TESTING FRAMEWORK

Does It Run, or Does It Run the Business?

A TESTING FRAMEWORK FOR LOGISTICS TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATIONS

JBF
design to deliver

Executive Summary

In our 2026 survey of 215 supply chain and logistics leaders, only 12% reported that their most recent logistics technology implementation delivered on time, on budget, and achieved expected business outcomes.

When asked how system testing was approached, only 9% described their approach as primarily scenario-based, while 42% relied on primarily technical validation, vendor-led testing with limited stakeholder involvement, or conducted no formal scenario-based testing at all.

Organizations that relied on technical testing alone were disproportionately likely to report that the implementation delivered a working system while the business itself struggled to operate inside it. JBF calls this disconnect the "Go-Live Gap."

This disconnect represents one of the largest hidden risks in logistics technology transformation. Most organizations approach testing as a quality assurance exercise designed to validate system functionality. They ask:

- Do the workflows execute correctly?
- Are the integrations complete?
- Does the configuration match requirements?

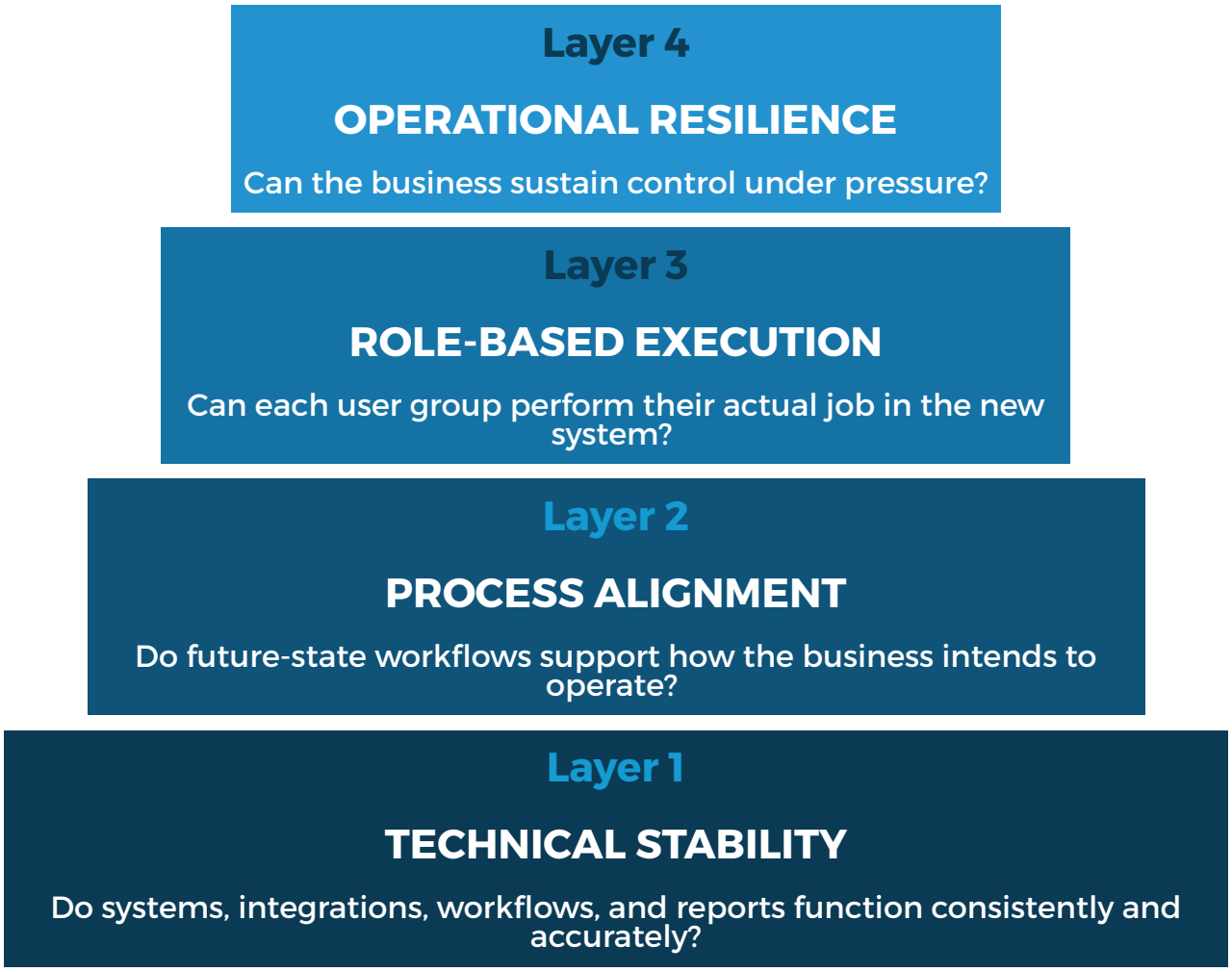
These are necessary questions, but they are insufficient for determining whether the organization can run the business using the new platform.

McKinsey research shows organizations can lose up to 20% of expected transformation value when operational adoption fails to mature, and Gartner found that 76% of logistics transformations fall short of critical targets tied to budget, timelines, or operational KPIs.

Organizations that close this gap approach testing differently — they validate the operating model alongside the software.

A More Effective Framework for Logistics Testing

Organizations do not necessarily need more testing; they need a more complete definition of what readiness means. JBF's operational testing framework is built around a four-layer validation model where each layer builds on the one below it, and skipping a layer does not save time so much as transfer risk directly to the go-live.



Layer 1: Technical Stability

Systems, integrations, workflows, and reporting structures must function consistently and accurately. Most organizations already validate this baseline through transaction processing checks, data mapping reviews, configuration accuracy testing, and integration completion.

Without this foundation, nothing above it can be tested meaningfully, but this layer on its own only confirms that the software works according to specification. Whether the business can effectively operate, make decisions, manage exceptions, and execute consistently inside the new environment is an entirely different question, and one this level of testing was never designed to answer.

Layer 2: Process Alignment

Future-state workflows must support how the business actually intends to operate, which means validating ownership structures, escalation paths, exception management procedures, and cross-functional coordination inside the configured system rather than inside a process document. This is where organizations often discover that their "future state" is really the old process replicated in new software.

Our 2026 research found that fewer than 10% of organizations formally redesigned their business processes to take advantage of the new system’s capabilities, while 67% adapted most processes informally during configuration and another 15% replicated existing processes with minimal redesign. When process alignment goes untested, organizations inherit their old operational problems inside a more expensive platform.

Layer 3: Role-Based Execution

At this layer, testing shifts from validating the system to validating the people who will operate it. Each user group, including planners, dispatchers, analysts, customer service representatives, warehouse coordinators, finance teams, and managers, must execute realistic operational scenarios using the new environment under conditions that reflect conflicting priorities, imperfect data, time pressure, and exceptions that require judgment.

This layer validates that each role can perform their actual daily job in the new system before anyone is asked to do it for real, and it surfaces the informal behaviors (the spreadsheets, the tribal knowledge, the personal carrier relationships) that traditional testing never sees because they exist outside formal workflows.

Layer 4: Operational Resilience

The final layer stress-tests the operating model itself by simulating the disruptions that define logistics execution: capacity shortages, carrier failures, demand spikes, delayed visibility, weather disruptions, integration latency, and the rush order that arrives at 4:45 PM on a Friday. If the organization can only operate the new system under ideal conditions, it has not validated readiness in any meaningful sense.

This layer confirms whether the business can sustain operational control under pressure, and very few organizations test at this level. The ones that do are significantly more likely to stabilize quickly after go-live and realize measurable outcomes faster.

Final Perspective

Most logistics implementations fail because the business was never fully prepared to run inside the transformed environment, even when the software itself works exactly as designed.

Organizations that treat testing as a narrow technical exercise often discover operational instability only after deployment, when financial exposure, customer impact, and organizational frustration are already increasing.

We've found that the most important testing question is whether the business can operate effectively with the system at the center of daily execution. Organizations that understand this are far more likely to reduce implementation risk, improve user adoption, accelerate ROI realization, and sustain operational value long after deployment.

JBF Consulting's Delivery Practice operationalizes this testing framework as one discipline within a comprehensive implementation methodology that spans five integrated capabilities:

Project & Vendor Management (PMO)	Central coordination across vendors, partners, and internal teams to keep programs on time, on budget, and on scope.
Holistic Design & Build	Detailed system design, integration architecture, and configuration engineered for resilience and scalability from the ground up.
Change Management & Training	Role-based readiness, stakeholder engagement, and organizational alignment that builds confidence and drives measurable adoption.
Testing & Validation	The four-layer framework described in this brief: technical stability, process alignment, role-based execution, and operational resilience.
Go-Live & Stewardship	Cutover planning, hands-on launch support, structured hyper-care, and knowledge transfer that transitions ownership to your team while JBF remains a trusted resource.

Every Delivery engagement is anchored to the strategic objectives defined upstream rather than to the vendor's project plan. The testing and validation work is one discipline within that broader methodology, and it delivers the strongest measurable outcomes when it operates alongside governance, change management, and operational readiness as a unified program.

If your go-live is approaching and your testing has been primarily technical, the gap between a working system and a business that can operate inside it is still closeable, but the window narrows quickly. JBF Consulting's Delivery Practice works with logistics and supply chain organizations across every phase of implementation, from pre-go-live readiness assessments to mid-implementation course corrections to post-deployment stabilization.

Learn more about JBF's Delivery Practice.

About the Author

Tony Wayda is an Engagement Principal at JBF Consulting with more than 30 years of experience in transportation and supply chain systems assessment, selection, design, and implementation. He has led global transformation programs for leading brands across retail, apparel, manufacturing, CPG, and 3PL industries. Tony has deep expertise with TMS, routing, scheduling, WMS, and visibility platforms, including Manhattan, Descartes, Blue Yonder, Oracle, and E2Open. Known for bridging technology and operations, he partners with shippers to develop strategic roadmaps, lead solution design, and enable long-term value realization.

About JBF Consulting

JBF Consulting is a leading logistics strategy advisory and technology integration firm that partners with shippers to transform their logistics and supply chain execution operations. We empower clients to achieve operational efficiency and scalable, sustainable value through strategy development, roadmap orchestration, unbiased technology selection, expert implementation, data-driven insights, and ongoing managed services.

For over two decades, our client-centric approach and partnerships with best-of-breed solution providers have ensured that every strategy and solution we deliver drives measurable impact, long-term success, and customer satisfaction.