Segmenting your workforce

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 an explanation of the varying degrees of complexity by which you might consider segmenting your workforce. This will enable you to analyse your workforce to an increasingly granular level, and identify your workforce gaps with increasing specificity. Ultimately this will position you to more effectively target your strategies to mitigate your workforce risks.

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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>December 2011</td>
<td>Australian Public Service Commission</td>
<td>First version</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

**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.htm.

**Job family**
First 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 profile**
Summary of the common information associated with a job within a job role. Can apply to a position or a discrete group of positions.

A job profile may detail the job title, the APS classification, skills, capabilities and other attributes associated with the job as well as any specific qualification and security requirements.

**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.

**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.

**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 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.

### 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

**__(12 to 18 months)__**

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.
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.

- **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.
- **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.
- **People to consult**: The list is not exhaustive and the right people to consult may vary depending on your organisation.
- **Information**: Information, facts and definitions that may help you undertake workforce planning.
- **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.

### Segmenting your workforce

- **Templates**: (4) Workforce segmentation document, (5) Job role profiling template
- **Documents to produce**: Workforce segmentation document
- **People to consult**: Executive, managers and staff (for agreement on the appropriate segmentation method and system)

Workforce planning enables you to identify current and potential future gaps in the workforce and devise strategies to address them. Workforce segmentation enables you to be more specific in identifying workforce gaps and, as a result, better target strategies to address these gaps.

Your organisation must accept and understand the segmentation method so the workforce understands where it sits, and so it effectively represents current and potential future gaps.
Depending on your workforce planning resources, the existing workforce segmentation system and the size of your organisation, you may choose to use anything from a very basic to a very mature workforce segmentation approach, as depicted in Figure 2. The self-assessment questions in Table 1 of the ‘Initiation and planning for workforce planning’ module should indicate what you should aim for).

**Figure 2. Workforce segmentation maturity spectrum**

![Workforce segmentation maturity spectrum](image)

**Organisational structure (basic maturity)**

An organisational chart is a common way of portraying your workforce. However, segmenting your workforce and identifying gaps by way of an organisational chart has limitations—it groups positions (or roles) according to reporting lines and organisational functions rather than skills and capabilities.

**Location (basic maturity)**

Segmenting your workforce by location allows you to understand the geographical spread of your employees and therefore any additional workforce risks that need to be considered around the availability of the broad skills and capabilities you require from the external labour market.

**Job family model (medium maturity)**

A job family model enables you to segment your workforce into similar occupational groupings based on related skills, tasks and knowledge blocks. It provides a deeper view of your workforce, allowing enhanced workforce analysis and planning.

As a resource for agencies and departments that don’t already have a job family model, an Australian Public Service (APS) Job Families Model has been developed by the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) in collaboration with agencies and departments, available on the APSC website [http://www.apsc.gov.au](http://www.apsc.gov.au). It consists of three tiers, each providing an increasing level of detail, and increasingly specific groupings of skills, tasks and knowledge blocks.

**Job family**

A job family is a high-level grouping of jobs that carry out similar types of work and have similar skills, capabilities and knowledge. Any one position can only fall under one job family. This system recognises that some positions require similar skills and so it’s more useful from a workforce planning perspective.

Organisations with a more mature approach to workforce segmentation tend to allocate all of their positions to well-defined job families, and embed this in their human resource (HR) information systems for ease of reporting.
If your organisation doesn’t use job families, this is a good place to invest your initial workforce planning efforts, as it also allows for useful labour market research later on. The APS Job Families Model offers an overview of some of the high-level groupings of jobs undertaken in the APS. These job families can be used as a basis for segmenting your workforce for further analysis.

**Job function**

Each job function falls under a specific job family. Like job families, job functions take into account that there are positions that require similar types of skills, capabilities and knowledge.

Identifying your workforce gaps by job function makes them easier to address because it promotes a shared understanding of what skills are required for that position both internally and externally.

The APS Job Families Model provides a comprehensive list of job functions that can help you break your job families down further into job functions, to enable a more detailed analysis of your workforce. The main reference point for most functions defined within this model is the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations so that labour market information published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations can be used to assess future workforce supply and associated workforce risks.

**Job role**

Each job role falls under a specific job function. Job roles distinguish the finer application of skill specialisation and where appropriate, skill level.

**Systematic workforce segmentation (mature)**

Although grouping your workforce into job families, job functions and job roles is useful, workforce planning is most effective if you identify the skills and capabilities needed within these. Not only will this validate the accuracy of mapping your workforce to the job family model, it will also help you understand where specific skills and capabilities gaps exist, and which skills and capabilities within a job role or job profile require lengthy lead times to develop.

Job profiling can assist you to identify the skills and capabilities your organisation needs. This is when you systematically collect and manage information about particular positions or types of roles. A job profile is basically a comprehensive list of the responsibilities and tasks undertaken in a position or role plus a list of critical skills and capabilities needed to perform those responsibilities and tasks.

Job profiling has many benefits including:

- allowing your organisation to identify and group the requisite skills and capabilities it has and needs to deliver its business priorities
- insight into the development needs across your organisation
- visibility of the lead times involved in filling different roles
- linkages with the potential supply pools for your required skills and capabilities.
It can inform a number of HR activities, including (but not limited to):

- workforce planning
- workforce risk
- organisation and job design
- remuneration strategies through understanding labour market salary parity
- recruitment and selection, including job branding and the development of selection documentation
- career pathways and succession planning
- talent management strategies
- targeted learning and development strategies
- performance management.

The job profiling methodology can be applied to a single position (position profile) or a discrete group of positions doing similar work (role profile), as a way to aggregate the common information associated with the positions.

Role profiling captures higher level information about a collective group of positions that have similar core skills, qualification groupings and knowledge blocks.

A position profile will generally capture a finer level of granularity including the local job title and APS classification.

In very small organisations, the detail provided by position profiling may be useful, but in most organisations it may be more useful to focus at the role level given that many positions do the same kind of work and require similar skills and capabilities.

Although profiling will look at the people who currently occupy a position or perform roles within an organisation, it’s also important that the profiling process provides an objective assessment of the requirements (responsibilities and tasks) of the position or role itself and the skills and capabilities people need to succeed in the role.

Another way to develop the profiles is to run workshops with subject matter experts. The demand forecasting techniques outlined in Appendix A of the ‘Demand analysis’ module could be applied to this exercise.

Systematic profiling is an intensive and lengthy exercise. Anecdotal evidence suggests that it can take up to three years to complete and mature in a large agency or department. Once you’ve decided whether you intend to undertake systematic profiling, Template 5 and Table 1 below will guide you on the types of data you may want to think about capturing, depending on your organisation’s needs.
## Table 1. Profiling data sets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job family information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position number</strong></td>
<td>If applicable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job family</strong></td>
<td>The first 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job function</strong></td>
<td>The 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job role</strong></td>
<td>The 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job title</strong></td>
<td>The position's full job title as it would appear on a business card or email signature block. Job titles may also differentiate the level of complexity or accountability between job roles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FTE</strong></td>
<td>Captures the full-time equivalent status of the role.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profile information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role purposes</strong></td>
<td>What is the key purpose of this role? Links to business plan, strategic direction or key goals of the organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core responsibilities</strong></td>
<td>Captures the core responsibilities of the role within the organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrated behaviours</strong></td>
<td>What are the critical behaviours of the role? Use the APS Integrated Leadership System or agency or department capability framework to list required position or role-specific attitudes and behaviours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inherent requirements</strong></td>
<td>Does the position or role require people to undertake physical, psychological or medical testing due to the type of work being undertaken (duty of care)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qualifications, Certifications, Licenses</strong></td>
<td>Are there any professional qualifications, certifications or licenses required or desirable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 'partial or full degree in ...'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 'degree ...'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 'tertiary qualifications in ... or other related ...'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 'industry certification in ...'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 'certificate in ...'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If so, are the qualification(s) required before entering the role or can they be acquired in the role?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• mandatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 to 2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 2 to 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 6 to 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 12+ months (specify time frame).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Profile information

**Required knowledge**
Captures preferred knowledge and could be described as:

- 'proficiency in ...'
- 'background in ...'
- 'specialisation in ...'
- ‘... legislation’
- ‘... systems’
- ‘extensive knowledge in ...’
- ‘experience with ...’
- ‘demonstrated experience in ...’
- ‘understanding of ...’

**Role specific technical knowledge**
Are there capabilities of the job role that fall outside the APS Integrated Leadership System capabilities that are required for the role?

**Source**
Is there a preferred supply source for the role? Examples might include universities including specific courses, other divisions, agencies or departments, or organisations.

**Vacancy criticality**
Determine the criticality of the role within your organisation (high, medium or low). You can apply a risk assessment matrix. Critical job roles may be different for each organisation, and may include senior and junior level roles. They are roles that:

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

**APS classification range**
APS classifications represented in a role, although it may be possible that a single classification is represented within a role.

**Security clearance**
Captures the required security clearance of a role.

**Is it an identified position?**
Positions with a strong involvement in issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people be classed as ‘identified positions’

**Do ‘Special Measures’ provisions apply to the position?**
‘Special Measures’ provisions can also be applied to employ people with intellectual disability or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

*Fields marked with an *(asterisk) only apply to position profiling.*
When choosing how you segment your workforce, you need to ensure you meet this key criterion: getting the right people in the right place. For example, using classification levels is not a good way of segmenting your workforce. Identifying that you need more APS 6 level employees tells you nothing about what these people need to do in their job and therefore what skills and capabilities they must have. For example, a Service Delivery APS 6 Team Leader has a completely different skill set to an APS 6 ICT Systems Designer.

Section outputs

- After considering the information and suggested outputs in this section, you should have decided how you will segment your workforce and to what level of detail to enable you to undertake workforce planning, and possibly have some ideas for how to further mature your organisation's workforce segmentation approach.
- Workforce plan. The information contained in this document will inform the workforce segmentation component of the 'Introduction' section of your workforce plan. Refer to Appendix B of the 'Workforce planning explained' module.