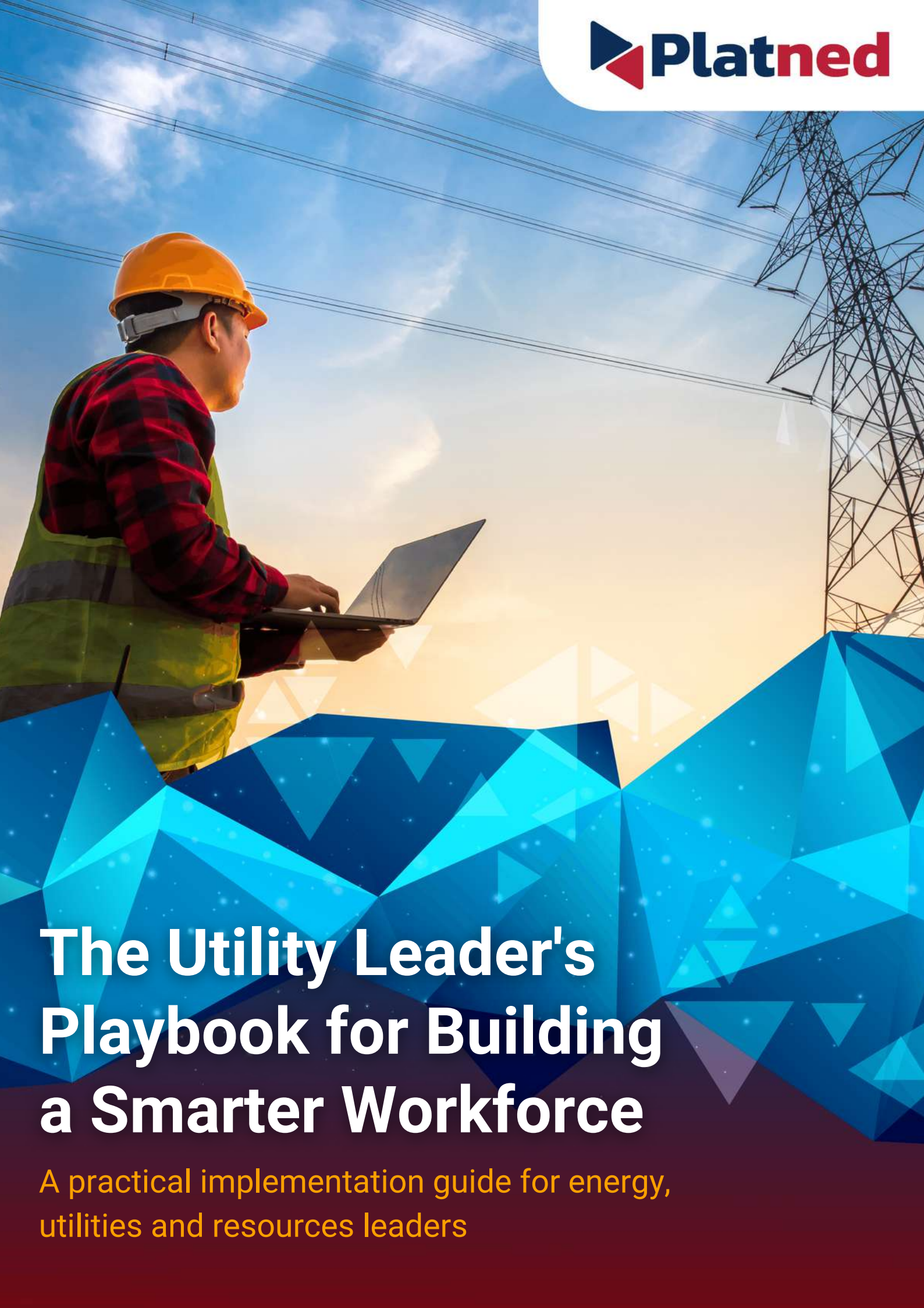




The Utility Leader's Playbook for Building a Smarter Workforce

A practical implementation guide for energy,
utilities and resources leaders

A step-by-step guide to improving workforce productivity, service reliability and operational resilience.

Every utility wants to deliver faster response times, improve reliability, reduce operating costs and make better use of a limited workforce.

Very few achieve all four.

The difference is rarely the number of technicians available. More often, it is how effectively they are planned, scheduled, equipped and supported. Across the utilities sector, leading organisations are moving away from static planning and manual coordination towards intelligent workforce optimisation, allowing them to make better use of existing resources whilst improving customer service.

This playbook provides a practical roadmap for organisations beginning that journey.

It is not intended to replace your existing operational strategy.

Instead, it helps you identify where to start, what to prioritise and how to deliver measurable improvements with manageable risk.



What a smarter workforce looks like

A smarter workforce is not simply a more digital workforce.

It is a workforce where:

- The right technician arrives first time.
- Work is continually reprioritised as conditions change.
- Travel is minimised.
- Knowledge is shared across experienced and newer engineers.
- Dispatchers manage exceptions rather than manually scheduling every job.
- Leaders have real-time operational visibility.
- Decisions are supported by data rather than assumptions.

The result is greater productivity without increasing headcount.



The five-stage roadmap



Stage 1

Understand where time is really being lost

Most utilities underestimate how much productive capacity disappears every day. Common causes include:

- Excessive travel.
- Waiting for parts.
- Repeat visits.
- Incorrect skills allocation.
- Manual administration.
- Poor communication between planning and field teams.
- Reactive scheduling following disruption.

Before investing in technology, establish a clear baseline.

Questions to answer

- How many jobs are completed per technician each day?
- How much time is spent travelling?
- What percentage of jobs require repeat visits?
- How often are technicians delayed because of missing information or parts?
- Which activities generate the greatest operational cost?

Quick win

Track technician activity over several weeks rather than relying on estimates. The data will often reveal significant opportunities for improvement before any technology changes are made.



Stage 2

Improve planning before adding more people

When workloads increase, many organisations immediately recruit contractors or approve overtime.

Sometimes this is necessary.

Often it is not.

Better planning frequently unlocks additional capacity from the workforce already in place.

Smarter scheduling helps ensure:

- The closest qualified technician is selected.
- Jobs are grouped geographically.
- Emergency work automatically reshapes the day's schedule.
- Workloads remain balanced across teams.
- Customer commitments continue to be met.

Utilities using IFS Planning and Scheduling Optimization achieve measurable improvements including higher technician productivity, reduced travel time and more jobs completed each day.

Leadership checkpoint

Before increasing workforce size, ask:
Could we complete more work with the people we already have?



Stage 3

Connect planning, assets and field operations

Many organisations still operate with disconnected systems.

- Planning.
- Dispatch.
- Asset management.
- Inventory.
- Mobile working.
- Customer communications.

Each may perform well individually.
Together they often create delays.

- Better scheduling decisions.
- Real-time job updates.
- Accurate inventory visibility.
- Faster work completion.
- Improved customer communication.
- Better operational reporting.

**A connected
operation
enables**

IFS Field Workforce Management combines these capabilities within a single platform, bringing together Field Service Management, Planning and Scheduling Optimisation, and Industrial AI for asset-intensive organisations.

Warning sign

If planners regularly copy information between systems or rely on spreadsheets, there is likely to be significant opportunity for improvement.





Stage 4

Use AI to support decisions, not replace people

Artificial intelligence is becoming an increasingly important part of utility operations. The greatest value comes from helping experienced people make better decisions faster.

Examples include:

- Optimising schedules automatically.
- Predicting travel times.
- Recommending the best technician.
- Identifying likely asset failures.
- Supporting field engineers with contextual guidance.
- Reducing administrative work.

The objective is not automation for its own sake.

It is giving planners and technicians more time to focus on work that requires experience and judgement.

Where are your experienced planners spending time today?

If the answer is routine administration, there is likely to be an opportunity for AI-assisted optimisation.

**Leadership
question**



Stage 5

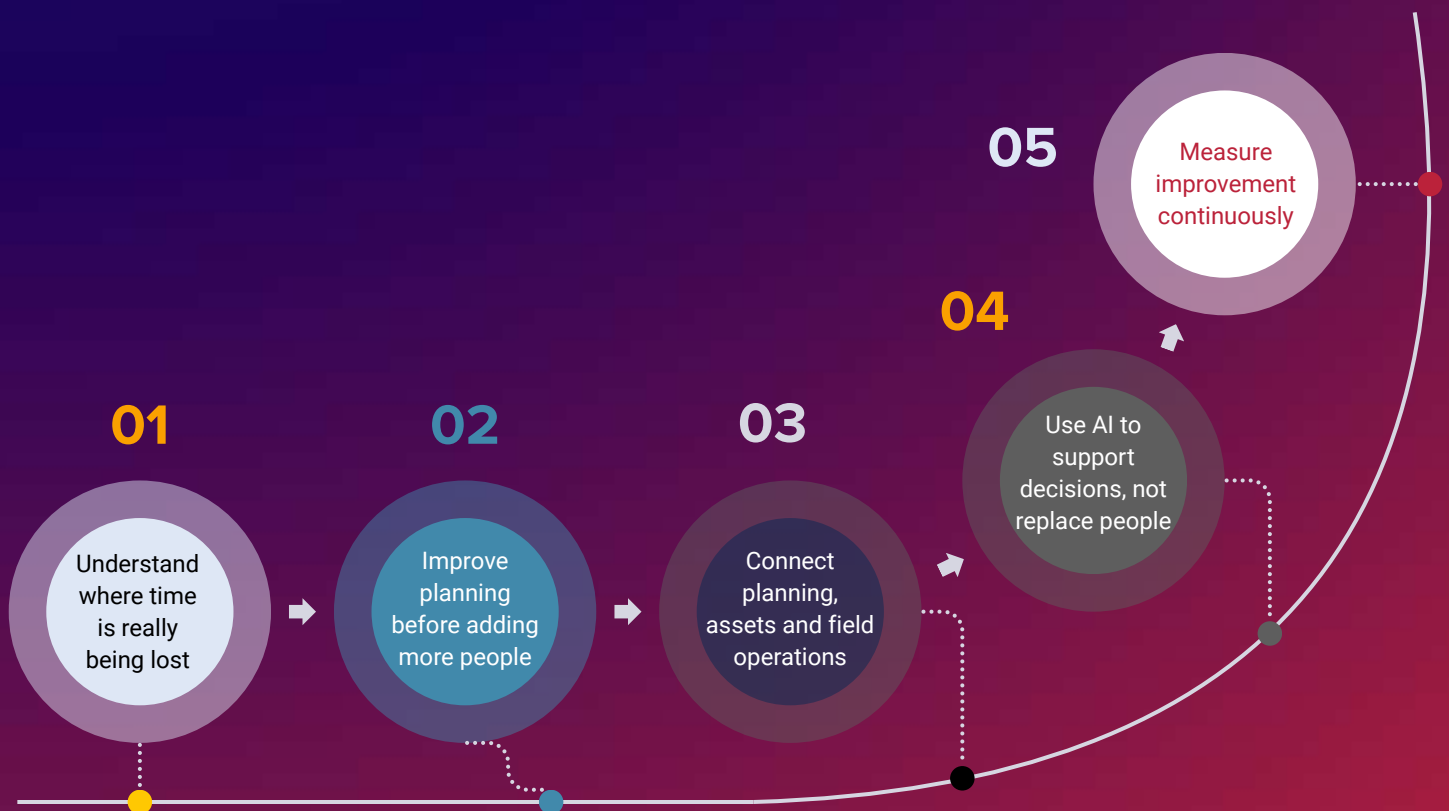
Measure improvement continuously

Successful organisations do not implement workforce optimisation once. They continuously improve it.

Monitor key operational measures including:

- First-time fix rate.
- Average resolution time.
- Jobs completed per day.
- Travel distance.
- Travel time.
- Technician utilisation.
- SLA compliance.
- Customer satisfaction.

The IFS benchmarking data highlights significant differences between top and bottom performers, demonstrating the value of continual optimisation rather than one-off improvement programmes.



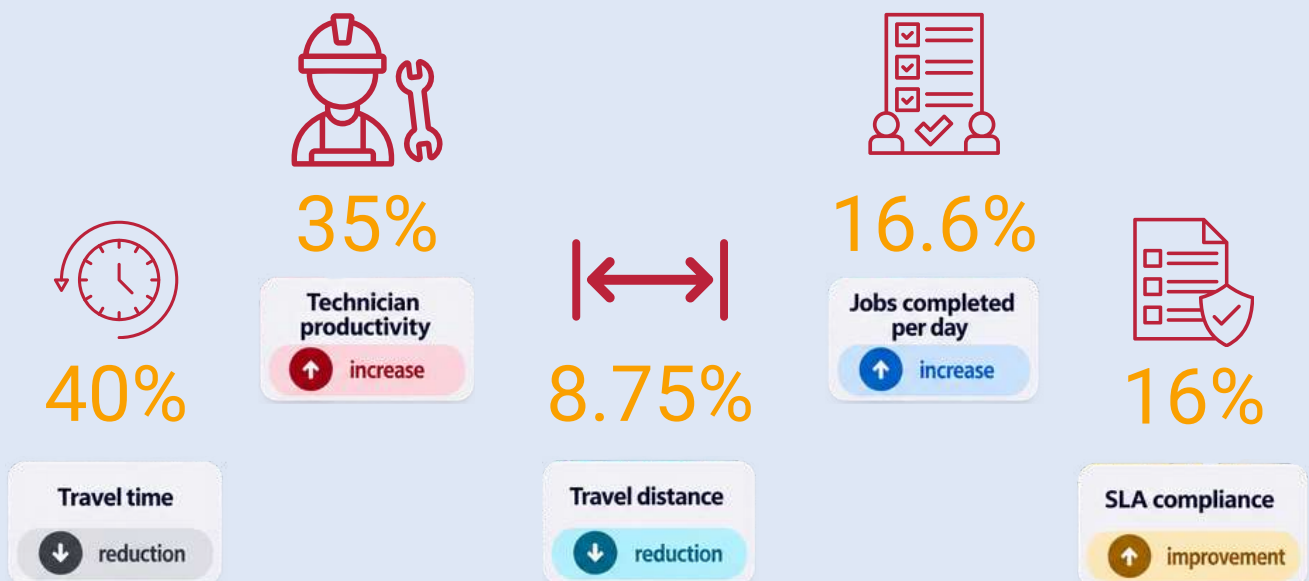
Building your business case

Operational improvement should be measured using outcomes that matter to senior leadership.

Rather than focusing solely on software features, demonstrate how workforce optimisation can help deliver:

- ▶ Lower operating costs.
- ▶ Higher workforce productivity.
- ▶ Faster restoration following outages.
- ▶ Better regulatory performance.
- ▶ Reduced overtime.
- ▶ Improved customer service.
- ▶ Lower carbon emissions through reduced travel.
- ▶ Greater resilience during workforce shortages.

Organisations using IFS Planning and Scheduling Optimisation report average improvements including:



Common implementation mistakes

Many workforce optimisation projects struggle because organisations attempt to solve too much at once.

Avoid these common mistakes.

Ignoring change management

New technology succeeds when planners, dispatchers and field engineers understand how it helps them.



Starting with technology instead of process

Technology improves good processes. It rarely fixes poor ones.



Trying to optimise everything

Begin with one region, one team or one work type. Demonstrate measurable value before expanding.



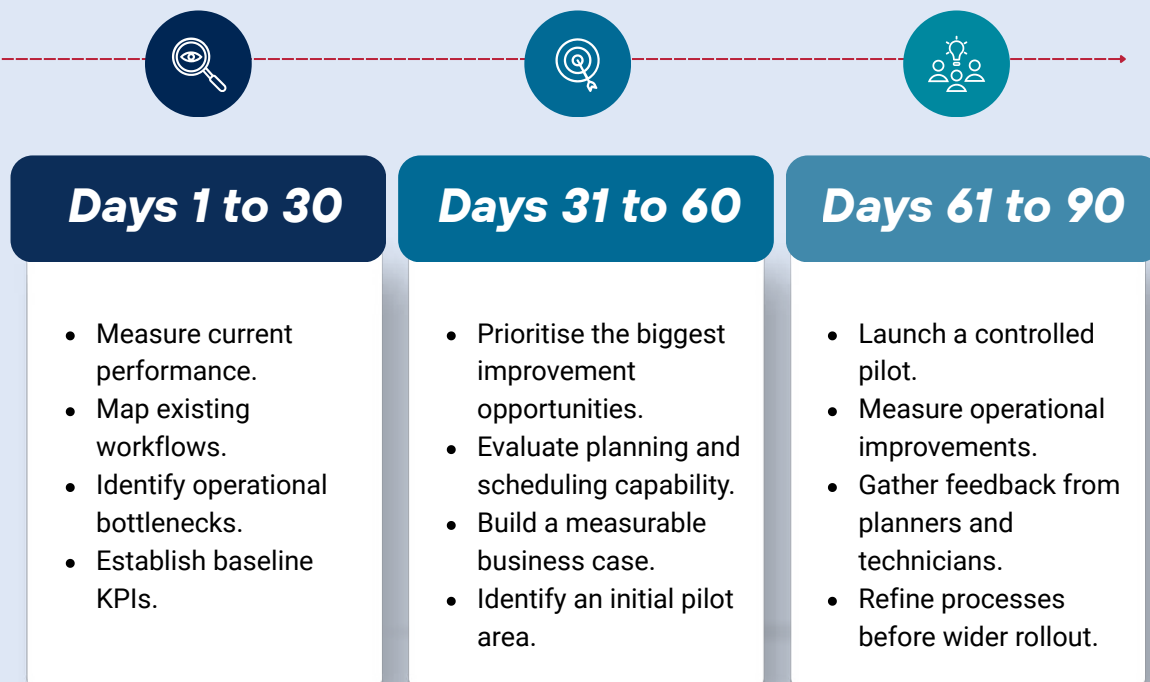
Measuring activity instead of outcomes

Focus on productivity, customer service and operational resilience rather than simply counting completed tasks.



Your first 90 days

If you are beginning your workforce optimisation journey, focus on these priorities.



How IFS and Platned can help

Technology is only part of the answer.

Successful workforce optimisation requires operational expertise, implementation experience and ongoing improvement.

IFS Cloud brings together Enterprise Asset Management, Field Service Management, Planning and Scheduling Optimisation, mobility and Industrial AI on a single platform designed for asset-intensive industries.

As an IFS Specialised Partner, Platned helps utilities turn those capabilities into measurable business outcomes. From assessing current operations and designing improved processes to implementing IFS Cloud, optimising Planning and Scheduling Optimisation, and providing long-term support through Platned Gateway, we work alongside utilities to improve workforce productivity, reliability and service performance.

Ready to build a smarter workforce?

If you're reviewing how your field workforce operates today, Platned can help you identify improvement opportunities, benchmark your current performance and develop a practical roadmap for workforce optimisation using IFS Cloud.

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Book a workforce optimisation workshop with our utilities specialists.

