

# Quick Fixes for the Top 5 Document Workflow Challenges in Finance

## 1. Version Control Chaos

Nothing undermines confidence like not knowing which document version is the version. Too often, finance teams pass spreadsheets and PDFs around via email or save them in multiple SharePoint folders, spawning a mess of “final\_v3\_FINAL” files.

The result? Confusion, errors, and even compliance risks. It's not uncommon for the actual signed contract or latest balance sheet to end up buried in someone's inbox or desktop instead of the shared drive.

- ❑ **Establish a “single source of truth”:** Stop emailing attachments, and pick one system (ideally your ERP or a connected document management tool) to be the home for final documents. Make it policy that all final invoices, contracts, and reports live there – not on personal drives.
- ❑ **Automate version tracking:** If available, turn on version control features or tagging. This way, if someone does download a file, your system logs changes or can even sync the edited version back.
- ❑ **Leverage real-time collaboration:** Where possible, switch to cloud-based editing. This lets multiple people edit one master file, eliminating the proliferation of versions. This helps maintain accuracy, consistency, and timeliness in financial reporting.

## 2. Wasting Time on Document Hunts

Does it take forever to find the info you need? You're not alone. Over half of UK business managers admit they burn time just searching for the right files to do their job. We've traded filing cabinets for digital “dumping grounds” – email inboxes, network folders, SharePoint – and often it's a needle-in-haystack situation.

- ❑ **Conduct a “find-it-fast” test:** Challenge your team to locate a specific key document (e.g. last quarter's closing checklist) within 2 minutes. If most can't, use that as a wake-up call to improve your filing/search system.
- ❑ **Invest in enterprise search tools:** Archive or delete obsolete files and consolidate documents in one searchable platform (for example, a document management system with unlimited storage integrated with NetSuite/ERP) rather than scattered across SharePoint, email, and local drives. A good search function pays for itself.
- ❑ **Use metadata and tags:** Instead of relying on memory and nested folders, tag documents with terms like “Invoice”, “Vendor Contract”, “FY2025”. Modern systems can then let you filter or search by these tags, pulling up the right file in seconds.

## Do you have further questions?

If you still have questions or want to understand how these ideas apply to your business, [book a discovery call here](#) with our team. We'll help you evaluate your current tech stack and identify practical next steps.

### 3. Audit Trail Gaps

When auditors come knocking (or regulators, or just your CFO), will your document workflow hold up to scrutiny? If invoices, approvals, or contracts live outside your ERP in personal email threads or random PDFs, you're taking a gamble. Disconnected document workflows mean it's easy to lose the paper trail – or never create one in the first place!

- **Attach documents to ERP records:** Make it routine to link or upload all relevant files to their NetSuite/ERP transactions or records. For instance, attach supplier invoices and contracts directly to the vendor record or PO in NetSuite. This creates an automatic paper trail.
- **Keep approvals in one channel:** If approvals are done via email or chat, consider moving them into a system that tracks them (like an ERP workflow or document management tool). With Workiro for example, even e-signatures are built in — so contracts, quotes, and approvals stay in one auditable, central thread.
- **Run periodic “audit drills”:** Don't wait for year-end. Pick a sample of, say, 10 transactions and try to find all related documents and approvals. If something's missing or only on an employee's hard drive, plug that hole with a better process or tool.

### 4. Disconnected Systems – No Single Source of Truth

Nearly two-thirds of teams reported that their tools make it impossible to get a clear view of what's going on across the business, leading to wasted time piecing things together and decisions made on half-truths. It shouldn't be this hard to work together, and yet siloed systems make it the daily reality for many.

- **Integrate, integrate, integrate:** Look for ways to connect your core systems. For example, integrate your email and ERP so that emails (and their attachments) related to, say, a customer or vendor automatically link to that record in NetSuite/ERP.
- **Adopt tools that work with what you have:** If you're adding a new document management or collaboration tool, ensure it plays nicely with your existing software. The goal is to eliminate duplicate data entry or the need to manually update multiple places. For instance, a document saved or signed in your document system should automatically reflect in NetSuite/ERP without extra effort.
- **Regularly communicate across teams:** Technology aside, sometimes silos are human. Set up brief cross-department check-ins specifically about information sharing (“Does finance have what sales promised the client? Does operations have the latest POs from finance?”). Encourage a culture where people think to proactively share or upload a document once for all who need it.

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