
Before You Schedule the Work Prove It Is Ready

A practical readiness check for a weekly schedule the crew can execute

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In last month's article, *Your Maximo Is Not the Problem*, I made the case that the system reflects the planning and scheduling discipline around it. The next question is practical: what should we change first?

Start with the work you are about to put on next week's schedule. Before you commit the crew, ask whether each job can actually begin and proceed as intended.

A place on the schedule should mean the prerequisites have been checked and the crew can execute the work.

Agree on what ready means

One clarification from the first article matters here. Work ready for a planner to develop is different from work ready for a crew to execute. A planner needs a clear request, the correct asset, and enough information to define the job. The weekly schedule needs a developed work package with its prerequisites resolved.

Call that second condition ready to schedule. Agree on the evidence behind it. A status label alone cannot tell a supervisor whether the parts are on hand or operations has agreed to release the equipment.

Five checks before making the commitment

- 1. The scope is clear.** The work package identifies the asset, the problem or required task, the work boundaries, and the conditions for accepting the completed job. The technician should not have to reconstruct the request.
- 2. The method is usable.** Instructions fit the job. Required tools, drawings, qualifications, and applicable safety controls are identified. Detail should match the work's complexity and risk.
- 3. Materials are available.** Required parts and quantities have been checked, with a known location and a plan for staging or issuing them. A purchase order or expected delivery date is still a dependency.
- 4. Resources and access are agreed.** The estimate identifies craft hours and crew requirements. Operations has agreed to the work window. Contractors, equipment access, and permit or isolation arrangements have owners. Required authorizations must still be completed before execution.
- 5. Constraints are visible.** Every unresolved prerequisite has an owner and a next action. If a constraint could prevent the job from starting, resolve it before committing the job to the executable schedule.

Put the check to work

Consider a pump repair planned for Tuesday. The work order has an estimate and a procedure. The replacement seal is on order, and operations has not confirmed the equipment can be released. Those two open items can stop the job regardless of what the work order status says.

Keep the repair visible in the multi-week plan. Assign someone to confirm the seal and someone to secure the operating window. Once those constraints are resolved, review the job against the crew's available capacity and the risk of other work competing for that time.

Urgent work may require a different decision. Make that decision explicitly: identify the risk, establish the necessary controls, and record what committed work will move. Urgency does not remove the need for a safe work package.

Use Maximo to make the evidence visible

Agree on the readiness criteria with planning, supervision, operations, and the people who perform the work. Then make the supporting information easy to find in your Maximo work orders and planning reviews. Use your organization's configured workflow to support that agreement.

This gives the schedule meeting a clear purpose. The team can weigh ready work against capacity and operating priorities, with a visible list of the jobs still waiting on prerequisites.

Try it before the next schedule meeting

Take ten jobs proposed for next week. Review each with a planner, a supervisor, and an operations representative. For every failed readiness check, name the constraint, its owner, and the action needed to clear it. Use another job from the ready backlog when that is the appropriate choice.

After the week, review which committed jobs were delayed by missing prerequisites and why. Keep the original commitment visible so changes do not erase the lesson. Use that feedback to improve the next work package and the next schedule.

The useful question is simple: what would stop the crew from doing this job as planned? Answer it while there is still time to act.

At MAXCON 2027

In my interactive planning and scheduling workshop, teams will use a live Maximo training environment to evaluate work packages, address missing information, and build a schedule around available capacity. It is an opportunity to practice the decisions behind a workable schedule.

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Explore the agenda and registration: <https://liquidenterprise.com/maxcon/agenda>