Journals: Best Practices Reference Guide

Below are some best practices for a well-constructed journal.

Manage Approvals

Construct your journal with only one approving organization. Journals with numerous departments and/or threshold amounts could potentially delay posting since the journal will route to more approvers.

Consider dividing up journals by organization. Having more than one approving organization on the same Prime Journal can lead to delays and to higher level approval thresholds. Journals over $25,000 in total will route to the highest level approver(s) for ALL lines, even if one organization's amount to approve is less than $25,000.

Review Workflows

When submitting a journal, review the workflow and approvers.

- Notifying an approver that a journal is being routed to them can help ensure timely approval and posting.
- When entering a journal towards the end of the month, be sure approvers are available to review before month-end close (four business days into the next month).

Journal Purpose

Use this field to provide an overall synopsis of why you're completing the journal. This information appears on the initial page that approvers view, so the more descriptive the better.

Journal Line Description

Use this to briefly describe the transaction for that particular chartstring. While it should be aligned with the journal purpose, the Journal Line Description can be more specific to that chartstring.

- These are limited to 30 characters, so sometimes you'll need to be creative with condensing your text.
- These are displayed on the Ledger Detail Report, so your description should be something specific enough that no further research may be necessary. Be less generic ("*reclass expense*") and more descriptive ("*J Doe travel exp fr Fund B4567*").
- For Assignment and Transfer Journals, use the line description to describe the purpose, source, or destination of the allocation. For example, on receiving chartstring "*RsrchDay supprt fr Science Dpt*" and on sending chartstring "*RsrchDay supprt to Psych Dept*".
- View more Cost Transfer / Correction and Standard Journals Line Description best practices and examples.

Journal Line Reference

Use this optional field to provide more information on your Standard, Assignment, or Transfer Journals. On Cost Transfer / Correction Journals, the reference field is automatically populated with the original journal ID (journal being corrected).

- This field is limited to ten characters.
- This field is displayed on the Ledger Detail Report, in the "Transaction ID" column.
- If you run out of room in the line description field, use it to reflect the sending or receiving department "*fr Science,*" "*to English.*"
- If you have an internal approval process for allocating monies to initiatives (programs) use it to denote the approval date "*App 070119*".

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- The journal creator is already visible on the Ledger Detail Report, so no need to repeat this information in the reference field.

Attachments

To provide sufficient support for the journal, attachments should be clear, concise, and relevant to all journal lines.

- Be mindful of the types of files you are attaching. While many types of files can be attached to the Prime Journal itself, there are some restrictions on what can be viewed on IW reports.
  - Along with data from many other systems, Prime Journals feed Prime Reports in the Information Warehouse. Attachments should be in PDF format to ensure they are viewable on Information Warehouse reports (ie. Ledger Detail Report)
  - If you have a file in a different format, save as / print to PDF, then attach the PDF to your journal.
  - Attachments in other formats may not be viewable in the IW (e.g. Outlook email attachments are not viewable on IW reports).
- Be sure that attachments do not contain secure and/or confidential information.
  - An attachment will be viewable to folks who have report viewer access to departments on *all lines* of the journal. This is another reason to break out journals by approving organization.
- You may add or delete attachments to a journal that has not yet been posted by modifying the journal.

Modify Journals When Possible

- Modifying a journal's ChartFields is more efficient than creating a new journal.
- Any Prime Journal that has not yet been posted can be modified, even if it is fully approved. However, Journal Type cannot be modified.
- When you resave and resubmit a journal, the modified journal will go back into workflow.
- Journals may be deleted before they are posted, but journal creators cannot delete their own journals. If a journal is no longer needed, email us.