

Our Approach to Workforce Planning and Organisational Design

As StratAlign, we align ourselves with the broadly accepted rationale of workforce planning which is to ensure that “the right people with the right skills are in the right place at the right time.” Our view is that this should be expanding slightly as follows:

“Workforce Planning is the process of ensuring that an organisation achieves its strategic vision through having the right people with the right skills **and attitudes** in the right jobs within the right structure at the right time.”

It is critically important that this is not achieved through a narrow focus on supply and demand leading to what might be called a short term “staffing plan”. On the contrary, workforce planning is an ongoing strategic activity to ensure that the human capital in an organisation meets the needs and requirements of the organisation's strategic plan. This is not a once off activity but an ongoing process within the organisation that requires continuous attention.

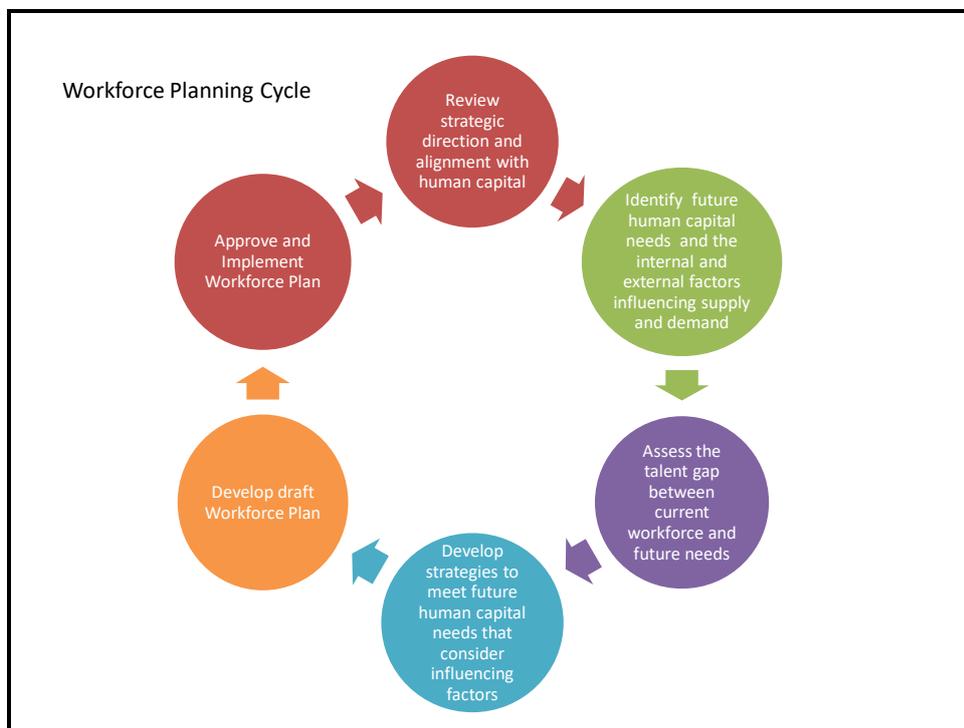
Consequently Workforce Planning is the strategic alignment of an organization's human capital with its business direction.

It is process which embraces the following:

- Understanding the human capital requirements of the organisation's strategy
- Analysing the current workforce,
- Understanding the internal and external factors impacting on the supply and demand of human capital
- Understanding the “social capital” (behavioural dimensions) necessary to optimise human performance
- Identifying future workforce needs,
- Establishing the gap between the present and the future,
- Implementing solutions so the organization can achieve its vision, mission and strategic goals

Workforce planning processes do not differ markedly internationally.

Our model and process is aligned with international best practice and is illustrated in the diagram below:



Each of the steps is described below:

Step One: Review strategic direction and alignment with human capital

In this step the following is critical:

- An understanding of the clear strategic direction of the organisation
- An analysis of the current workforce configuration to achieve the strategic direction. This includes an analysis of organisational people strategies, policies, structures, job profiles and competencies

It is critical that during this first step the entire organisation is brought on board with the project and engaged in the process. Our view is that if people within the organisation are consulted and actively involved in the process the outcomes are significantly more likely to be accepted and implemented.

Step Two: Identify future human capital needs and the internal and external factors influencing supply and demand

- The future needs of the organisation to optimise the possibility of achieving strategic goals
- An understanding of the internal and external factors affecting the supply and demand of human capital in the organisational environment. Without this dimension the plans to achieve the desired workforce are likely to be misguided.

Again, as far as possible, a participatory methodology is recommended.

Step Three: Assess the talent gap (or talent opportunities) to be addressed to transition from the current workforce towards the meeting of future needs

As indicated above we prefer to use the language of identifying “talent opportunities” rather than “talent gaps”. This approach keeps us focused on achieving future possibilities rather than simply plugging past gaps.

It is then possible to assess the opportunities to enhance the current supply of human capital and meet the future strategic needs. It is critical that these opportunities be carefully identified so that the workforce plan actually achieves the desired strategic gains.

Because Workforce Planning is not an exact science and relies on the imagination and ingenuity of the people involved in the process our preference is that as many people as possible are enrolled in providing input into this step.

Step Four: Develop strategies and plans to embrace the opportunities to meet future human capital needs that consider influencing factors

Having identified the opportunities to enhance the human capital of the organisation it is possible to develop strategies and detailed plans to optimise and strategically align the workforce. These strategies and plans include at least the following:

- A future view of the organisational structure
- Job profiles that aligns individual key results with organisational strategic outcomes
- A clear picture of the human behaviours that are conducive to achieving strategic outcomes
- A clear picture of the competencies necessary to achieve job and organisational results
- How the outcome of having the right people in the right jobs with the right competencies and attitudes at the right cost will be achieved.

Step Five: Develop draft Workforce Plan

In this step the planning in step four is consolidated into a workable plan and presented to decision makers for approval. In this step much of the detailed work will be done on structure and job profiles.

Our methodology in this step will again be participatory. People are much more likely to embrace changes to structure and job profiles if they are

engaged in the process. This step will involve engagement between employees and their managers around proposed job profiles wherever changes are deemed necessary.

Step Six: Approve and Implement the Plan

Once approved the plan must be implemented.

Organisational Design

There is an element of Organisational Design in Workforce Planning and so it is important to define an approach to this important aspect of the process.

StratAlign's approach to organisational design embraces the fact that apart from the technical tools used in organisational design it is critical to ensure the following three things:

- Firstly that there is maximum participation of all people affected by the design process. This participation and engagement is built into the proposal below.
- Organisational design processes require sign off from the leadership of the organisation at important stages in the journey.
- A systems approach should be adopted when conducting an Organisational Design Process to ensure that the whole system works effectively once the new design is implemented. The devil is not only in the detail of Organisational Design processes, it is in the relationships. It is critical that an organisation design process takes cognisance of the relationships between divisions, departments and people

We use a range of tools to make all of the above possible.

Job Profiles

In our view the Balanced Scorecard provides one of the most effective ways of framing job profiles but we are able to use other methodologies if the organisation requires.

The balanced scorecard provides for key performance areas for each job to be separated into four dimensions:

- Financial results
- Customer results
- Business process and operational results
- People and growth results.



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