

WORKFORCE PLANNING

A FRAMEWORK
FOR THINKING ABOUT
YOUR OWN APPROACH

5 key factors to focus on
when approaching
workforce planning

5

FOCUS

What people-related business problems require solving?

Where do resourcing issues most need addressing?

What upcoming labour market changes will impact you?

CHANGE

Where will the organisation see most people change in future?

What effect will this have on workforce numbers and skills?

Are you accounting for all the factors that shift workforce demand?

DATA

What information is necessary to answer these workforce questions?

Are your data accurate and consistent?

Have you a set of data definitions agreed across the organisation?

PROCESS

Are all the important managers engaged in workforce planning?

Have you allocated roles so that everyone is clear on their task?

SKILLS

Are your managers aware of workforce planning requirements?

Can your business partners ask good workforce demand questions?

Do your HR colleagues have the necessary analytical skills?

10

10 practical tips for workforce planning

EMPHASISE THE PROCESS

Workforce planning can be successful simply by surfacing assumptions and bring issues to the fore even if problems are not 'solved'.

ORGANISE EFFECTIVELY

Decide how best to do workforce planning – keep corporate control or devolve responsibility – but make it fit your business model.

SKILL UP

This applies to line managers but especially to HR staff and their ability to ask questions that identifies the need for workforce change.

UNDERSTAND DEMAND

Encourage managers to think about all the ways in which their workforce requirement (numbers and skills) might alter, including those due to performance improvement.

STANDARDISE DATA

Agree definitions with all parties and convey to those supplying data the necessity of accuracy and completeness.

BUILD ANALYTICAL CAPABILITY

HR people must have the skills to understand, manipulate and present data in a way that illuminates understanding.

IDENTIFY KEY GROUPS

Focus your limited resources on those employment groups vital to organisational performance especially if they present resourcing challenges.

DEAL WITH UNCERTAINTY

Use scenario planning techniques rather than simplistic forecasting in situations of high complexity and uncertainty.

ANALYSE CAPABILITY NOT JUST NUMBERS

Understand workforce change in terms of workforce skills and competencies, but avoid expensive collection of skills' data – keep it simple.

EDUCATE SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Emphasise that it takes time to hire, train or redeploy staff to meet changing business needs and you must take account of employee aspirations for their retention.

This research is published in full as: Reilly P (2015) Workforce planning: A framework for thinking about your own approach. HR Essentials 2, Institute for Employment Studies.

Visit www.employment-studies.co.uk/hre2 to read the full guide text.

To find out more about workforce planning, contact peter.reilly@employment-studies.co.uk

