ALLIED BizTech SOLUTIONS

FIELD GUIDE · 2026

Rebuild Workday yourself.
The plan we follow.

For companies of 500 to 15,000+ employees who want to own their HR records, workflows and self-service, keep payroll with the provider they trust, and stop paying per employee.

- → Is it worth it, at your size
- → What to rebuild and what to drop
- → The architecture, in three layers
- → Migration and go-live checklists
- → The data model
- → A week-by-week build plan
- → Payroll, dates, permissions
- → Where teams get stuck

Workday grows with headcount. *Postgres grows with bytes.*

Workday charges a monthly fee per employee, and each add-on (Recruiting, Payroll, Time Tracking, Talent, Adaptive Planning) adds its own. Every hire raises the bill. A custom HRIS on Postgres replaces it with hosting and a payroll integration that grow far more gently.

HEADCOUNT	WORKDAY A YEAR	REBUILT: YEAR ONE / AFTER	SAVED IN YEAR ONE
200 employees	~$96,000	~$66,500 / $20,000	~$29K
500 employees	~$240,000	~$72,500 / $26,000	~$167,500
1,500 employees · full HCM	~$720,000	~$108,500 / $62,000	~$611,500
5,000 · all modules	~$2,400,000	~$281,200 / $180,000	~$2,118,800
15,000+ · multi-country	~$7,000,000+	~$671,400 / $480,000	~$6,328,600

Workday does not publish its prices: ranges as of May 2026, from third-party buyer reports. "Rebuilt" runs Postgres on RDS with a custom HRIS front end and ADP, Gusto or Rippling API integration, plus our fixed build price: $46,500 up to 1,500 employees, $101,200 (the top of $67,000–$101,200) to 5,000, $191,400 (the top of $123,000–$191,400) above. If your own team builds it, put your engineering cost in that place.

THE RULE OF THUMB

At 200 employees, year one saves ~$29K and $76K a year comes back after. **At 1,500 employees, the rebuild saves ~$611K in year one and ~$658K a year after.** From 5,000 employees, year one alone saves more than $2M.

Who you need

- **A senior full-stack engineer** at home with Postgres, workflow design and payroll-provider APIs. Our team ships this in 12–16 weeks; one engineer working between other priorities should plan for longer.
- **Your HRIS lead and payroll manager**, two hours a week: the workflows that matter, the payroll field mapping, the pilot business unit, the parallel-run sign-off.
- **An owner after launch**: hosting, upgrades, access reviews, and on-call at every payroll cut-off.

02 · SCOPE

Rebuild the 15 features in daily use. *Drop the rest.*

Workday ships hundreds of features per module. A real HR team uses about 15 every day, the 15–25% it pays for and uses. Those are the project; most of the long tail exists to justify pricing tiers.

REBUILD ONE FOR ONE

- **Directory and org chart**: effective-dated, permissions-aware
- **Self-service**: time off, benefits, personal info, pay stubs
- **Manager dashboard**: team view, approval queue, headcount
- **Hire, promote, terminate**: multi-step approvals, audit trail
- **Performance**: reviews, goals, 1:1s, calibration
- **Compensation planning**: merit, bonus, equity
- **Time off and PTO accruals**, policy-based, multi-country
- **Reporting and headcount analytics**
- **Multi-country** policies, currencies, compliance
- **Payroll integration**: ADP, Gusto, Rippling, Paychex

REBUILD, SIMPLER

- **Recruiting**: a pipeline with scorecards and offers, or Greenhouse, Lever or Ashby
- **Benefits**: a basic open-enrollment workflow

DROP ON PURPOSE

- **Workday Studio BI**: Tableau, Looker or Metabase on the warehouse
- **Adaptive Planning**: Cube, Pigment or Anaplan
- **Workday Learning**: 360Learning, Lessonly or Docebo
- **Workday Financials**: the NetSuite-alternative scope, or stay
- **Workday admin certifications**

ADD WHAT PER-EMPLOYEE PRICING DISCOURAGES

- Hire freely: cost follows bytes, not headcount
- Direct SQL on all HR data, no API rate limits
- Workflows in code: versioned, reviewed, tested

Three layers. *Payroll stays.*

A custom HRIS front end, employee, org and comp data on Postgres, and a direct integration with your payroll provider. Payroll runs on the same rails as today; only the Workday HCM layer becomes optional.

LAYER 1 · PEOPLE USE

The HRIS workspace

- Directory, profile, org chart
- Manager dashboard and approvals
- Self-service: time off, benefits, personal info
- Reviews, goals, 1:1s
- Recruiting pipeline
- Reporting and headcount analytics

LAYER 2 · DATA + WORKFLOW

Postgres + workflow

- Employee, position and comp tables
- Org structure, effective-dated
- Hire, promote, terminate workflows
- Multi-level approval routing
- Comp cycle management
- An audit log on every change

LAYER 3 · INTEGRATIONS

Direct providers

- **ADP, Gusto, Rippling**: payroll
- **Carta, Pulley**: equity
- **Greenhouse, Lever**: ATS, or built in
- **Lattice, 15Five**: or built in
- **Okta, Azure AD**: SSO + SCIM
- **Slack, Teams**: approvals

Decisions to make in week one

DECISION	OUR DEFAULT	WHY
Where it runs	Your AWS account, by region	EU employee data stays in EU regions
Accounts	Okta or Azure AD, SSO + SCIM	Joiners and leavers flow from one directory
Dates	Effective dating on every HR fact	History, retro and future changes all need it
Payroll	Your provider's published API	The HRIS owns people; the provider owns pay
Workflows	In code, in Git	Reviewed and tested like the rest of the product
Reporting	Direct SQL to your warehouse	No API rate limits, no extract jobs

Compliance: on your own AWS account you inherit AWS's SOC 2 and ISO 27001 posture, with GDPR data residency by region and SOX-grade audit logging on every change to employee data.

Ten tables *carry the whole product.*

Model these before writing any screen. Every HR fact is effective-dated, and every imported row keeps its Workday ID, so the import can run twice and any record traces back to its source.

TABLE	KEY COLUMNS
`workers`	id, workday_id, legal_name, preferred_name, email, country, hire_date, termination_date, status
`org_units`	id, workday_id, parent_id, name, type (company, division, cost center), effective_from, effective_to
`positions`	id, workday_id, title, job_profile, level, org_unit_id, location, fte, effective_from, effective_to
`assignments`	id, worker_id, position_id, manager_id, reason (hire, promotion, transfer, termination), effective_from, effective_to
`compensation`	id, worker_id, pay_type, amount, currency, frequency, comp_band, reason, effective_from, effective_to
`time_off_ledger`	id, worker_id, policy_id (country, accrual rule), hours (+/−), source (accrual, request, adjustment), as_of
`business_processes`	id, type (hire, promote, terminate, comp change), worker_id, payload (jsonb), steps (jsonb), status, effective_date, initiated_by
`reviews`, `goals`	id, worker_id, cycle_id, reviewer_id, type (self, manager, calibration), rating, body, submitted_at
`payroll_sync`	id, worker_id, provider, external_id, change_type, effective_date, status (queued, sent, confirmed, failed), sent_at
`audit_log`	id, table, row_id, field, old_value, new_value, changed_by, changed_at, reason

TWO RULES THAT SAVE A REBUILD

Never update an HR fact in place: close the old row and open a new one with its effective date. History, retro changes and future-dated hires all fall out of that one rule. **Payroll reads from a queue, not from screens**: every change that touches pay writes a row, so a failed sync shows up before cut-off, not on payday.

Sixteen weeks to build, *then a pilot.*

This is the order we build in. Each stage ends with something your HR lead can try; then one business unit runs on it for four weeks before the parallel run.

WEEKS	BUILD	DONE WHEN
1–2	**Extract and model.** The ten tables. Workday's REST API and EIB exports into staging: workers, positions, comp, benefits, time-off balances, reviews, recruiting. SSO and SCIM.	Counts match Workday; 50 worker histories spot-checked
3–4	**Core HR.** Directory, profile and org chart with effective dating; the manager dashboard; permissions by role, org and field.	A manager sees their team as of any date
5–7	**Workflows.** Hire, promote, terminate and comp change, with multi-level approvals, Slack or Teams notifications and the audit log.	Every business process HR runs today has a route
8–9	**Payroll and time off.** Field mapping to your provider's API, the sync queue, the roster reconciliation; accruals by country policy.	A test cycle's payroll inputs match Workday's line for line
10–12	**Talent and comp.** Reviews, goals and 1:1s, the comp cycle, the recruiting pipeline, self-service and open enrollment.	A comp cycle runs end to end in staging
13–16	**Reporting and compliance.** Headcount analytics, the warehouse feed, the SOX audit report, multi-country policies, the security review.	HR, finance and audit sign off

PILOT, PARALLEL RUN, CUTOVER

One business unit for **four weeks**, then **eight weeks** with both systems taking every change and payroll inputs compared every cycle. Cut over at your Workday renewal, about seven months from kickoff, and keep a read-only export of Workday history.

Get pay, dates and access right. *The rest is screens.*

An HRIS is judged on three things nobody sees until they fail: the pay change that reached payroll on time, the record that shows what was true on a given date, and the salary only the right people can read.

1. **The HRIS owns people; the provider owns pay.** Map every field to your provider's API (ADP, Gusto, Rippling, Paychex) and send changes as effective-dated events through the queue. Reconcile the provider's roster with yours before every cut-off, freeze changes inside the cut-off window, and alert on a failed sync while there is still time to fix it.
2. **Compare payroll inputs in the parallel run.** For every cycle of the eight weeks, diff what the new HRIS sends with what Workday sent. Each difference is a mapping bug found before it reaches a pay stub.
3. **Date every fact.** Each row carries effective_from and effective_to. Support future-dated changes (a hire starting next month), retro changes (a raise backdated to the quarter, which payroll must see as a retro) and as-of questions (the org chart on 1 January).
4. **Separate corrections from changes.** A change adds a new effective-dated row; a correction fixes a wrong one, with a reason in the audit log. Auditors and payroll both need to tell them apart.
5. **Grant access by role, org and field.** Managers see their reporting line, HR partners their org; salary and national ID need their own grant. Compute access from the effective-dated hierarchy, so a transfer moves access the day it takes effect.

Log reads, not only writes

SOX and GDPR both ask who saw what. Log every view of comp and personal fields next to every change, and keep EU employees' records in EU regions.

Countries as policy, not code

PTO accruals, working-time rules and statutory benefits live as policy rows per country. A new country is data and a test, not a release.

Move it, launch it, *run it.*

Migration

- ☐ Extract through Workday's REST API and EIB: workers, positions, comp, benefits, time off, reviews, recruiting
- ☐ Keep the Workday ID on every row
- ☐ Load the org hierarchy before workers
- ☐ Move full history with effective dates, not only today's values
- ☐ Carry time-off balances as opening ledger entries with their as-of date
- ☐ Map every payroll field before the first sync
- ☐ Check counts, then read 50 worker histories end to end
- ☐ Extract the changes since, at cutover

Go-live

- ☐ SSO and SCIM live; leavers lose access the day they leave
- ☐ Payroll inputs matched through the parallel run
- ☐ Permissions tested by role, org and field
- ☐ Backups proven by a restore
- ☐ Rollback ready: Workday read-only until renewal

Running it

- ☐ **Always on:** uptime and sync alerts, security patches
- ☐ **Every payroll cycle:** roster reconciliation with the provider before cut-off
- ☐ **Monthly:** upgrades through staging, workflow and policy changes reviewed
- ☐ **Quarterly:** access review, cost review against the Workday bill you replaced
- ☐ **Yearly:** a restore drill, country policy updates, SOX audit support

Who owns it

Name one person before launch. An HRIS is quiet until payroll day: someone has to answer when a sync fails the night before cut-off.

Five ways a rebuild *stalls.*

1. Swapping one per-employee vendor for another

Rippling's bundle is well designed, but per-employee pricing scales aggressively: $200–$400 per employee a year at enterprise size. BambooHR is cheaper below 500 employees; above 1,000, the pricing converges.

2. Moving to UKG or SuccessFactors

Both are comparable to Workday in price and complexity, and migration alone is 12–18 months. You have swapped vendors, not removed the margin.

3. Paying an SI to tune Workday

Implementation partners cost $1M–$5M for a typical enterprise rollout. That spend buys a better-tuned Workday, not less Workday.

4. ADP Workforce Now past 2,000 employees

If ADP already runs payroll, Workforce Now adds an HRIS for less than Workday and works below 2,000 employees. Above that, sophisticated talent and comp processes outgrow it.

5. Skipping the parallel run

Eight weeks of both systems catch the field mapping that only shows on a retro raise or a mid-cycle transfer, before an employee finds it on a pay stub.

And one that is not a mistake: negotiating

Workday discounts enterprise contracts 10–20% on multi-year commits. Do it if the rebuild is a year away; it captures less than a quarter of what the rebuild does.

ALLIED BizTech SOLUTIONS

RATHER HAVE IT BUILT?

We build this exact plan. *Fixed price.*

The same scope, architecture and sixteen weeks, delivered by a senior team that has shipped 250+ products.

$46,500 fixed up to 1,500 employees, $67,000–$101,200 for 1,500–5,000, $123,000–$191,400 above 5,000, agreed before we start

Live in 12–16 weeks, then a four-week pilot on one business unit

Every record migrated, with effective dates; payroll stays with ADP, Gusto, Rippling or Paychex

90-day warranty, quarterly check-ins through year one, and the code in your GitHub

We can run it for $14,000–$32,000 a year: hosting, monitoring and monthly upgrades

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