OTL - How to Implement and Use Oracle Time and Labor Functionalities for Project Transactions Only

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Introduction

Oracle Time and Labor (OTL) is part of the HR module and replaces Oracle Internet Time (OIT). It is Oracle's single source of time entry for multiple Oracle modules.
As of 31-OCT-2004 all platforms of Oracle Internet Time (OIT) Product Version(s) 11.5.1 and higher, are desupported (Metalink Note 282357.1).
This white paper will outline time card entry features which have been introduced with the movet to OTL, including detailed implementation steps specific to project-related time entries. In addition major differences between OTL and OIT functionalities and setup will be identified.

OTL Time Entry – Overview

The most costly expense for an employer is labor. Timecard information is used for billing, utilization and, in some companies, for payroll. OTL functionalities allow employers to reduce costs associated with recording labour.
An intuitive self service web page, in timecard format is used by workers to enter time. Various timecard layouts can be defined to ease the time entry by providing users with the fields relevant to them.
Timecards can be approved automatically or sent for approval via Workflow. Users working remotely can download a timecard template, including the valid lists of projects and tasks, enter timecards off line, and then upload the timecards once on line. In addition, users can use mobile phone or PDA devices to enter timecards.   Line Manager and Timekeeper functionalities allow managers and selected users to enter timecards for others. In addition, companies can still use 'time clocks' and enter data via a timecard API.

OTL Concepts, Terms and Key Functionalities

Before we review the OTL setup steps and make a comparison to OIT, we should get familiar with some OTL concepts, terms and functionalities.

Timecard Configuration – OTL provides predefined timecard layouts. Users can configure the predefined layouts or define new layouts to meet requirements. Some of the modifications to predefined layouts include adding / hiding fields, rearranging the order of columns , placing the company logo, and configuring 'help text' by instructing users how to enter timecards.

Template – The use of templates reduces entry errors and provides a faster timecard entry. Multiple templates can be available to a user. Templates provide default time entries that the user can edit, review and submit. Users can export a template to a spreadsheet for use during disconnected entry. If Project Resource Management is implemented, a template displaying assignments can be utilized.

Contingent Worker – OTL now provides single source of time entry for both employees and contractors. Projects Family Pack 'M' introduced contingent worker functionality. With that functionality contractors can be set up as contingent workers. Contingent worker support is available for the following OTL functionalities: Web based Self Service timecard entry and line manager entry, approvals, timekeeper, timecard layout (procurement), and procurement retrieval. A contingent worker uses Purchasing timecard layout to enter time against PO and PO lines for a given time period. The OTL Minipack release required is HXT-G.

Application Set – The Application Set can be Projects, Payroll, HR. In Preferences a valid application set needs to be assigned and it specifies which Oracle Application is interested in workers' timecard entries.

Time Entry Rules – When a timecard is saved the entered data is validated against defined rules. For example, when Change and Late Audit functionality is used, the Late Rule can be defined as 40 hr, meaning that if the timecard is entered for the day that is 40+ days prior to the system date, users will be required to enter the reason for entering late time. Another rule can be limit of hours per day, week, etc. .

Approvals – Approvals are Workflow based, and available actions are: approve, reject or request more information. Mass approval functionality is also available.

*Approval Styles* – Defined Approval Style specifies who is approving workers' timecards. For Projects the predefined style is 'OTL Auto Approve'. Additional styles can be defined,, including a specific individual, HR Supervisor, and Project Manager. The approvals are sequenced with the lowest number being performed first.
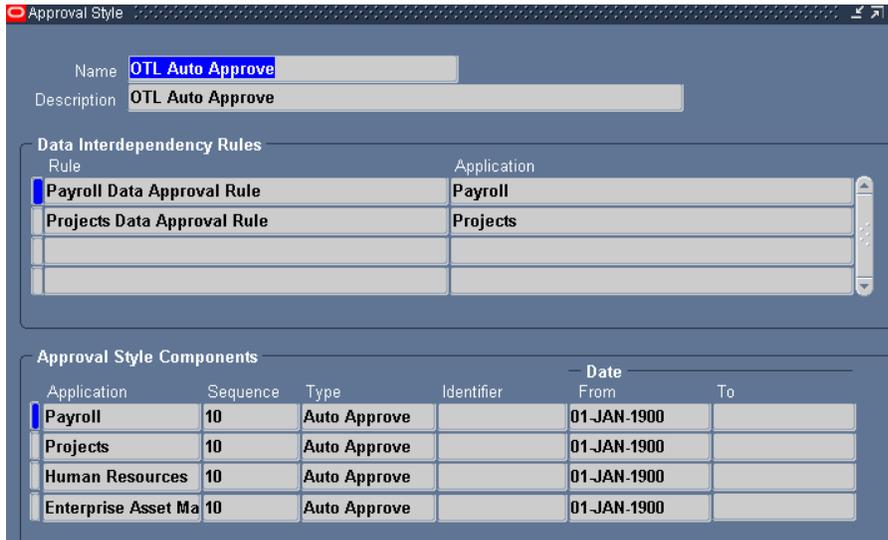
Change and Late Audit (CLA) – Functionality enforces users to enter a reason / comment if the timecard previously saved is changed, or if the timecard entered is considered a 'late entry'. The late entry is determined by the Time Entry Rule definition. This functionality assists with audit standards, and provides an audit trail of reason(s) for changed and late time entries. The reasons available in list of values are defined by users. The functionality is enabled in CLA preference node.
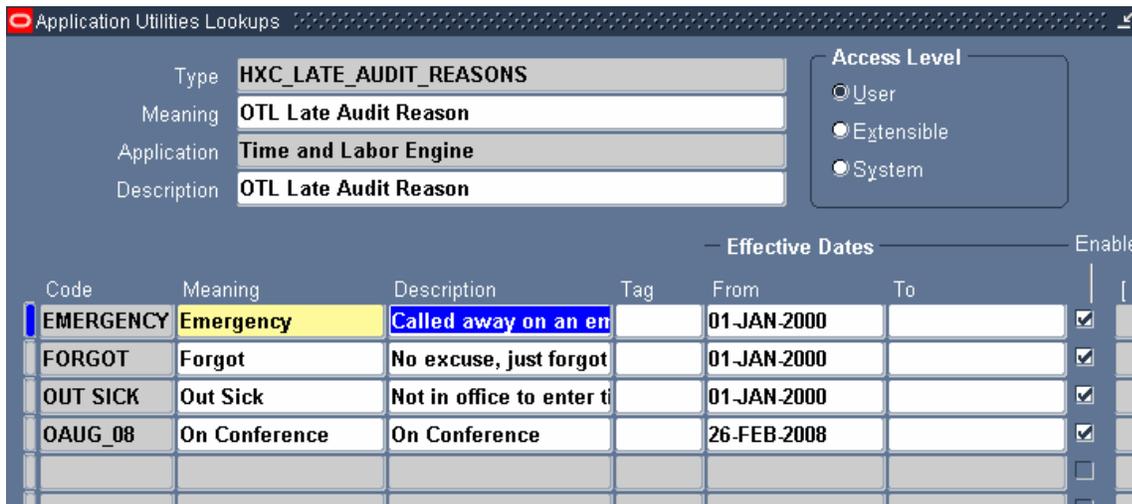
Preferences – Preferences configure OTL and define how workers can use the application. Some preferences are used in the same manner as OIT profile options. The preferences have a tree hierarchy format, and are specific to a Business Group.
Preferences are covered in details in 'OTL Setup Steps - Projects' section of this document; '*Step 37 Define Preferences'.*

Eligibility Criteria – Once Preferences are defined, an Eligibility rule is defined and assigned to a preference tree (Branch). By creating eligibility rules preferences are assigned to employees. As people can be eligible for more than one hierarchy, the precedence is defined.

Name of rule	Name of Branch	Link by	Linked to	Precedence	From	Da
OAUG_08_02	OAUG_08 Project	Organizatio	Vision Healtl	25	26-FEB-2008	
OAUG_08_01	OAUG_08 Project	All People		30	26-FEB-2008	

Time Store – Time Store is a 'gatekeeper' of timecard data to all Oracle Applications. It is a central repository where time data is stored via a predefined deposit process. Valid retrieval rule group is assigned to Time Store Preference node.

Retrieval Rules – Each application has retrieval rules, specifying which approval process must complete prior to the application retrieving data. Predefined retrieval rule for Projects requires timecards to be approved before the process can retrieve them.

Line Manager – Line Manager can create, edit and submit employee timecards. This functionality is Web based, and employees can be accessed via supervisor hierarchy, or by using self service 'My List' functionality. This functionality can be used in replacement of Timekeeper functionality (form based).

Time Entry: People in My List

Select Person: Delete Selected
Select All | Select None

Select	Name △	Assignment Number	Job	Department	Action
☐	Abraham Feinstein	1047	ANA400.ANALYST	Vision Corporation	
☐	Amy Feng	508		Vision Corporation	

Timekeeper – Authorized Timekeepers can enter time for other workers that are defined in 'Timekeeper Groups'. This feature is form based, and it is usually used to enter time for a large group of workers.

Timekeeper Group

Name: OAUG_08 Group
Timekeeper: Marlin, Ms. Amy

Populate Person

Add | Filter by

Person

Name	Number	Type	Timecard Period
Adams, Ms. Janice	102	Employee	Weekly - Starts Monday
Albiero, Ms. Nancy	116	Employee	Weekly - Starts Monday
Baker, Ms. Catherine	48	Employee	Weekly - Starts Monday
Capriotti, Ms. Melanie	29	Employee	Weekly - Starts Monday
Daley, Mrs. Mary	2	Employee	Weekly - Starts Monday

Integration – OTL is integrated with the following Oracle applications: Projects, HR, Internet Expenses, Project Resource Management, Payroll, Procurement, and Enterprise Asset Management.

Transaction Controls – OTL Timecard entries are validated by transaction controls in Projects.

Valid Projects and Tasks – A list of valid projects and tasks can be downloaded for use when creating a timecard off line. This functionality requires the export layout preference to specify the layout. It is available with Minipack release HXT-H.

Alternate Names – This feature provides users with flexibility to define user friendly names, and to restrict the list of values (Projects, Organizations..)

OTL Setup Steps – Projects

As with any implementation, setups must first be completed and tested before release into production. Oracle recommends a 'Quick Setup' which allows users to test if the OTL application is installed and working properly. Required setup steps depend on recipient application retrieving the timecard information. Additional setup applies if data is sent to a third party application (mapping and retrieval). The setup steps for OTL are broken down to: 1) Basic Setup (logo display, SysAdmin ID and Workflow Background Process) 2) Security Setup (creating menus, responsibility, users, and profile options), 3) OTL Rules and Preferences (defining rules, preferences and DFFs), and 4) Time Management and Policies (holiday calendars).

Set up steps are:

Step 1 Replace the Default Oracle Logo – OTL delivers an Oracle logo. This logo can be replaced by an alternative company logo. This setup step is optional.

Step 2 Set Up Sysadmin ID – OTL default workflow sends error notifications to Syadmin ID. This setup is required.

Step 3 Set Up Workflow Background Process - OTL Workflows for Employees: leave the threshold parameters blank, and select Yes in the Process Deferred, Process Timeout, and Process Stuck fields. Schedule the workflow to run daily, in intervals that make sense to your company. This setup is required.

Step 4 Define Menus – OTL provides predefined Self Service and forms menus. Users need to define custom menus.

Step 5 Disable the Multiple Windows Feature – HRMS does not support multiform functionality. This setup is required.

Step 6 Define Report Security Groups – Define the groups of standard reports and processes. . This setup is required.

Step 7 Create Responsibilities – OTL provides predefined responsibilities. Define responsibilities that meet your company needs and assign a menu and report security group to them. This setup is required. Note: if you are using Oracle Internet Expenses, users who enter both time and expenses, Oracle Internet Expenses and Oracle Time and Labor are integrated for a single entry experience. Users can navigate between Time and Expenses using tabs

Step 8 Create Users – Define users. This setup is required.

Step 9 Configure Batch Creation of User Accounts – This setup is optional. Refer to the 'Oracle HRMS Deploy Self Service Capability Guide'.

Step 10 Set User Profile Options – Set up Profile Options that meet your business needs. Each Operating Unit must have MO Profile Options: MO: Operating Unit, GL Set of Books. HR: Business Group must be defined for new responsibilities. This setup is required.

Step 11 Define Flexfield Value Sets – OTL provides Descriptive Flexfields (DFFs), which need to be updated if adding fields to timecard layout. Process 'Generate Flexfield and Mapping Information' needs to be run if using DFFs. This setup is required if using DFFs.
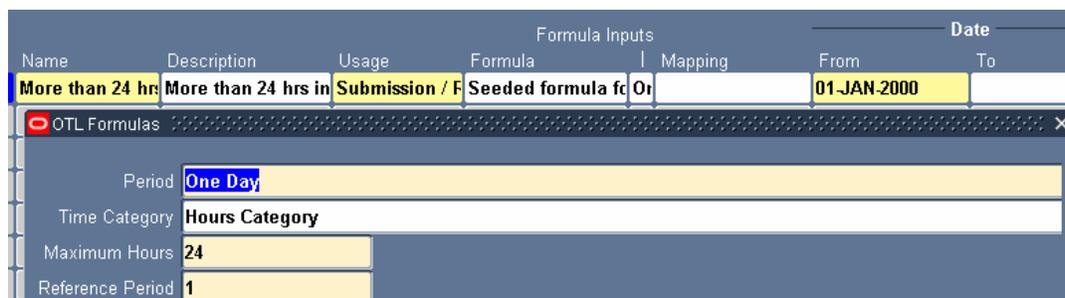
Step 12 Unprotect the OTL Formulas Descriptive Flexfield – This setup is required if using DFFs. Refer to Oracle Applications Flexfield guide.

Step 13 Define Descriptive Flexfield Segment – This setup is required if using DFFs. Refer to Oracle Applications Flexfield guide.

Step 14 Define Flexfield Segment Values – This setup is required if using DFFs. Refer to Oracle Applications Flexfield guide.

Step 15 Protect the OTL Formulas Descriptive Flexfield – This setup is required if defining OTL Formulas Flexfield.

Step 16 Write Formulas for Time Entry and Approval Rules – OTL provides predefined formulas. Additional formulas can be defined (custom code) to meet business rules. Some of the predefined formulas are: CLA Change (Seeded Formula), CLA Late (Seeded Formula), and Seeded formula for Period Maximum which verifies that employees do not enter more than 24 hours per day.

Name	Description	Usage	Formula Inputs — Formula		Mapping	Date — From	To
More than 24 hr	More than 24 hrs in	Submission / F	Seeded formula fc	Or		01-JAN-2000	

OTL Formulas

Period	One Day
Time Category	Hours Category
Maximum Hours	24
Reference Period	1

Step 17 Define Recurring Time Periods – OTL predefined recurring period is 'Weekly - Starts Sunday'. If this approval period is not valid an additional recurring time period(s) needs to be set up. This setup determines periods for time entry or rules validation. Examples are: Weekly - Starts Monday, Weekly - Starts Saturday and Bi-Weekly.

Recurring Time Periods

Name	Period Type	Duration In Days	Start Date
Weekly - Starts Monday	Week		03-JAN-2000

Step 18 Define Approval Periods – This is required if recurring time periods were defined. Approval periods are defined for each application, selecting from the recurring periods.

Step 19 Define Retrieval Rules – OTL provides a predefined retrieval rule for Projects. Additional retrieval rules can be created if needed to meet business requirements. It can be set to Working,

Submitted, and Approved. The predefined retrieval rule for Projects requires timecards is set to Approved.

Step 20 Define Retrieval Rule Groups– OTL provides a predefined retrieval rule group for Projects. Additional retrieval rule groups can be created if this one does not meet business requirements.

Step 21 Define Time Categories – Time Categories are used to provide groupings, such as fast formula rules, time entry rules. This setup step is optional.

Step 22 Define Time Entry Rules – Time Entry Rules are used with Time Categories and / or fast formulas. This setup step is optional. Examples of predefined Time Entry Rule are Change Rule, Late Rule and Overlapping Time Entries.

Step 23 Define Time Entry Rule Groups – This is a required step if Time Entry rules were defined. Each rule group has a specific outcome: business message, warning or error. One example of predefined Time Entry Rule Group is Change and Late Audit.
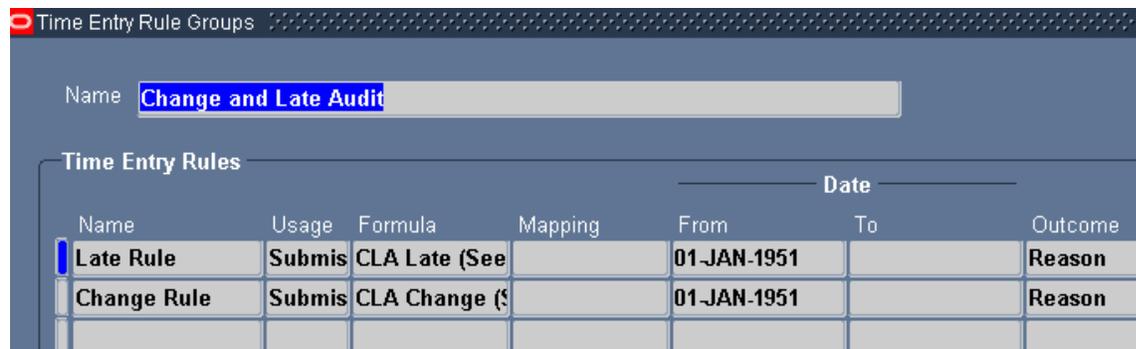
Step 24 Define Approval Workflow – This step is optional. A simple predefined workflow can be used as a template to create a new one.

Step 25 Define Approval Styles – OTL predefined Approval Style is 'OTL Auto Approved'. By default all timecards will be auto approved. If there is a requirement for the HR Supervisor or Project Manager to approve timecards, Approval Style(s) need to be defined.
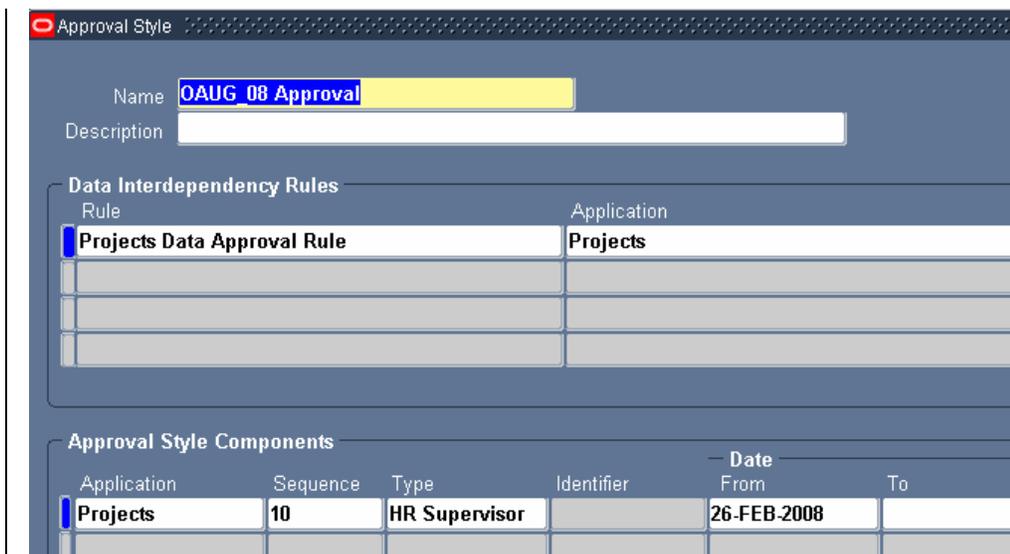
Step 26 Run Generate Flexfield and Mapping Information Process – The Generate Flexfield and Mapping Information process creates context and segments in the OTL Information Types flexfield. This process must be run on the initial setup. If the Project Expenditure Items flexfield is modified, the process needs to be run again.

Step 27 Review OTL Information Types FlexField Segments – After Generate Flexfield and Mapping Information process is run, the segments generated in the OTL Information Types FlexField must be reviewed to ensure segments are enabled and visible.

Step 28 Define Mapping Components – This step is optional.

Step 29 Define Mapping – This step is optional.

Step 30 Define Retrieval Process – This step is optional.

Step 31 Define Timecard Layouts – OTL provides predefined Timecard Layouts. This step is optional. The step becomes mandatory if there is a requirement to configure the predefined layouts.

Step 32 Define Alternate Names – This setup step is utilized to create user-friendly names on the timecard list of values.

Step 33 Define and Enable Templates – This setup is optional.

Step 34 Define Preferences – This is a required step. OTL preferences define rules regarding how the application is used.   The preference hierarchy and eligibility rule are specific to a Business Group. The Preference node contains several types of preferences. The default preferences cannot be changed or deleted. To define preferences, new branches are added to the existing preference tree. If using Change and Late Audit feature, a preference value for audit requirement is added.   Steps to follow are:

Step 1. Create preference tree
Step 2. Create custom branches
Step 3. Define sub-branches for each section
Step 4. Add preferences and preference values to sub-branches

The sample screen shot below shows the OAUG_08 Project Preference Tree as the new preference tree, and OAUG_08 Change and Late Audit, OAUG_08 Self Service, OAUG_08 Time Store, OAUG_08 Timekeeper as its custom branches:
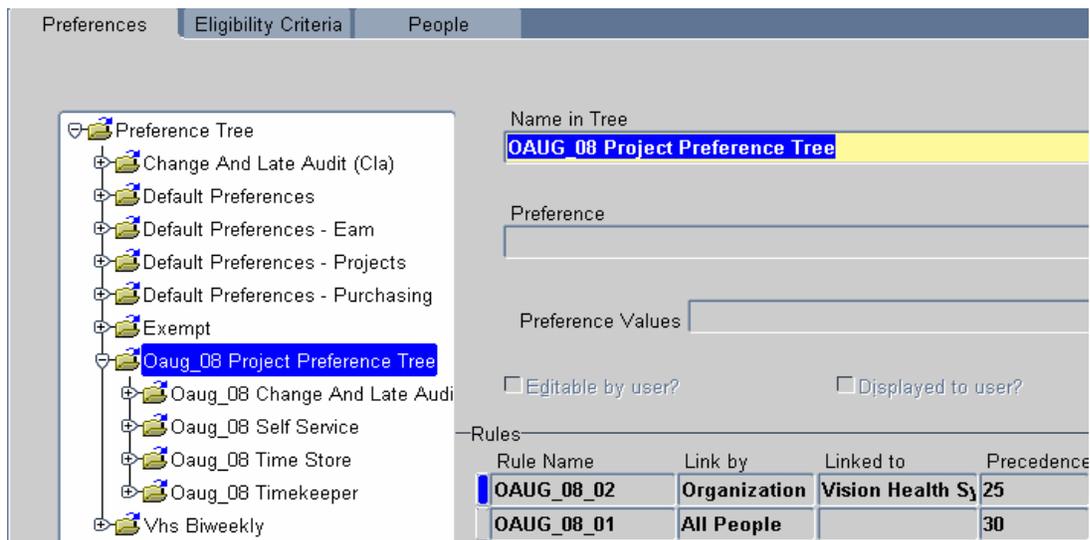
Preferences control formats and actions that a worker can perform. These preferences are added to a sub-branch in the preference tree. The above defined branches include some of the following sub-branches, preferences and preference values:

Branch	Sub-Branch	Preference	Value
OAUG_08 Change and Late Audit	OAUG_08 CLA Delete Timecards	Timecard Delete Allowed	No
	OAUG_08 CLA Layouts	Self-Service timecard, review and confirmation layout pages for a worker	Projects Timecard Layout Projects Change and Late Review Layout Projects Confirmation Layout
	OAUG_08 CLA Process Flow	Self Service Flow	Audit
	OAUG_08 CLA Rule Group	Time Store Audit Requirements	Change and Late Audit
OAUG_08 Self Service>OAUG_08 Worker	OAUG_08 Append Templates on Timecard	Self Service functionality to append templates on the timecard	Yes
	OAUG_08 Enter Negative Hours	Self-Service ability to enter negative hours	Yes
	OAUG_08 Number of Empty rows on Timecard	Self-Service number of empty rows on the timecard	3
	OAUG_08 Save As Template on Timecard	Self-Service save as template functionality on timecard	Yes
	OAUG_08 Timecard Delete Allowed	Timecard Delete Allowed	No
	OAUG_08 Timecard Layout	Self-Service timecard, review and confirmation layout pages for a worker	Projects – for all
OAUG_08 Time Store	OAUG_08 Application Set	Time Store Application Set	Projects
	OAUG_08 Approval Periods	Time Store Approval Periods	Projects Only
	OAUG_08 Approval Style	Time Store Approval Style	OAUG_08 Approval
	OAUG_08 Retrieval Rule Groups	Time Store Retrieval Rule Groups	Projects Retrieval Rule Group
OAUG_08 Timekeeper	OAUG_08 Timekeeper Layout Attributes	Timekeeper Layout Attributes	TK Projects List
	OAUG_08 Timekeeper Misc Setup Items	Timekeeper Misc Setup Items	No Yes Yes

Step 35 Configure Instructions and Tips – This setup is optional. The feature displays instructions / tips to guide users during the timecard entry.

OTL and OIT – Major Differences

Major difference between the modules starts with OTL being a part of HR module. The table b compares some of the OIT setup to an OTL setup, and identifies which OTL setup step corresponds to its OIT setup / functionality counterpart.

Setting Up Self Service Time	Corresponding OTL Setup Steps
Setting Up Responsibilities and Automatic Approval	Create Responsibilities Define Approval Periods Define Approval Styles *A*ssign Preferences relating to Approval
Assign Users the Authority to Enter Timecards for Other Employees - authorized delegate.	Timekeeper Profile and Preferences Setup Or Line Manager Functionality
Configuring Profile Options	Various Preferences
ICX: Date Format Mask	A preference called 'Date Format' is delivered to control the date formats in the self-service timecard.
ICX: Language	Language is not a specific OTL setting. It is set in the Oracle Application Framework settings.
ICX: Limit Connect	Limit Connect is not an OTL setting. It is set in the Oracle Applications Framework.
ICX: Limit Session Time	Limit Session Time is not an OTL setting. It is set in the Oracle Applications Framework.
PA: Override Approver	Preference 'Enter Override Approver'
PA Time: Allow Entry of Negative Hours	Preference 'Enter Negative Hours'
PA Time: Timecard Number Prefix	Timecard Number Prefix is not available in OTL.
PA Time: Enable Business Message	Time Entry Rules There are no Business Messages delivered with OTL.
PA: AutoApprove Timesheets	Auto Approve is the default Approval Style for OTL. PA: AutoApprove Timesheets profile option should be set as appropriate in Projects.
PA Time: Licensed	Not applicable in OTL.
Setting the Week Ending Day	Define Recurring Time Periods and assign the value to appropriate preference
Setting Up the Spreadsheet for Offline Entry	Disconnected Entry Preference
Transaction Import – Transaction Source: Oracle Self Service Time	Transaction Import – Transaction Source: Oracle Time and Labor
Custom trigger to prevent duplicate timecard	OTL does not allow duplicate timecard entry. Periods for which timecards have been entered are identified with an asterisk.

Conclusion

OTL is Oracle E-Business Suite's time management application. Unlike Oracle Internet Time, which is the Self Service front end to the Projects module, OTL is part of Oracle's Human Resources Management System (HRMS).
OTL features web based time entry, online and offline time entry, time entry via mobile device, multiple templates with different layouts, timecard copying, retroactive-time entry process, contingent worker support, timekeeper and line manager functionalities.
When timecards are entered, they are made available for retrieval by any of the applications that gather timecard data. Timecards are stored in a central repository, Time Store, and later retrieved by Retrieval Rules.
OTL preferences and eligibility definitions determine how the application is used, and by whom.

Oracle Corporation has recommended that customers upgrade/migrate to Oracle Time & Labor on any Oracle certified platform.