Initiation and planning for workforce planning

Effective leadership  Diverse workforce  Capable organisations and workforce  Employee conditions  APS Values

December 2011
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Module overview

This is one of eight modules in the Australian Public Service Workforce Planning Guide, designed to assist you with workforce planning in your agency or department. It can be read in isolation; however there are linkages to other modules, just as there are linkages between the elements of workforce planning.

This module provides guidance on how to initiate workforce planning: where to start, who should be responsible, obtaining executive buy-in and linking in with your organisation's business and financial planning cycle. It also covers what to consider when planning for workforce planning: objective, resource requirements, scope, time frame, stakeholder engagement and risk management.

The structure of the modules as they relate to the workforce planning process is depicted in Figure 1. The module you’re reading is highlighted in purple.

Figure 1. Modules in the APS Workforce Planning Guide
Document management

Version history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>December 2011</td>
<td>Australian Public Service Commission</td>
<td>First version</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Glossary

**Capability**
The measure of an individual’s ability to achieve the tasks and objectives of their role through the application of skills, knowledge and attributes.

**Critical job roles**
May be different for each organisation, and may include a mix of senior and junior level roles. They are roles that:

- are key, or may become key to the functions of the organisation
- have had a high number of vacancies and/or vacancies that have been difficult to fill due to labour market tensions
- have an impact on the organisation’s business outcomes if left vacant
- require a long lead time to develop the required skills
- have the largest number of staff (that is, critical mass)
- have niche or specialised skills that have little redundancy within the organisation.

**Demand forecasting**
Used to understand future workforce demand implications against the business delivery scenarios identified through scenario planning, including the ‘known path’ or most plausible business direction.

Demand forecasting is not about predicting the future, which will always contain an element of uncertainty and be based on certain assumptions. It is about looking at likely futures to inform preparations for the future workforce your organisation requires to deliver business outcomes.

**Demographic information**
Gives insight into your current workforce, such as age and gender profiles, classification and location breakdowns, and workforce diversity balances.

**Employment type**
Way in which a worker is employed—for example, ongoing, non-ongoing, non-ongoing intermittent, part time, full time, contractor, consultant.

**Environmental scanning**
Process of looking more broadly at indicators of external labour supply and influences on demand to understand what the future may look like.

**Fit-for-purpose**
Applying workforce planning in a way that is relevant to your organisation and ensures the workforce needs of your organisation are met.

**Granularity**
Level of detail considered in a model or decision-making process. The greater the granularity, the deeper the level of detail. Granularity is usually used to characterise the scale or level of detail in a set of data. Definition adapted from [http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/granularity.html](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/granularity.html).
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Australian Public Service Commission

**Job family**

First and highest tier in a hierarchy of job segmentation within a workforce. The purpose is to split the workforce into logical and practical segments to allow for deeper workforce analysis.

A job family is a grouping of similar jobs at the highest level that usually consists of several job functions. For example, a possible job family might be ‘Administration, facilities and property’.

**Job function**

Second tier in a hierarchy of job segmentation within a workforce.

A job function is a subgroup of jobs within a job family that require similar skills, capabilities and knowledge. For example, one job function within the job family of ‘Administration, facilities and property’ might be ‘Executive assistants, secretaries and receptionists’.

**Job role**

Third tier in a hierarchy of job segmentation within a workforce.

A job role is a subgroup of jobs within a job function that allows for further refining and grouping of required skills, capabilities and knowledge. For example, a job role within the job function of ‘Executive assistants, secretaries and receptionists’ (in the ‘Administration, facilities and property’ job family) might be ‘Personal/Executive assistants’.

**Organisation**

Entity for which your workforce plan applies to. It may refer to a department, agency, division, branch, section or unit.

**Qualitative**

Involving or relating to distinctions based on quality or qualities. Distinguished by a description in words rather than in numbers.

**Quantitative**

Expressible as a quantity or relating to, or subject to measurement. Distinguished by use of numbers rather than words.

**Scenario**

Description of a sequence of events, or situation, based on certain assumptions and factors (variables). Scenarios are used in estimating the probable effects of one or more variables, and are an integral part of situation analysis and long-range planning. Definition adapted from [http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/scenario.html](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/scenario.html).

**Scenario planning**

Method that helps your organisation understand the possible and plausible future business directions and scenarios that may eventuate so as to make flexible long-term plans and identify possible contingency plans.

**Skill**

An ability, acquired through deliberate, systematic and sustained effort, through training and/or experience, to perform tasks within a role that require specific cognitive, technical and/or interpersonal skills.
| **Skills and capabilities audit** | Process of identifying the skills and capabilities of each of your employees, including additional skills and capabilities they may have but are not using in their current position. May also identify additional factors such as education, licences, certificates and training. Will form the basis for analysing your current workforce supply. |
| **Trend information** | Based on data from the past that helps you predict how your current workforce might change over time. Examples include recruitment, secondments, terminations, vacancies, length of service and leave. |
| **Workforce capability** | What the workforce can do. It refers to the skills and knowledge of the workforce, including elements such as its ability to be innovative. Workforce capability can be used to describe what is in existence currently, including latent capability (that is, capability not currently being used), what is predicted may be required in the future, and any gap between the two. |
| **Workforce capacity** | How much the workforce can do. Refers to the ‘availability’ of the workforce to do work, for instance the absolute numbers of staff available with the necessary skill sets (including their level of the skills) and other elements such as levels of absenteeism (or presenteeism). When used to describe the absolute numbers of staff, the element of employment type (for example, ongoing, non-ongoing, full time, part time) also needs to be considered. The dimension of workforce capacity can be used to describe what is in existence, what may be required in the future and any gap between the two. The other component of workforce capacity is the workforce’s ‘performance’, which includes elements such as staff engagement, motivation and discretionary effort. |
| **Workforce demand** | The workforce an organisation needs to perform its functions and achieve its business objectives now and into the future. Workforce demand is defined in terms of workforce capability, workforce capacity and the alignment of the workforce to the functional business delivery of the organisation (structure). |
| **Workforce management plan (immediate issues)** | Deals with immediate and specific workforce issues (such as restructure, conclusion of a significant project or a recruitment campaign for specific skills) and identifies actionable strategies for managing the workforce issues. An organisation may have a number of workforce management plans if it’s dispersed across a number of geographic locations or business areas. |
### Workforce plan

Document you produce to capture the key factors you’ve considered in developing the strategies and initiatives to mitigate your workforce risks. Throughout this guide, the term is used broadly to describe either a single workforce plan or multiple workforce plans—strategic workforce plan(s), operational workforce plan(s) and/or workforce management plan(s)—depending on the needs of your organisation.

**Workforce plan, operational**

Usually covers the next 12 to 18 months and identifies actionable strategies to address a specific workforce gap in the short to medium term.

**Workforce plan, strategic (three-plus years)**

Usually covers a three to five-year time horizon, with many organisations focusing on a four-year time horizon aligned to Portfolio Budget Statements. However, if the lead time to fill critical job roles is longer than three to four years, the forecast period may need to extend beyond this.

Seeks to address high-level trends and developments that will affect the availability of the workforce required to deliver organisational outcomes. A suite of actionable strategies will be articulated to mitigate the workforce risks identified.

### Workforce planning

A continuous business planning process of shaping and structuring the workforce to ensure there is sufficient and sustainable capability and capacity to deliver organisational objectives now and in the future.

To be effective, workforce planning needs to be integrated into an agency or department’s strategic planning framework and incorporate strong governance mechanisms, so it can be used to clearly identify the human resource (HR) strategies required to continuously deliver the right people—that is, those with the skills and capabilities necessary for the required work—in the right numbers in the right place, at the right time.

### Workforce segment

A specific job family, job function or job role within your organisation.

### Workforce supply, external

Anyone who does not work for your organisation but could do so, now or in the future.

External workforce supply is used to reconcile demand and supply if internal workforce supply is not sufficient and/or cannot be developed to meet demand.

Supply is defined in terms of skills, capabilities and numbers.

### Workforce supply, internal

Everyone in the current workforce. It should also consider future movements in and out of the workforce. This includes full time, part time, casual and contracted employees who are working for or supplying services to the agency or department.

Supply is defined in terms of skills, capabilities and numbers.
Symbols

Below is a key to the symbols used in this module, to draw your attention to things that might help you along the way, as you progress workforce planning in your organisation.

- **People to consult**
  - The list is not exhaustive and the right people to consult may vary depending on your organisation.

- **Documents to produce**
  - Documents you may wish to produce at a particular stage of workforce planning. These may eventually be collated to form part of your final workforce plan. Templates are provided for some of these.

- **Examples**
  - Examples of what the documents you produce may look like.

- **Templates**
  - Generic templates outlining the basic information required and a suggested format for collecting and structuring this information. Templates are referred to by their number and title.

- **Key questions**
  - Key questions you may need to answer at a particular stage of workforce planning. These lists are not exhaustive and you may want to think about more questions that are specific to your organisation.

- **Information**
  - Information, facts and definitions that may help you undertake workforce planning.

- **Ideas**
  - Ideas you may wish to think about along the way.

- **Section outputs**
  - Summary of the documents you may have considered and produced at a particular stage of workforce planning, and guidance on where they fit in relation to the development of your workforce plan. Also provides context on how you’re progressing through the workforce planning process.

Initiation

- **People to consult**
  - Executive

- **Documents to produce**
  - Documents to produce

- **Examples**
  - Appendix A of the ‘Workforce planning explained’ module gives more information, including a benefits management framework that can help you produce a business case for workforce planning, if required.
Initiating workforce planning involves:

- determining your level of readiness to undertake workforce planning
- determining who is responsible for workforce planning
- obtaining approval and buy-in from management and/or the Executive
- linking workforce planning to the business and financial planning cycle.

**Level of readiness**

Table 1 is designed to help you understand your organisation’s level of readiness to undertake or progress workforce planning, and to help you determine where to start. The aim is to help you choose to what level of detail you should conduct workforce planning and to help set expectations for your workforce plan. The self-assessment is indicative only, and the fit-for-purpose rule should be applied throughout your workforce planning process.

**Table 1. Workforce planning readiness assessment questions and implications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Ideas if answer is No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic and business planning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a strategic/corporate plan?</td>
<td>Use your strategic plan, in conjunction with other documents, to determine the future workforce demand of your organisation.</td>
<td>Without a strategic plan, it will be more difficult to obtain a cohesive perspective of future workforce demand.</td>
<td>You might consider using structured questioning (structured interview technique) with key business managers, to get a sense of future workforce demand. However, a recommendation flowing from the development of your workforce plan might be to develop a strategic plan as a next step.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have any business and/or organisational plans?</td>
<td>Use your business plan to understand where your organisation is headed (particularly in the shorter term), to determine your workforce needs.</td>
<td>Without a business plan (especially if no strategic plan exists), you will find it difficult to determine future workforce needs. This will result in less confidence in the accuracy of your workforce plan.</td>
<td>You might again consider using structured questioning (structured interview technique) with key business managers to get a sense of future workforce demand. However, a recommendation flowing from the development of your workforce plan might be to develop business plans as a next step.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Workforce planning

### Do you have a workforce plan?

**Yes**

Review your plan thoroughly, understand how it can be improved (what works and what doesn't), and take the opportunity to mature your plan further. It may help to talk to the people who developed and have been using the plan.

**No**

The workforce plan you're about to develop will be a first iteration and you will benefit from keeping it relatively simple.

**Ideas if answer is No**

You may find that your first workforce plan is based almost entirely on qualitative information, making the gap analysis relative rather than exact (words and trends rather than precise numbers). However, a recommendation flowing from the development of your first workforce plan might be to develop the data required as a next step.

### Is your workforce plan regularly consulted (that is, is it being used as a basis for your workforce policies)?

**Yes**

Talk to those who use the plan to obtain an understanding of whether it is effective and how it could be improved.

**No**

Find out why the workforce plan is not being used. Is it unrealistic? Is it not applicable? Is it hard to understand? Are managers unaware of its existence?

**Ideas if answer is No**

Use this information to improve the next iteration of your workforce plan. Ensure that your workforce plan and recommended HR strategies are clearly aligned to business outcomes, to ensure it is relevant to the Executive and line managers.

### Were key stakeholders consulted for your workforce plan?

**Yes**

Obtain a list of the key stakeholders consulted in the previous process and revise the list as needed.

**No**

A lack of stakeholder consultation can result in low buy-in and low relevance of your workforce plan.

**Ideas if answer is No**

Ensure that business representatives are directly involved in the development of your workforce plan as this helps gain their ownership of workforce planning as a business planning tool.

### Is there executive support to undertake workforce planning?

**Yes**

Even if you have executive buy-in, you should still actively engage stakeholders down the line so they retain the sense of ownership of the plan. An imperative to comply does not necessarily equate to engagement.

**No**

Workforce planning will be more difficult and less complete without executive buy-in.

**Ideas if answer is No**

You will need to build a business case for workforce planning (refer to Appendix A of the ‘Workforce planning explained’ module for guidance).
**Question**

Do the skills and capabilities needed for workforce planning exist in your organisation?

**Yes**

Make sure the employees with these skills and capabilities are available for workforce planning.

**No**

Can the skills and capabilities be developed in-house?

If not, can you collaborate with other areas of your agency or department, or another agency or department, to access shared skills and capabilities.

**Ideas if answer is No**

You will need to source employees with:

- knowledge of agency and government business and financial planning processes and timings
- knowledge of organisational business outcomes
- analytical skills
- project management skills
- relationship management skills
- knowledge of HR policy.

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**Workforce planning elements**

Is your workforce currently divided into job families, job functions, job roles or similar?

**Yes**

If job families are widely accepted, they will provide a good foundation for workforce planning.

If they aren’t, find out why.

If it’s due to lack of communication, create a document to communicate the segmentation structure within your organisation.

If it’s due to inappropriate segmentation, revise the segmentation structure or use a simpler one.

**No**

You can still undertake workforce planning using a qualitative approach, by identifying broad skills required to deliver business outcomes, such as:

- project management
- procurement and contracting
- supply chain logistics
- business analysis.

However, your ability to identify workforce risks and appropriate mitigation strategies will be difficult.

For the first iteration of your workforce plan, consider using a simple job family structure. However, the less detailed the job family structure, the less detailed and precise the HR strategies will be in your workforce plan.

**In your organisation, do you have the knowledge necessary to attach numbers (full-time equivalent (FTE) and/or headcount) to specific job families, job functions, job roles or similar?**

**Yes**

If this holds true for current demand and supply as well as future demand and supply, you will be able to express your workforce gaps in terms of numbers (quantitatively).

**No**

You won’t be able to produce a workforce plan that puts reliable numbers against workforce gaps and tells you exactly how many people to recruit and when.

**Ideas if answer is No**

You might consider:

- using numbers drawn from qualitative questions asked of business representatives
- evaluating your supply, demand and gaps qualitatively, and using comparative words such as high, medium, low, increase and decrease.
## Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Ideas if answer is No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you understand the changing environment and how it impacts on your workforce (that is, changing technology, government priorities, changing legislation)?</td>
<td>This information will form the basis for your future workforce demand forecasting.</td>
<td>You will have difficulty forming a basis for your future workforce demand forecasting.</td>
<td>You might consider a structured questioning (structured interview technique) approach to consult managers who have an understanding of this, noting that the less certain the information, the less accurate the forecast. Refer to Table 2 in the ‘Demand analysis’ module for examples of external drivers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Data collection

| Is standard workforce demographic and trend information regularly collected in your organisation? | Make sure you know who to obtain this data from. It is also important you understand exactly what data is available and what isn't. | If you're workforce planning at the agency or department level, demographic information will give you an interesting insight into your workforce, while trend information will help you understand your future workforce supply. Trend information is considered more important to workforce planning. | There are a number of data sources that might assist you to establish trend data, such as: • your HR Information System • the Australian Public Service Employee Database • the last three Statistical Bulletins published by the Australian Public Service Commission. Refer to the ‘Supply analysis’ module for more information on analysing internal workforce supply. Some data sets you need to focus on are: • retirements • resignations • recruitment • length of service. Refer to Table 3 in the ‘Supply analysis’ module for examples of workforce trends. |

| Is there a regular skills and capabilities audit in your organisation? | Workforce supply should be defined in terms of these skills and capabilities, and the audit will form the basis for analysing your current workforce supply. | You will have difficulty defining and analysing your current workforce supply in terms of skills and capabilities using a quantitative approach. | You can still develop a workforce plan using a qualitative approach. However, a recommendation flowing from the development of your first workforce plan might be to undertake a skills and capabilities audit as a next step. |
Who is responsible?

Who should be doing the workforce planning?

One of the biggest mistakes is to assume that workforce planning is an exercise isolated to HR. While HR may own the policy, framework and expertise, workforce planning is ultimately a management responsibility and HR needs to encourage the business to own it.

HR may lead your agency or department’s workforce planning activity, working in partnership with business leaders, senior executive, director-level employees and other managers to understand the business requirements and workforce required to deliver these outcomes. This is particularly important for aligning with your agency or department’s overall business direction and gaining buy-in from the Executive and senior management.

In practice (depending on the size of the agency or department and the HR area), different people may undertake different components of workforce planning, such as:

- environmental scanning
- sourcing business and financial data
- analysing data
- consulting stakeholders
- facilitating conversations to source information about the current and future capability of the workforce
- project management of implementing the workforce planning process
- providing oversight and support.

Who should be responsible for the implementation of the workforce plan?

Ultimately, the agency or department head is the owner and sponsor of your organisation’s strategic workforce plan, while the organisation’s key decision makers and business managers, working in partnership with HR, are responsible for developing and implementing your workforce plan. For example, the division head is responsible for providing the business context and priorities for workforce planning in their division, and owns the strategies and action plans to deliver the workforce they require.
Approval and buy-in

Obtaining buy-in from the senior leadership group is essential to the long-term success of workforce planning. If you don't have this, it’s worth developing a business case that considers the organisational benefits from workforce planning and the risks of not undertaking workforce planning. Appendix A of the ‘Workforce planning explained’ module has more information, including a benefits management framework that may help with this step.

Linking workforce planning to the business and financial planning cycle

Ideally, workforce planning should be integrated into the organisation’s overall business planning and financial processes, and be linked to the appropriate strategic and business plan objectives. It should also consider the government’s budget cycle and form part of your organisation’s budget planning. Because business planning processes vary across the APS, you’ll need to incorporate workforce planning to best suit your organisation’s circumstances and financial forecast periods.

As guidance, the priority setting and Budget decision processes for government usually occur between September each year and the following May, while the spending and reporting activities are ongoing throughout the cycle.

Estimates are updated by agencies and departments, in consultation with the Department of Finance and Deregulation, three times a year in:

- October, as the basis for the preparation of the Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook
- early February, to provide the government with up-to-date estimates before the Budget deliberations of the Expenditure Review Committee
- April, as the basis for preparing the annual Budget.

Within this framework, there are two suggested points in a financial year to have strategic workforce conversations: the first starting in early February through to the end of March, during the preparation of the next financial year’s Budget; and during the mid-year review period (September to November).
Planning for workforce planning

Templates
(1) Project plan, (2) Stakeholder engagement plan, (3) Project risk assessment

Documents to produce
Project plan, Stakeholder engagement plan, Project risk assessment

People to consult
Executive (to establish what the critical job roles are in your organisation)

The initial implementation of workforce planning should be planned and undertaken as a project. Following implementation, your workforce planning should become part of the normal business and financial planning process. However, it will require ongoing planning to support the review and maintenance of the plan, to ensure continued alignment of the plan to the delivery of a workforce to support business outcomes. The key to successful workforce planning is to be clear from the onset about the following:

- **objective**
- **resources** required (people, systems, travel and budget)
- **scope** of the workforce planning activity
- **time frame** it will take to implement the workforce plan
- **stakeholder engagement**
- **risks**.

**Objective**

In one or two sentences, you should be able to state the objective of workforce planning in your organisation. The objective should answer the question: ‘What do you want workforce planning to achieve in your organisation?’

**Resources (people, systems and budget)**

Your resource needs will depend on the size and level of your organisation. They will also depend on your organisation’s readiness to undertake workforce planning (Table 1). For example, if your organisation is not collecting workforce data and doesn't have a skills and capabilities audit, extra resources may be required. Once you’ve determined your resource needs, you will need to assess how to obtain these resources.
Key questions: Resources

- What are the skills and capabilities you require to undertake workforce planning?
- How many employees with these skills and capabilities do you have available?
- Are your employees full time or part time?
- What is your FTE requirement for undertaking workforce planning?
- Can the FTEs commit to workforce planning in the long term?
- Do the FTEs have the capacity to undertake workforce planning?
- What is the budget for workforce planning?
- What other items need to be costed in (data and information collection and management systems, survey costs and travel)?

Scope

Workforce planning can vary in its scope so you need to understand this at the start. You need to determine two aspects of scope:

- organisational level
- workforce segments

Organisational level

This refers to the level within the organisational structure (that is, whether the workforce plan is being developed at unit, section, branch, division, group, or agency or department level). At this stage, you probably already have a level in mind, so you need to ask yourself the following question.

Does it make sense to develop a workforce plan at this level? If the organisation for which you’re developing a workforce plan is very small, requires similar capabilities to other areas in your agency or department, or has close interdependencies to other work groups within your agency or department, it may be worth reconsidering whether workforce planning should include these areas as well.

Workforce segments

A workforce segment can refer to a specific job family, job function or job role within your organisation. Ideally, the total workforce should be analysed, as analysing only some segments won’t paint a complete picture of your workforce. If you’re only focusing on one element of the workforce, bottlenecks may occur elsewhere in which case solving problems for one element won’t have the desired impact. Also, by not considering other complementary elements of the workforce, you may not understand the impact of your resultant workforce plan on them or how they may affect your workforce plan.

However, if it’s not possible to analyse the total workforce due to resource or other constraints, you should identify the critical job roles within your agency or department and prioritise these in your workforce planning. Most agencies and departments should already be identifying critical job roles, so make sure you consult with the relevant people before you start this task.
Critical job roles are roles that are key to the functions of your organisation. Often, critical job roles require a long lead time to develop the required skills, and have a disproportionate effect on the organisation if left vacant. However, critical job roles may also include roles your organisation relies upon to deliver day-to-day services to clients, or roles which account for the largest number of staff (that is, critical mass). These may be roles for which there have been a high number of vacancies and which may also have been difficult to fill due to market demand. Identifying the critical job roles at this stage will also help you assess the criticality of workforce gaps later on in the process.

Time frame

The forecast period covered by the workforce plan, and the level of granularity by which you will describe and segment your workforce will determine the length of time required to develop the plan and the project implementation time frame. The ideal forecast period for your workforce plan will depend on your organisation and you should specify a forecast period that is appropriate for your workforce planning purposes.

Stakeholder engagement

Effective stakeholder engagement is key to the success of workforce planning. This means involving stakeholders from the start, managing their expectations and understanding what you wish to achieve through consultations.

There are three levels of stakeholder consultation:

- awareness—for example, simply imparting information
- involvement—for example, to influence the stakeholders’ thinking and actions, such as to get buy-in to pre-empt adverse reactions
- commitment—for example, targeting stakeholders to achieve their full cooperation and obtain their input and contribution into the planning process.

Who you need to consult will depend on the size and level of your organisation. All employees should be made aware of the workforce planning process, its objective, forecast period and how it will affect their day-to-day work. Consulting employees and keeping them informed is also important because the workforce plan will affect them, and some may think that workforce planning will lead to downsizing and employees being laid off. Managers and employees who are required to provide input into the process should be engaged more so they understand the process and can provide you with honest and timely information.

It is advisable to develop a stakeholder engagement plan. Template 2 provides an example of how you may do so.
Key questions: Stakeholder engagement

• Who are the key stakeholders?
• What is their level of involvement or interest in workforce planning?
• To what extent should you consult them (consider their awareness, involvement and commitment)?
• What is the best way to engage key stakeholders?
• What questions should you ask to obtain the information you need from them?
• How often and when should you engage with them?
• What is the risk of not engaging them? What is their level of involvement or interest in workforce planning?
• To what extent should you consult them (consider their awareness, involvement and commitment)?
• What is the best way to engage the stakeholders?
• What questions should you ask to obtain the information you need from them?
• How often should you engage with them?
• What is the risk of not engaging them?

Ideas: Stakeholder engagement

• Key internal stakeholders may include the Board, the executive group, senior managers and employees. On an awareness level, all employees may be engaged, however when it comes to involving employees in the workforce planning process, you may engage employee nominees or representatives rather than all employees.
• Key external stakeholders may include universities, training providers, professional associations and industry groups. This will depend on the existing links between your agency or department and external bodies, as well as on the type of skills your agency or department requires and whether these are hard to obtain.

Risks

You will need to identify the project risks associated with undertaking workforce planning and develop strategies to mitigate these risks. If your organisation doesn’t have a risk management framework, Template 3 provides a suggested structure for developing one. The risk assessment document should be consulted throughout the workforce planning process and changes recorded and mitigation strategies updated.

Section outputs

• After considering the information and suggested outputs in this section, you should be able to start your workforce planning as you would have developed a:
  - Project plan
  - Stakeholder engagement plan
  - Project risk management plan

• Workforce plan. The information in these documents will inform the ‘Introduction’ section of your workforce plan. Refer to Appendix B of the ‘Workforce planning explained’ module.