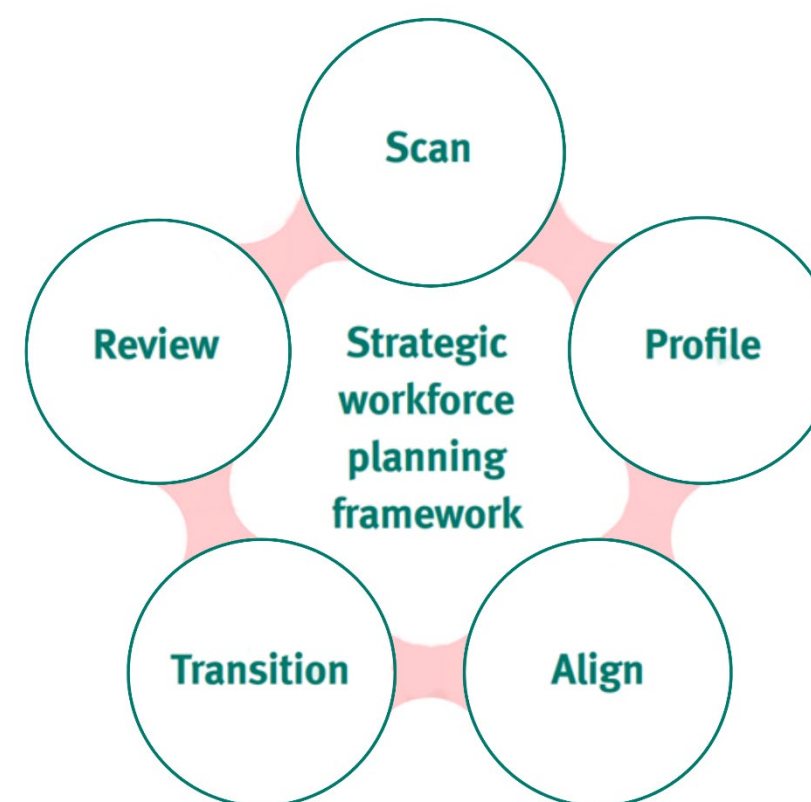# Strategic workforce planning framework

The Strategic workforce planning framework is a continuous dynamic process that can assist you to better understand which:

1. strategies to link
2. data to analyse
3. stakeholders to consult
4. questions to explore.

Source: Adapted from Gente Consulting Pty Ltd – Workforce Planning Essentials (updated December 2023).

Scan the workforce landscape and understand strategic direction

Strategies to link	Data to analyse	Stakeholders to consult	Questions to explore
To minimise duplication, strategic workforce plans may inform, augment, reference, or incorporate other agency or sector workforce strategies. It is important to reference workforce strategies in the 'scan' stage to help understand the strategic direction. Sector workforce strategies to link include: • the agency's Reframing the relationship plan (also see Reframing the relationship guidelines) • the agency's Equity and diversity plan (also see Audit guidelines) • the agency's Disability service plan linked to the Queensland's disability plan • the Queensland multicultural action plan • the Queensland public sector inclusion and diversity strategy. • Within the sector, the State of the sector report, Working for Queensland survey results, and gender pay equity dashboards are a rich source of sector workforce data that can assist in strategic workforce planning and benchmarking across the sector.	• Conduct a comprehensive assessment of both external and internal workforce influences. • Gather data on external labour market conditions, particularly focusing on critical skills and emerging job groups. • Understand the sector context considering three key areas—our work, workforce and workplace to strengthen how we: – come together to work across public sector – organisations to respond to complex challenges – connect with our community and continue – to provide excellent customer service – identify the skills we need now and in the – future and grow these skills across the sector – foster future generations of diverse, purpose-driven leaders – provide exciting and rewarding opportunities in respectful, safe and inclusive workplaces – equip all our people to make ethical decisions which serve the public interest. – the human capital outlook to anticipate how our workforce will change in the coming years.	• Identify and engage with key strategic workforce planning stakeholders • Identify drivers affecting workforce design and deployment – including political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal (PESTEL) factors. • Conduct a scan of workforce strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). • Confirm anticipated significant changes in business processes, service delivery or technology that will affect the workforce. • Identify how your organisation's strategic agenda will impact the workforce.	**Understanding the future:** • Where is the organisation heading, and do we have enough resources for it now? • What are our main goals for the next 1-2 years and longer term (3-5 years)? • How will our plans affect the people we need to hire, and the costs involved? • Might our business direction change in the next 1-2 years or longer? • Have we pinpointed crucial roles and resources for the next 6-12 months? • Does our plan cover managing our workforce and making the organization work better? • What are the risks for our workforce in the short term (3-12 months) and long term (12-36 months)? • Are our strategies for diversity and inclusion aligned with the industry's direction? **Cost analysis:** • Are we clear about our workforce expenses and are we keeping track of them? • What factors are driving up our workforce costs? • How do our workforce expenses compare to what we planned in our budget? • Do changes in our business affect how much our workforce costs, and have we figured this out? • What budget constraints might affect our future staffing needs? • How do our negotiation tactics and payment strategies affect our workforce related expenses? • Does our workforce plan look at how productive our people are and the return we get from investing in them? **Capacity and planning:** • How does where we're going as an organisation affect how many people we need to hire in the short and long term? • Have we predicted how much demand there will be for our services? • What are the challenges and opportunities ahead when it comes to getting enough people? • Do we know what kind of workforce we need for the most important parts of our work? • Can changing workplace methods (like processes or IT systems) help reduce future staffing budget constraints and improve efficiencies? • Could restructuring our organisation help? • Are there tasks we should cease or new ones we should introduce? • Are there ways we can work with others to handle risks related to how many people we need? • Are we thinking about more flexible ways of working in our plans? • Have we figured out the possible risks when it comes to getting enough people, both from inside and outside the organisation? • Have we made plans for big changes in the population or other major risks? • Are there risks for inclusion and diversity linked to the changes in how many people we'll need?

Profile current and future workforce state

Strategies to link	Data to analyse	Stakeholders to consult	Questions to explore
To minimise duplication, strategic workforce plans may inform, augment, reference, or incorporate other agency or sector workforce strategies. It is important to reference workforce strategies in the 'profile' stage to help determine the current and future workforce state. Sector workforce strategies to link include: • the agency's Reframing the relationship plan (also see Reframing the relationship guidelines) • the agency's Equity and diversity plan (also see Audit guidelines) • the agency's Disability service plan linked to the Queensland's disability plan • the Queensland multicultural action plan • the Queensland public sector inclusion and diversity strategy.	• Collect and categorise relevant workforce information (see Analyse workforce data) such as: – key occupational groups – roles by classification – demographic and diversity data – location or business unit – skills, capabilities, and attributes (see Leadership competencies for Queensland and Skills framework for the information age and HR capability model, etc). • Apply an equity and diversity lens over current and future workforce data by engaging relevant stakeholders to analyse and provide context on their cohort's data.	• Understand future expectations for service delivery and the strategic direction. • Review current and future workforce design. • Identify critical functions and roles needed now and in the future. • Consider desired skills, capabilities, and attributes, as well as the expected performance of your future workforce. • Explore potential future scenarios, risks and possibilities through scenario planning (see Scenario planning).	Understanding organisational capabilities: • What skills do we currently have and what's needed in the short and long term? • Are there critical roles that are hard to fill in the current setting? • Which parts of our workforce are most crucial in the next 1-2 years and beyond? • What specific skills are necessary in vital job groups like ICT & Digital or data-related positions? • What skills are needed to support ongoing technological changes? • What new abilities or job roles are crucial for achieving organisational success? • How will leadership talent be developed at all levels? • How can we collaborate across the sector to build key skills? • Is there a plan in place to enhance cultural understanding and respect? Scenario planning: • What are the possible scenarios? • What scenarios might happen? • What scenarios are most likely to unfold? • What outcomes does the organisation want to see, such as equity, diversity and inclusion profiles?

Align to the future workforce by identifying gaps

Strategies to link	Data to analyse	Stakeholders to consult	Questions to explore
To minimise duplication, strategic workforce plans may inform, augment, reference, or incorporate other agency or sector workforce strategies. It is important to reference workforce strategies in the 'align' stage to help identify workforce gaps. Sector workforce strategies to link include: • the agency's Reframing the relationship plan (also see Reframing the relationship guidelines) • the agency's Equity and diversity plan (also see Audit guidelines) • the agency's Disability service plan linked to the Queensland's disability plan • the Queensland multicultural action plan • the Queensland public sector inclusion and diversity strategy.	• Gather internal workforce data on how the workforce is: – recruited – promoted – developed – deployed – engaged – managed. • Apply an equity and diversity lens over internal workforce data by engaging relevant stakeholders to analyse and provide context on their cohort's data. • Forecast future spending and investments for the workforce that will have the most significant effect. • Analyse potential technological and automation impacts across various workforce segments including regions. • Review your agency Reframing the relationship and Equity and diversity audits to identify focus areas.	• Estimate the number of employees needed and the type of work they'll do based on how the business and services are expected to change. This includes understanding how new technology might influence future operations (see Forecasting workforce needs). • Identify gaps in skills and resources. • Find opportunities to enhance productivity and collaborative work methods. This involves improving how we manage the resources required for efficient work. • Ensure that the future objectives align with stakeholder expectations. • Plan the talent and abilities needed to increase (buy, build or borrow), repurpose (boost or bind) or decrease (bounce) (see Strategic talent segmentation).	Workforce supply: • How available are skills and capabilities currently? • Where do we usually find these skills and capabilities? • For each job opening, how many good applications do we receive? • Are some skills harder to find than others? • How long does it usually take to hire someone? Does this differ for different job types, and if so, why? Current workforce demand: • How many funded full-time positions do we have? Is this enough to meet current goals? • Are we meeting our goals on time and within budget? • If not, is it due to a lack of capacity or skills? If so, which ones? • Over the planning period, where should we increase or decrease positions? • Are current roles well-designed, and do employees have the right skills for their jobs? • What skill gaps are evident right now? Future workforce demand: • If we were starting this business area from scratch, how should it be set up? How many employees, in what roles, at what levels, in which locations, and with what skills would we need? (zero-based demand planning).

Transition through workforce strategies and performance measures

Strategies to link	Data to analyse	Stakeholders to consult	Questions to explore
To minimise duplication, strategic workforce plans may inform, augment, reference, or incorporate other agency or sector workforce strategies. It is important to reference workforce strategies in the 'transition' stage to include or reference outlined strategies and performance measures. Sector workforce strategies to link include: • the agency's Reframing the relationship plan (also see Reframing the relationship guidelines) • the agency's Equity and diversity plan (also see Audit guidelines) • the agency's Disability service plan linked to the Queensland's disability plan • the Queensland multicultural action plan • the Queensland public sector inclusion and diversity strategy.	• Review the sector State of the sector report and Working for Queensland survey results, and Gender pay equity dashboards for workforce data that may be used as benchmarks. • Agree performance measures (including interim measures toward achieving agency diversity targets) to assist with performance monitoring. • Gather more information to support and measure the advantages and returns on investments (e.g. marketing campaign impacts on job applications).	• Summarise major transitional challenges in terms of roles, locations, and capabilities. • Engage stakeholders to pinpoint risks concerning the workforce and determine which issues need immediate attention. • Consider the design of the organisation making changes to its structure, governance, and ways of working to achieve its business strategy. • Develop elements of the strategic workforce plan, next steps and provide recommendations (see Designing workforce strategies). • Include Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples perspectives in the consultation and apply a cultural lens to strategy development. • Follow governance processes.	Creating a positive workplace culture: • How are we actively fostering a positive, engaged, and inclusive workplace culture? • What initiatives are in place to uphold a culture of inclusion and respect? • Are there specific strategies aimed at boosting diversity within our organisation? • How are we prioritising staff well-being to enhance resilience? Talent retention strategies: • Will planned business changes impact our workplace culture, and how do we plan to handle these impacts? • What measures and strategies ensure a positive experience for our employees and retain top talent? Workforce management: • What measures would help to manage key workforce-related risks, and how do we gauge success? • Have we identified critical skills and workforce development needs, and how are we investing in them? • How will our vital skill sets grow (acquiring, developing, borrowing, boosting, aligning, or adapting)? Strategic alignment: • How are we cultivating cultural capability among our managers and employees to create an inclusive workplace and support broader cultural shifts? How are we adapting to broader system reforms and explaining future costs, workforce capacity, and staffing changes? • What strategies and initiatives are in place to understand and engage with the communities we serve?

Review by monitoring, evaluating, and reporting strategic workforce plan performance progress

Strategies to link	Data to analyse	Stakeholders to consult	Questions to explore
To minimise duplication, strategic workforce plans may inform, augment, reference, or incorporate other agency or sector workforce strategies. It is important to reference workforce strategies in the 'review' stage to help evaluate performance progress. Sector workforce strategies to link include: • the agency's Reframing the relationship plan (also see Reframing the relationship guidelines) • the agency's Equity and diversity plan (also see Audit guidelines) • the agency's Disability service plan linked to the Queensland's disability plan • the Queensland multicultural action plan • the Queensland public sector inclusion and diversity strategy.	• Analyse and report trends and measure performance against targets and benchmarks. • Review performance and continuously enhance methods for data collection. • Maintain regular communication with stakeholders regarding the ongoing progress.	• Establish consistent methods to inform stakeholders about workforce performance in relation to goals. • Monitor the implementation of workforce plans and assess any changing risks. • Incorporate an annual review and evaluation process into existing planning cycle. • Include Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples perspectives in the review and apply a cultural lens to strategy review. • Evaluate and adjust workforce and action plans where necessary to ensure the organisation remains on track (see Review workforce planning performance).	Evaluate: • Did our strategic workforce plan effectively line up with our organisational objectives to drive success? • Did it make sure we had the right capability, capacity, knowledge, skills, and expertise on hand? • Were we able to address work imbalances, staff availability, and skill requirements effectively? • Did we support rapid development of employee skills to keep pace with changing demands? • Were we able to identify and close any workforce gaps to uphold operational excellence? Adjust: • Have any new workforce risks emerged or do they require further attention?

Adapted by agreement from Australian Public Service Commission – Workforce Planning Guide.