



Workforce Design

Your workforce is a critical part of your service delivery

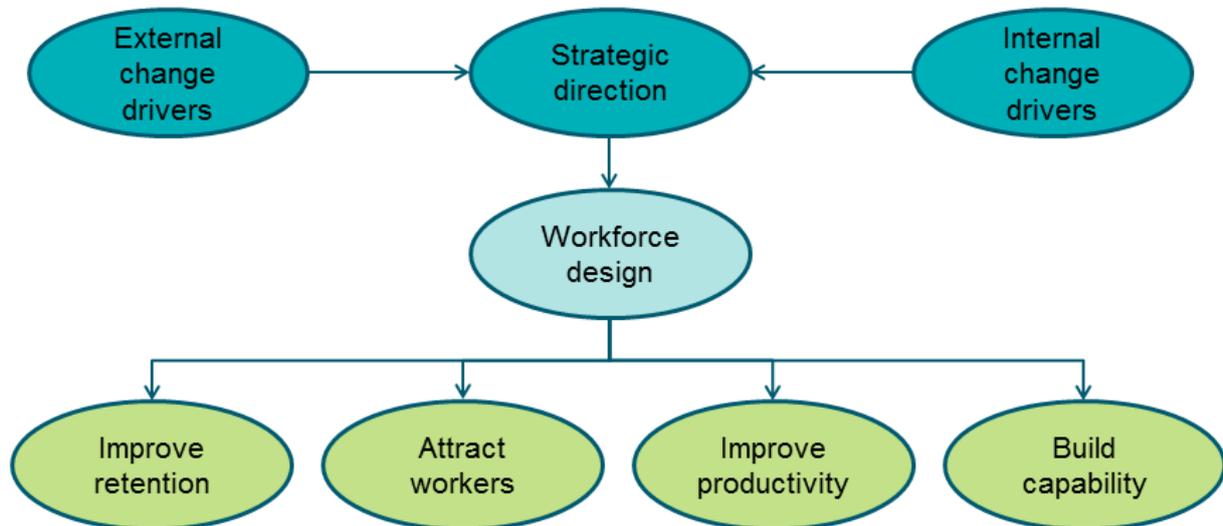
The abilities and skills of your workforce are important because they:

- help meet your clients' needs
- deliver your organisation's goals.

Your workforce includes staff, contractors and volunteers. Workforce design can help your organisation to have the right people, with the right skills, at the right time. This will help you to achieve your goals and prepare for future change. It will also help you to anticipate what staff and skills your organisation will need in the future so that you can keep delivering services efficiently and effectively. The benefits of good workplace design include:

- more staff staying with your organisation (retention)
- better productivity
- a more capable and sustainable workforce.

Inputs and outcomes of workforce design



View our factsheet on strategic planning for more information on developing your organisation's direction.



Understand your external environment

Your external environment is the events and conditions outside of your organisation that you can't control. These include:

- changes in the community
- government decisions that affect your clients
- the operations of other organisations in your community that offer similar or complementary services
- the availability of staff with the skills you need.

Workforce planning lets your organisation respond to these types of changes and should align with your strategic plan.

Assess your current workforce

To assess your workforce you need the following information:

- your current budget and financial position
- how many staff you have and how often they leave and are replaced (turnover)
- their employment type (permanent, casual and contractor, volunteer, part time and full time)
- the age, location and gender of your staff as well as how long they've worked for your organisation
- their level (classification or title)
- their main abilities
- their qualifications
- their knowledge and experience.

It is important to understand your external environment and current workforce before you start planning. This will confirm the reasons for any changes that need to be made.

Assess your future demand and supply

Once you understand your external environment and current workforce, you should assess your future workforce *demand* and *supply*.

Demand is the workforce you expect your organisation will need in the future. This need is based on your external environment and your strategic plan.

When assessing what your future demand will be, you should think about:

- how many staff you'll need
- where staff will be located
- the level of experience and qualifications your staff will need
- having a good mix of skills and abilities
- the needs of your clients
- anything else that may affect how many staff, and their skills, you'll need in your organisation.

Supply relates to what you expect your organisation's future workforce to look like. Your assessment should be based on:

- your current workforce (including your staff, volunteers and turnover)
- the potential sources and availability of staff and volunteers to join your organisation.

After assessing demand and supply, do a *gap analysis* to work out whether there is a gap between your expected demand and supply, and where this gap is. This will help you to work out:

- new roles and capabilities that could be introduced
- roles that are no longer needed and could be phased out.

A gap analysis will also help you to discover:

- areas that your staff need more development in
- opportunities to reskill your current staff.

An important part of workforce design involves building the capability and skills of your staff. This will improve the productivity of your organisation and make sure your staff are satisfied and engaged.

You may find you need extra skills that are not available through hiring new staff or retraining current staff. In this case, you may like to think about working with other organisations.

View our factsheet on working together for more information.

Develop a solution and monitor over time

Work out what you need to do to help close the gap between your workforce demand and supply. Your organisation may need to:

- develop a budget for its future workforce
- work out its recruitment needs
- think about attraction and retention strategies, such as offering flexible working arrangements and opportunities for volunteers
- develop a framework for managing staff learning and development to build their skills and capability.

Monitor your workforce plan (at least once a year) and review the impact of any changes you make. You will need to update your plan if there are changes to your external environment and strategic plan that affect your workforce.

Other Resources

Other resources you can use to help understand workforce design include:

- a Workforce Planning Toolkit available on the Victorian Public Sector Commission's website
- a Workforce Capability Framework Toolkit available on the Victorian Department of Human Services' website, and
- information on strengthening workforce capability from the Victorian Council of Social Service website.