flags earned vs actual drift early and forces a recovery plan.*

**G AR Retainage — Job-level AR & retainage detail**

Owner: Billing/AR + PM

- Use when cash, disputes, or retainage concentration are recurring constraints.

*Tip: Assigns collection and billing-unblock actions with owners.*

**H Job Health — Job health scorecard (Green/Yellow/Red)**

Owner: Facilitator + PMs

- Fast portfolio risk scan to prioritize meeting time and escalation.

*Tip: If any category is Red, the job is typically at least Yellow overall.*

**HOW TO IMPLEMENT IN 30 DAYS**

A lightweight rollout that builds discipline first, then adds visibility where it matters.

**Week-by-week rollout**

Week	Focus	Outcome
Week 1	Align on standards and roles; choose facilitator; pick 5–10 active jobs to pilot. Confirm the MVP packet and meeting rules.	Everyone understands the process and expectations.
Week 2	Run MVP packet (Cover + A + C + D) for pilot jobs; keep the meeting strict; capture actions on the cover sheet.	First cycle complete; issues logged and prioritized.
Week 3	Refine inputs (coding discipline, forecast assumptions, change order hygiene). Add Tab B only where needed.	Second cycle faster and higher quality.
Week 4	Expand to all active jobs; add one optional add-on only if it directly solves a recurring problem.	Scalable cadence with minimal admin burden.

**Pre-work checklist (due before the meeting)**

Who	What must be done before the meeting
Accounting	Close job cost; identify and resolve major coding exceptions; prepare preliminary WIP and exception list.
PMs	Update cost-to-complete and key assumptions; update change order statuses; be ready to explain drivers.
Billing/AR	Update billing status, open AR/disputes, retainage; note blockers and proposed next actions.
Facilitator	Set job review order (risk first), confirm packet completeness, and distribute packet at least 24 hours ahead.

**Success looks like**

- Job reviews finish on time with a consistent packet.
- Material EAC changes are explained with 1–3 drivers (not hand-waving).
- Change order dollars move forward every month (less stuck in “submitted”).
- Actions have owners and due dates—and roll forward until closed.

Implementation rule: Start with the MVP packet (0 + A + C + D) for two cycles before adding any optional additions.