

Workforce Planning Connect

Workbook

A practical guide for
the aged care sector



Ageing
Australia

DELIVERING
FOR QUEENSLAND



Queensland
Government

FURTHER ENQUIRIES

For enquiries or further information about this report:

Telephone: 07 3294 4710

Email: info@jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au

COPYRIGHT

This publication is protected by the *Copyright Act 1968*. © State of Queensland, Jobs Queensland, August 2025.

Excerpts may be reproduced with acknowledgement of the State of Queensland (Jobs Queensland).

LICENCE

This work is licensed by Jobs Queensland under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) 3.0 Australia licence. To view a copy of this licence, visit www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/

OTHER LANGUAGES AND FORMATS

The Queensland Government is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds. If you have difficulty understanding this publication and need a translator, please call the Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS National) on telephone 131 450 and ask them to contact Jobs Queensland on (07) 3294 4710.

Alternative formats (including large print) are available on request. If you would like this in another format, please contact us (calls from mobile phones are charged at applicable rates).

Persons with a hearing impairment:

TTY: 07 3896 3471

DISCLAIMER

While every care has been taken in preparing this publication, the State of Queensland accepts no responsibility for decisions or actions taken as a result of any data, information, statement or advice, expressed or implied, contained within. To the best of our knowledge, the content was correct at the time of publishing.

Produced by Jobs Queensland (Queensland Government) and Ageing Australia.

Contents

- INTRODUCTION4**
 - What is workforce planning?4
 - Why is workforce planning important?4
 - What does workforce planning involve?5
 - How to use this workbook5
 - The four key stages to workforce planning7
- STAGE 1: GET STARTED 8**
- STAGE 2: GATHER INFORMATION12**
- STAGE 3: IDENTIFY ISSUES AND FIND SOLUTIONS20**
- STAGE 4: DEVELOP, IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR24**
- YOUR WORKFORCE PLAN ON A PAGE29**
- GLOSSARY30**



Introduction

The Queensland workforce is evolving. External changes such as aged care reforms, workforce regulations, funding pressure, cost of living, workforce shortages and digital transformation are just a few of the challenges and opportunities facing Queensland businesses.

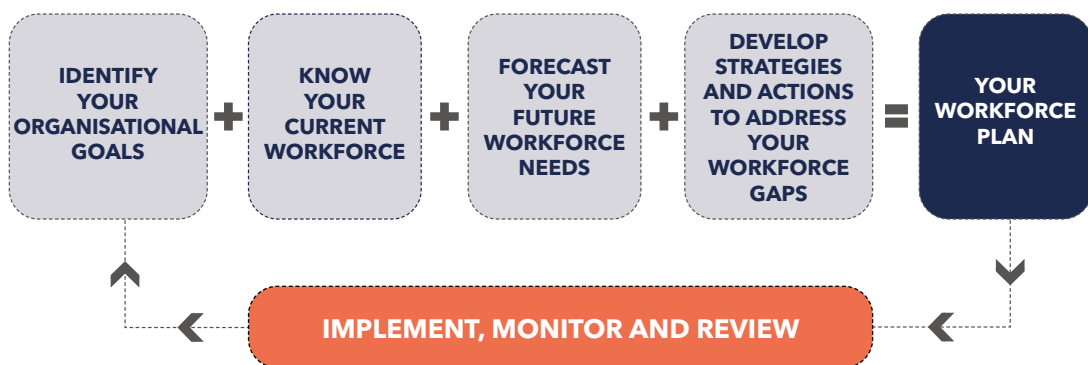
These external changes may mean a growth or decline in your client base, and an increase in competition. These changes can have an impact on your workforce needs too, and will need to be considered as part of your planning. Many organisations use workforce planning to help think ahead and manage change.

Jobs Queensland, in collaboration with Ageing Australia, has developed this Workforce Planning Connect workbook to help aged care providers step through the key stages involved in workforce planning and develop a workforce plan that meets their organisations needs.

What is workforce planning?

Workforce planning is about planning for the people who help your organisation deliver services to your clients. It's about having the right people with the right skills, at the right time and place, doing the right things to help you achieve your organisational goals. Linking your people, with your purpose.

The key steps involved in workforce planning are outlined below.



There are different levels of workforce planning.



Why is workforce planning important?

Whether you have three staff or 30, workforce planning can save you time and money.

By having a workforce plan, you will gain a solid understanding of your current workforce and how to prepare your workforce for the future. By integrating workforce planning with your organisations strategy and planning, your organisation can benefit through:

- responding quickly and strategically to change
- linking your workforce initiatives to your finance and organisation planning
- improving efficiency, effectiveness and productivity
- reducing employee turnover and improved retention and engagement
- attracting staff to key roles, reducing skills shortages and increasing job satisfaction.

Workforce planning can help your organisation be more resilient to economic, environmental, social and technological change.

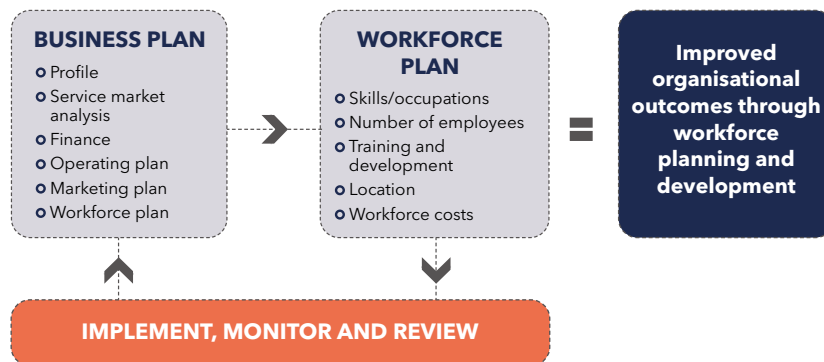
What does workforce planning involve?

You plan your finances; you plan your services; and you plan your workload – workforce planning helps you plan for your people.

Workforce planning helps you think about the future of your organisation and how the people you employ will support you to reach your goals. There are four dimensions to workforce planning:

- **Who:** securing, fostering and retaining the right **people**
- **What:** identifying the right **skills**, training and development required
- **Where:** aligning people to the right **roles** and responsibilities at the right location
- **When:** ensuring that these components come together at the right **time**.

Workforce planning works best when integrated with your normal organisation planning processes. Organisations that align strategic, organisation and workforce plans are better placed to identify current and future workforce requirements.



How to use this workbook

This workbook provides you with the ability to work through all the stages of workforce planning, or you can just focus on a part of the workbook that you are most interested in now.

If you complete the whole workbook, you will have developed a workforce plan for your organisation that you can use, review and update. If you only complete parts of this workbook, you will be well on your way to developing a workforce plan.

As you complete this workbook, you will also:

- learn each stage in the process of workforce planning
- understand who needs to be involved and what information needs to be collected
- assess workforce risk and its implications for your organisation
- develop strategies to manage that risk
- develop a workforce plan so that you have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time, to meet your organisations needs.



To help guide you through this workbook, we have provided examples to get you started using a fictional business. Your answers might be different (that's okay), this is about your workforce planning journey and what is best for your business.

INTRODUCING SERENE SHORES AGED CARE

Small aged care provider

- **Jason:** Business owner
- **Rachel:** Business owner/admin manager

2 employees (full-time)

- **Omar:** Registered nurse (20 years service)
- **Adele:** Physiotherapist (2 years service)

Other employees

- 3 contract staff

Different organisational goals impact how each organisation would plan its future workforce. Below are some of the alternative scenarios for Serene Shores Aged Care facility.



Grow

Expanding the service



Decline or maintain

Jason and Rachel may choose to sell the business, or they may hand it over to someone else when they retire



Diversify

Staff are discussing ideas to diversify

You can do this!

Successful workforce planning outcomes can be achieved through a simple process, with limited experience, resources and data.

Things to keep in mind:

- The process is the same for any size organisation, in any industry.
- Start with the end in mind.
- It doesn't have to be complicated.
- Data collection does not have to be complex.
- Workforce planning may help you retain staff and compete for the workforce you need now and into the future.
- It can support you to manage your workforce risk by helping you focus your energy in the right place.
- A workforce plan is a living document. You can update it as often as you like.
- It is recommended you review your workforce plan on a regular basis, perhaps each time there is a major change in your organisation. Alternatively, you might aim to review it annually to align with your organisation planning process.



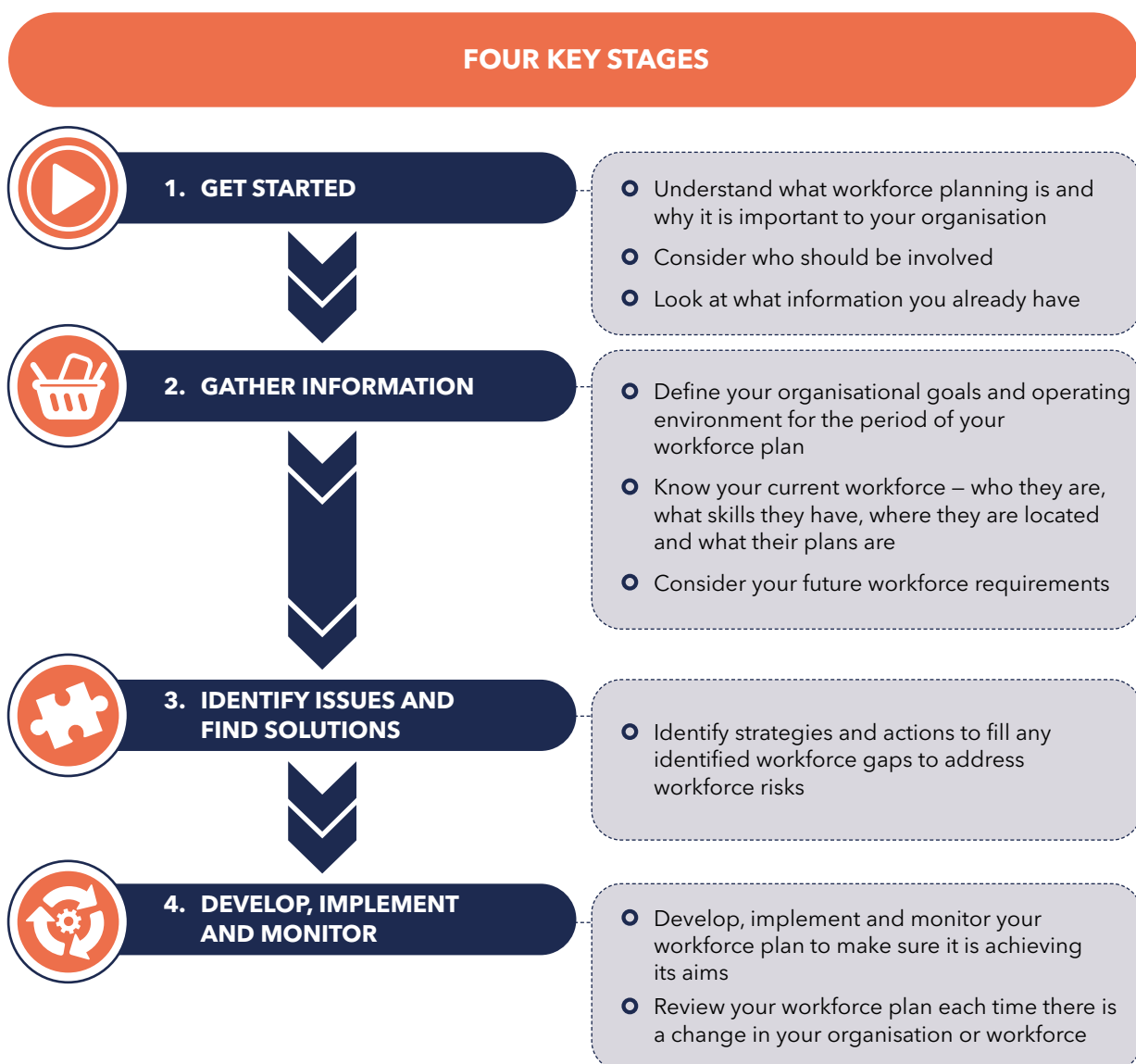
There is a one-page **WORKFORCE PLAN ON A PAGE** that you can use to create a summary of your workforce information at the end of the workbook.

The four key stages to workforce planning

You are probably intuitively doing elements of workforce planning without realising it already! Activities like developing new skills or recruiting additional employees are all part of the process. It's not as daunting as it sounds.

The framework below identifies the information and resources that can be adapted to your organisation. You can use this workbook to develop a workforce plan or to address a specific workforce challenge, opportunity or need in your organisation.

Workforce Planning Connect framework



It is important to remember that workforce planning does not need to be complicated, but it does require thought and engagement with your staff and other key people who may support your organisation (e.g. financial advisor).

Now let's get started!



STAGE 1

GET STARTED



The purpose of workforce planning is not to decide what you will do in the future, it is about determining what you can do now to be best prepared for the future. So, let's help you prepare!



KEY ACTIVITIES IN THIS SECTION

1. Consider who should be involved
2. Understand what information you already have
3. Look at what information may be required

Things to consider

- What timeframe you are planning for? (e.g. 1 year, 2 years, another timeframe)
- Who are your stakeholders that you want to include in the workforce planning process?
- Why you are including them?
- Who are the key decision-makers? How can they best be involved?
- How much time can they commit to the process?
- Will they be committed to supporting and implementing the actions?
- Aim to increase the diversity of your workforce in terms of age, gender, cultural background and declared disability.

Timeframe and goals

It's important to consider the timeframe you are going to plan for, and the organisational goals you have.

It's important to think beyond the following year, so you can put things in place now that will support your organisation long term.

Considering a strategic focus (two years and beyond) is often a good starting point, though sometimes a shorter timeframe may be more useful for getting started.

Suggestions on who you could involve

It is important that you consider who should be involved in workforce planning for your organisation. Your workforce planning team is a core group who will be involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of your workforce plan. If you are a micro organisation, this may only be two key people.

Micro and small organisations	Medium sized organisations
May only have two people involved in the running of the organisation and the management of staffing	A diverse mix of management and employees who represent various organisational levels, functional areas and locations
In some organisations, all staff may also be family members	Managers and team leads who oversee areas with critical hiring needs
Dedicated and knowledgeable staff	Line staff, including both new hires and those employees with more experience Dedicated and knowledgeable staff

Stage 1 activities



Who could be involved?

Make a list of all the people you think should be involved and why.

Who could be involved?	Why are you involving them?
Example: Organisation manager	Because they have oversight of all aspects of the organisation and its workforce
Example: My partner	Because they are a co-owner and manage administration and recruitment
Example: Long-term employee	Because they are committed to the organisation and have played an important role over the years



Is there commitment to implementing identified actions?

Yes No Unsure

It is important that you have commitment from the people you need to have involved in the workforce planning process.

If the answer is **No**, you may need to think about how you get buy-in to this process. Consider how you might request or encourage involvement.

If **unsure**, speaking to the individuals you listed earlier is a good start.



What do you want to achieve through this workforce plan?

Write down your goal or outcome for the plan

Example: Have the right people, with the right skills, to meet increased service needs

What do you already know about your workforce?

You can use this information later to help you develop your workforce plan. This is covered further in the next stage. For now, this is to help you work out what you already have and where you can find it.

Write down the information you already know

Example: The types of jobs you have in your organisation, how many employees and their employment status

Example: Overhead costs (e.g. wages/salary, superannuation, leave loading)

What other information do you need?

Consider what information you can collect easily and who can help you collect it.

Examples of some of the information are:

- What qualifications do people have/need to do their jobs?
- What other skills do your team members have that you may be able to use in your organisation?

What?	Where can I find this information?
Example: Current team skills	Each team member

It may benefit you to ask your team what they believe are their strengths. They may have developed skills outside the organisation that they have not had an opportunity to apply in the workplace.



STAGE 2

GATHER INFORMATION



A clear and well thought out workforce plan will support your current and future organisational goals. Workforce information will help you create your workforce plan.

This section will help you identify the information you need and where to find it.



KEY ACTIVITIES IN THIS SECTION

1. Review and understand your organisational goals and how your workforce will contribute to this
2. Consider what your current workforce looks like now
3. Identify where you might want to be in the future

Stage 2 activities



What are your organisational goals?

Organisational goals tend to fall under one of four scenarios:



Grow



Decline



Maintain



Diversify

Consider the timeframe of your plan when setting your goals.

To be in the best position to have the right combination of people, skills and employment types across your workforce, you should think about your organisational goals and how you will achieve them.

Organisational goals	Workforce implications
E.g. Grow: Expand service delivery (end-of-life care services or respite care)	Identify the new skills or knowledge that will be required for staffing, training, role design Recruit or train existing team

Each goal has its own challenges and barriers to success. Let's explore yours.

Goal/opportunity	Key challenges
E.g. Expand service delivery	Train staff with the skills required for these roles

As you go through the process of developing your workforce plan, it is important to know your workforce starting point and how well that aligns to your organisational goals.



What does your workforce look like now?

What your workforce looks like now can be shown below. You should be using the most recent information available, but historical information can also be helpful. We recommend you include the last 12 months as a minimum to help you create a picture of what your own workforce supply looks like. Workforce supply is the size of your current and future workforce. It takes into consideration employee turnover through resignations and retirements, and how these affect the size of your workforce over time.

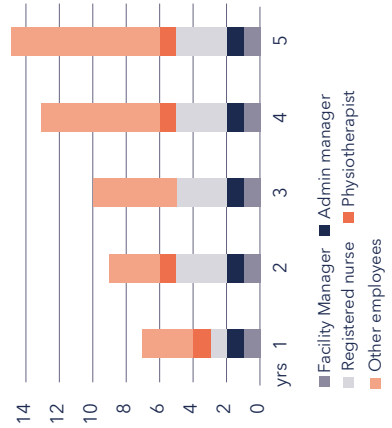
Position	Number of employees	Employment status	Length of employment	Age	Skills
E.g. Registered nurse	1	F/T; P/T; casual; temporary; contract	20 years	20-50	Important for identifying current skills available and roles within your organisation

Note: To develop a more detailed workforce profile, you can use the 'Current workforce data and profile' template on the website www.jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/wpc

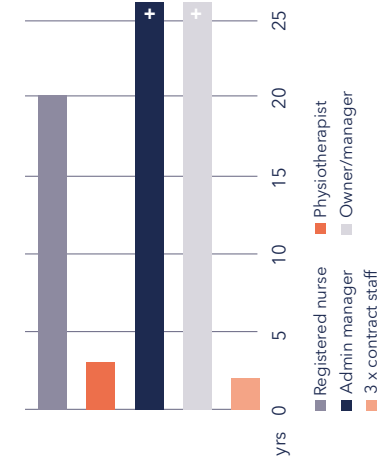
Other workforce supply data you might like to consider include:

- **turnover:** resignations; retirements
- **practice arrangements:** flexible hours; leave allowances; shift work
- **costs:** wages/salaries; overheads (e.g. accommodation, phone); variable costs (e.g. training).
Sometimes using a graph or a chart makes it easier to see a trend (up or down).

Serene Shores workforce count



Length of employment (years)



The skills you need today are a good starting point for planning the skills you will need tomorrow.



What does your workforce need to look like?

The answer to this question may surprise you! Refer back to your organisational goals. Depending on which scenario and timeframe you chose, your workforce needs will vary.

Keep in mind potential staffing changes within your organisation (e.g. if someone is promoted or moves into another role, do they need to be replaced?). This can be an opportunity to consider productivity improvements within your organisation.

The following questions might help.

Questions to ask yourself

Who can help you identify your future workforce needs?

Do you need more, fewer or the same number of people?

Do you need the same number of people but with different skills?

If so, what skills are needed?

Are you wanting to introduce new technology/processes/services?

If so, what skills will be needed?

When do you need these people or skills?

Can you upskill someone in your team to meet this need?

What can you do to make sure that your organisational goals and workforce plans all line up, so that you have the right people, with the right skills, at the right time?

Similar to the information you provided earlier (what your workforce looks like now), use the table below to outline the additional staffing you will need in the future.

Position	Number of employees	Employment status	When they should start	Skills
E.g. Physiotherapist	3	F/T	6 months	Mobility and functional assessments. Rehab post injury or illness.



THINGS TO CONSIDER: Recruitment of under-represented groups is a great way to diversify your existing workforce. Employing people from a migrant community, Aboriginal peoples, Torres Strait Islander peoples or someone returning to the workforce after a career break can also bring innovative ideas and enthusiasm to a role. Some may require a flexible approach or support while they transition into your team. Don't be afraid to recruit differently to how you traditionally have.

There are two main types of gaps. Let's take a look at both.

Workforce gap: the number of people and composition of roles you need to undertake the work in comparison to the people you currently have.

Skills gap: the skills you need employees to have so they can effectively and efficiently do the work in comparison to the skills your employees currently have.



What is your workforce gap?

A workforce gap is the difference between what your workforce looks like now and what your future workforce needs to look like to help you reach your organisational goals.

Example: If your organisation intends to expand through diversification/new services, your workforce may need to grow.

Current # of employees	Planned growth/ decline Yr 1	Planned growth/ decline Yr 2	Planned growth/ decline Yr 3	Total workforce gap
4	+3	0	0	3
Current # of employees	Potential resignations Yr 1	Potential resignations Yr 2	Potential resignations Yr 3	
4	2	0	1	3
Totals	5	0	1	6

The information you supplied earlier will help you identify the gap between what your workforce looks like now and what it needs to look like in the future.

Current # of employees	Planned growth/ decline Yr 1	Planned growth/ decline Yr 2	Planned growth/ decline Yr 3	Total workforce gap
Current # of employees	Potential resignations Yr 1	Potential resignations Yr 2	Potential resignations Yr 3	
Totals				

For more detailed guidance on workforce supply and demand, you can use an alternative layout via the 'Workforce supply, future demand and gap analysis' template on the website www.jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/wpc



What is your skills gap?

Your staff can be your most valuable asset. The skills and experience they bring to your organisation can be critical to its success. You might already have enough people working in your organisation, and they work well in a team doing what needs to be done, but with all changes in an organisation, you might find you have a skills gap.

It is important to remember that needing new skills does not always mean you need to recruit someone new. It is often more cost effective to retain good staff and upskill your existing employees. If your organisation is growing, this creates career opportunities for your current staff and a pathway into the industry for someone new. By considering what your organisations goals are and how your workforce will support you in achieving those goals in the future, you can plan your way out of a skills gap. Examples of things you may consider are:

Things to consider	Why
Introduction of new equipment or services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your staff might need training in how to use the equipment or how to maintain it properly. If it is a new service, do your existing staff have the skills to deliver the service?
Replacing resignations or promotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When people take on additional or new tasks, they may need support while they gain the skills they need to be efficient.
New team members require inductions and support while they learn and become familiar with your organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff who are training and supporting other staff may need improved coaching and communication skills they don't already have.

There is more information on developing your existing workforce in Stage 3. For now, using the table below, consider what skills your organisation will need in the future that you don't currently have.



What is your skills gap?

My future skills needs are: *(Example: coaching and mentoring a small team)*

Year	Skills required
1	
2	
3	

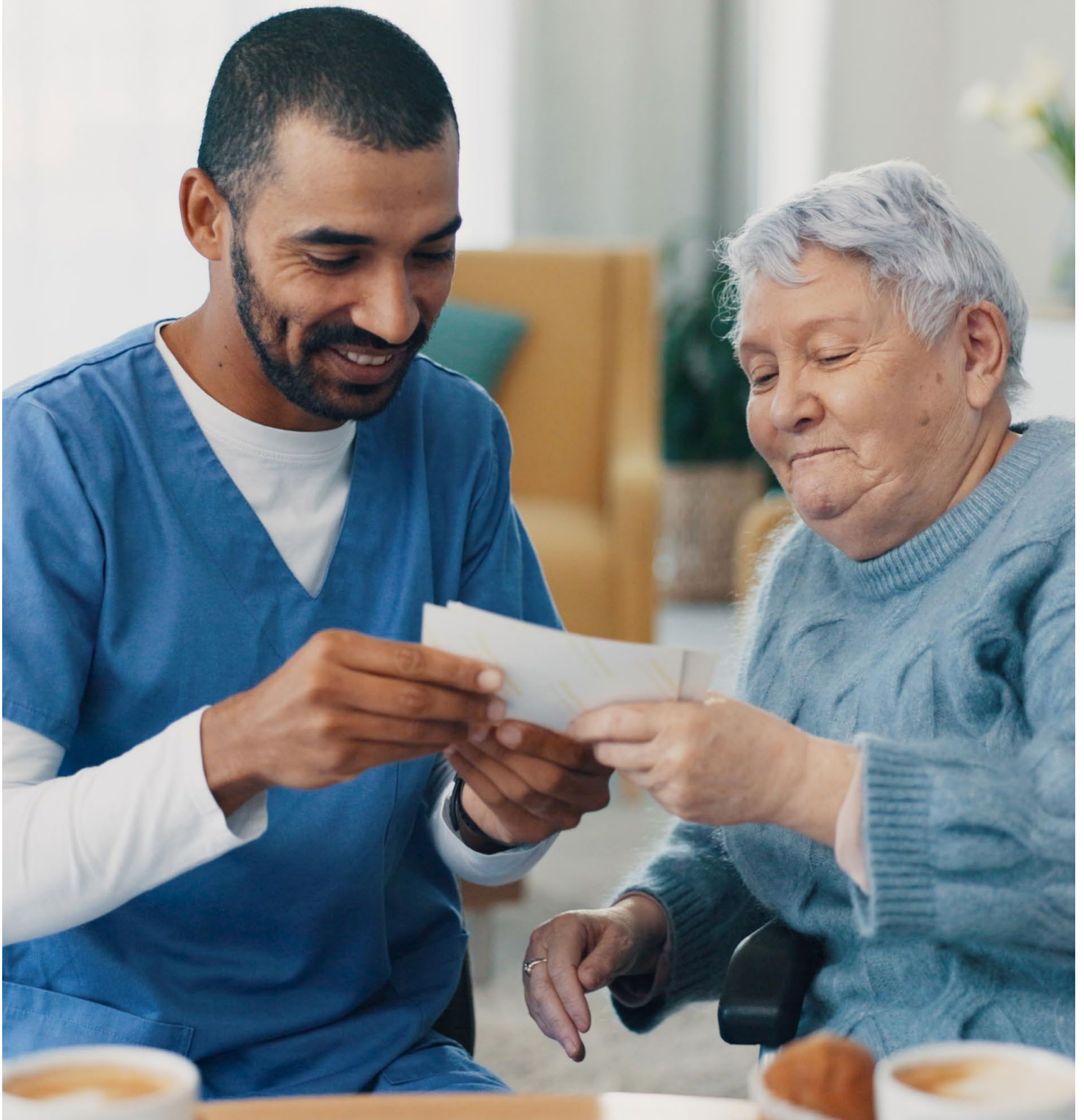
Next you will need to identify strategies and actions to close these workforce and skills gaps. These strategies and actions will form the basis of your workforce plan.





STAGE 3

IDENTIFY ISSUES AND FIND SOLUTIONS





Assess workforce risk

A workforce risk can be any workforce related issue that can disrupt your organisation's ability to deliver on its outcomes or outputs. It's important to think about the level of risk to your organisation if you don't have the right skills for your future business needs, people leave, or you don't recruit the right people at the right time to achieve your goals.

Not having the right skills can sometimes be just as much of a risk as not having the right number of people.

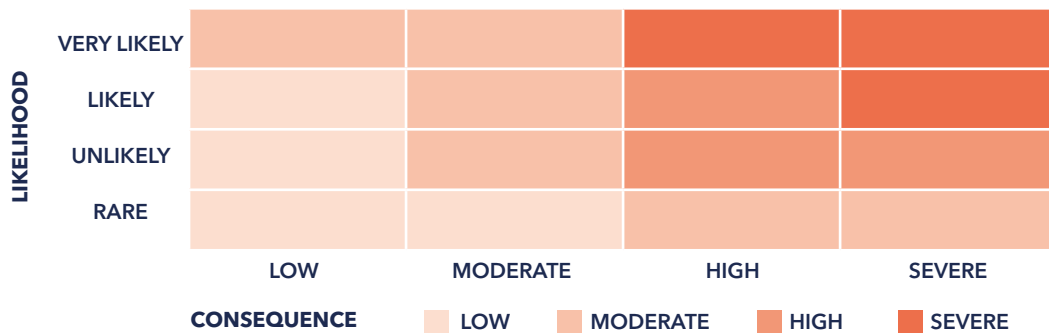
Main sources of workforce risk may include:

Internal to the organisation	External to the organisation
Leadership	Aged care reform
Resignations	Workforce skills shortages
Workforce skills and capabilities	An ageing population
Stress or burnout	Client expectations

Risk assessment looks at the gaps in workforce supply and demand, as well as internal and external organisational risks, and considers:

- the likelihood of not being able to fill workforce or skills gaps
- the consequence of not being able to fill workforce or skills gaps
- whether the risk is low, medium, high or severe.

All gaps should be risk assessed against the impact on the organisation from not addressing them. Risks that have severe consequences should be the priorities for action.



Workforce risk	Likelihood	What do I need to do to manage that workforce risk?



Finding your workforce solutions

Solutions can be grouped into four categories:

1. Develop your existing workforce skills and capability
2. Attract new employees to address skills gaps
3. Retain valued employees
4. Manage the workforce through organisational change.

Each solution will provide a focus on particular workforce issues and no one solution will solve all of the identified issues. Reviewing your solutions on a regular basis (a minimum of once a year) helps you adjust the response you put in place if your workforce or external impacts change. For example:

Strategy	Positives	Need to plan for
Develop my existing workforce	Already know my organisation	Training budget and workforce time to undertake the training
Attract new employees	Will bring fresh ideas	Will take time to settle in and be fully productive
Retain valued employees	Retain clinical knowledge and history	Retention strategies Replacement of key employees and knowledge transfer strategies
Manage the workforce through change	The change (e.g. new service offering) will support the organisations goals and help those involved to understand what is happening when, and what they need to do	Communication, timing and who will be impacted

Now it's time to think about your own strategies.

The strategies I need for my workforce are:

Strategy	Positives	Need to plan for

Do you need to develop the skills of your existing workforce?

Developing your staff does not necessarily mean they need formal training. Using the 70-20-10 rule gives your employees a variety of ways to learn and to grow their existing skills. This is also a good way to retain your valued employees or manage your workforce through change.

Things to consider:

	70 per cent experiential learning	20 per cent social learning	10 per cent formal learning
Learn via	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job-related experiences Increased responsibility in current role so they can safely learn by doing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactions with others Coaching/mentoring Giving feedback Researching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal education Attendance at training sessions held by local training providers
Example	Omar and Adele to take on more responsibility working on complex client needs	Jason to mentor Omar on managing the organisation	Certificate IV in Leadership and Management

STAGE 4

DEVELOP, IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR



You are now ready to develop, implement and monitor your workforce plan and its supporting action plan. Having a clear workforce plan that states your organisational goals and how you propose to achieve these goals through the support of your workforce provides a focus to your actions.



KEY ACTIVITIES IN THIS SECTION

1. Develop your workforce plan, including an action plan
2. Implement your action plan
3. Monitor and review your workforce plan



Action plan

A sound workforce action plan will identify:

- what needs to be done (e.g. implementing flexible working arrangements)
- who is responsible (e.g. facility manager)
- when it needs to be addressed (e.g. as an immediate priority).

All the information you have gathered so far will enable you to put together your action plan. Once complete, it is useful to share the action plan with your team and to consider placing it where everyone can see it (e.g. staff lunchroom). This will help your team understand what is happening, who is doing what, and when. It also gives them the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

If you are planning to develop your workforce, there are often lead times involved or other impacts on your organisation to consider. For example:

- A training course may take six months to complete. When identifying who the best person is to undertake this training, you will also need to consider when is the best time for them to start the training.
- A new piece of equipment will be purchased next year. If staff will be trained on the job by the supplier when it arrives, time needs to be allocated for this. The impact it has on productivity in the short and the longer term need to be considered in your return on investment.

Once you have written down your actions in the table on the next page, you can prioritise what needs to be done, by when and by whom.



What is your priority?

Once you have developed your action plan, you need to consider the sequence of actions to support your organisation to have the right people, in the right place, at the right time. You cannot always do everything at once, so you will need to prioritise what you will initially focus on.

Things to consider:

- Which actions will have the greatest impact on your organisation?
- What items need to be implemented in each future year?



Implement your action plan

When implementing your action plan, there may be a need for additional resources, such as training and technology, or redeploying current staff to accommodate greater flexibility in the workplace.

My additional resource needs are:

Resources needed	Who should I talk to about this?
Example: Training for new equipment	Managers (to identify appropriate staff to train) Finance (for training budget)

I also need to think about:

Your workforce plan on a page

Collating all of the information you developed on the previous pages of this workbook, you can now create your workforce plan onto one page.



Get started

Key people I am involving:

Aims and objectives of the workforce plan:



Gather information

Organisational goals for the next ____ months/years:

To reach these goals, my future workforce looks like:



Identify issues and find solutions

The key workforce risks to reaching my goal are:

The solutions I have identified to overcome the risks are:



Develop, implement and monitor

I will implement and monitor my workforce plan by:

GLOSSARY



Useful workforce planning terms to know

Workforce information

Workforce information covers a range of intelligence and data that exists or can be created about your workforce.

Quantitative data

- **Positions:** How many are filled or vacant?
- **Positions:** What positions have been budgeted for?
- **Resignations:** How many and why?
- **Recruitment:** How many positions, by type and reason, for the particular role needed?
- **Diversity information:** What is the diversity of your workforce in terms of age, gender, cultural background, declared disability?
- **Qualifications:** What type of qualifications are required?
- **Skills:** What specific skills are required?

Qualitative data

- Learning and development needs
- Employee engagement
- Work life stage (new to the workforce, early-mid career, end-career workers)
- Career aspirations
- Individual worker intentions to stay or leave

While this is not an exhaustive list of workforce information that an organisation may have available, it demonstrates the breadth of information that already exists or can be gathered to assist with workforce planning.

Workforce supply

Workforce supply is the size of your current and future workforce. It takes into consideration employee turnover through resignations and retirements, and how these affect the size of your workforce over time.

Workforce demand

Workforce demand is the number of employees you will need today and into the future to deliver against your business plan.

Workforce gap

Workforce gap occurs when there is a mismatch between supply and demand. That is, you do not have enough employees to meet your business needs or, in some cases, too many employees for your business needs.

Skills gap

A **skills gap** means there is a mismatch between the skills you need your employees to have to support your organisational goals and the skills your employees actually have.

Visit Ageing Australia's Workforce Hub at
employment.agedservicesworkforce.com.au



To find out more, visit the Workforce Planning Connect
website at www.jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/wpc



Ageing
Australia



Queensland
Government