Our Public Service 2020
Strategic Workforce Planning Guide

Strategic Workforce Planning Guide

| 1. Getting started | 2. Understand the organisation & its environment | 3. Review current workforce | 4. Identify future workforce | 5. Develop & implement SWFP | 6. Evaluate & revise the plan |

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Introduction

Strategic Workforce Planning (SWFP) is an essential tool for anticipating possible future developments and maintaining a well-structured workforce of an appropriate size, which is able to meet the changing needs of the public service in a cost-efficient manner.

This guide is a practical and hands-on toolkit that can be used to assist HR Managers and people leaders across the public service in developing a strategic workforce plan for their organisation.

The guide offers a step-by-step approach through the different stages of the SWFP process. It is divided into six sections, each designed to assist you in developing a SWFP for your organisation.
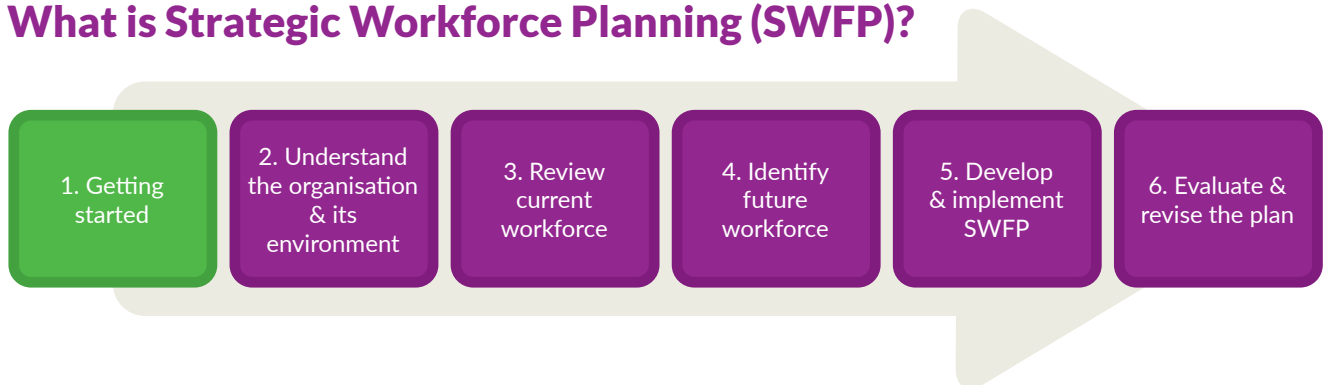
| 1. Getting started | 2. Understand the organisation & its environment | 3. Review current workforce | 4. Identify future workforce | 5. Develop & implement SWFP | 6. Evaluate & revise the plan |

Acknowledgements

Section 1 – Getting started

What is Strategic Workforce Planning (SWFP)?

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There are many definitions of SWFP.........to quote a few........

> "The right people, with the right skills, in the right roles, at the right time and the right cost' is what will ultimately deliver the right results for an organisation". **(CIPD)**

> "Workforce planning is a systematic, proactive process, which aligns strategic planning, human capital and budgeting to meet organisational goals"
>
> **(State of Georgia, Human Resource Service, 2012)**

In the Irish public service, workforce planning is described as:

The proactive management of current and future human resources by each organisation, aligned with their Statement of Strategy, to ensure the following are reflected:

- access to the right skills and experience;
- the changing needs of each organisation;
- the evolving environment within which they operate (incl. impacts related to technological developments); and
- available resources

This should be balanced with wider resource priorities in order to:

- ensure effective and responsive delivery of public services
- underpin efficiency, accountability and drive reform in public service delivery, and
- support the sustainable evolution of the public service pay and pensions bill, in line with the Government's overarching approach to public expenditure management". (DPER)

Regardless of which definition you choose for your organisation, Strategic Workforce Planning (SWFP) is the pro-active management of your current and future workforce composition to support the delivery of your organisation's business strategy in an evolving environment.

Strategic Workforce Planning:

- is continuous, not a one-off activity
- is a process, not a static action or set of actions
- is about streamlining behaviours towards embedding the process into the organisational culture
- is about shaping the workforce with a clearly identified purpose and to bring about particular changes
- has its purpose linked with the organisation's mandate, key goals and objectives,
- applies not just to the current workforce but anticipates future workforce requirements
- is agile and flexible and
- is aligned with the organisation's business planning process.

It represents a significant shift from its initial development back in the 1960's which focused on basic short-term 'manpower' or 'headcount' planning.

SWFP is a dynamic process that supports service delivery and the process of service redesign. This includes planning for new ways of working and development of new skill sets, competencies and behaviours. SWFP must consider multiple time horizons: Short – (1 year), medium – (3-5 years), and long-term – (10+ years).

1.0 Set Strategic Direction	2.0 Conduct Workforce Demand Analysis	3.0 Conduct Workforce Supply Analysis	4.0 Perform a Gap Analysis and Risk Assessment to Prioritise Results	5.0 Develop and Execute Agency Strategies	6.0 Monitor Evaluate and Revise Strategies
• Initiate Annual Strategic Workforce Planning Process • Conduct workload forecast	• Identify the workforce (core positions) needed • Perform workforce demand analysis	• Assess inventory (supply) of current workforce • Identify inventory (supply) of future workforce	• Perform gap analysis • Perform risk assessment on gaps and surpluses	• Formulate strategies • Incorporate into budget formulation/ execution • Execute strategies	• Set performance indicators • Assess performance • Adjust plans based on performance feedback • Communicate progress
Workload Forecast	**Workforce Demand**	**Workforce Supply**	**Gap Analysis Results**	**Office/Agency Strategies**	**Monitor Progress**

Deliverables

So why do it?

SWFP challenges and empowers the organisation to focus on what will be different in terms of talent needs and integrates analysis not just on workforce dynamics for the organisation but also potential dynamics in general workforce in the wider economy.

Figure 1: How SWFP links to other HR activities

SWFP provides insights for your organisation that goes beyond merely reacting to circumstantial market events. It can offer market and industry intelligence and help organisations to focus on areas including:

- Changing Customer needs
- Workforce demographics – retirements etc.
- Knowledge and skills gaps for present and future workforce requirements
- Succession planning, talent management and people development
- Innovation for more effective and efficient service delivery
- Workforce deployment and flexibility
- Recruitment and selection
- Learning and development
- Organisational agility
- Equality, diversity and inclusion, employee wellness, work-life balance and retention

Strategic Workforce Planning is a process of analysing your current workforce, determining the organisation's future workforce needs, identifying the gap and implementing solutions to allow the organisation to meet its ultimate strategic business plan.

While it is convenient to describe Strategic Workforce Planning as a process, it is important to understand that it is an iterative process, not rigidly a linear one. It must be agile and flexible in order to adapt to sudden developments, such as a global pandemic, that impacts on your organisation's ability to continue to operate.

It is a good idea to define the overall aim of SWFP in your organisation and the objectives you wish to achieve as a result, to assist our colleagues in the Property Registration Authority have set out their aim and objectives at **Appendix 1.**

It is a good idea to develop your SWFP as a Project and to manage it within your organisation's existing Project Management structures.

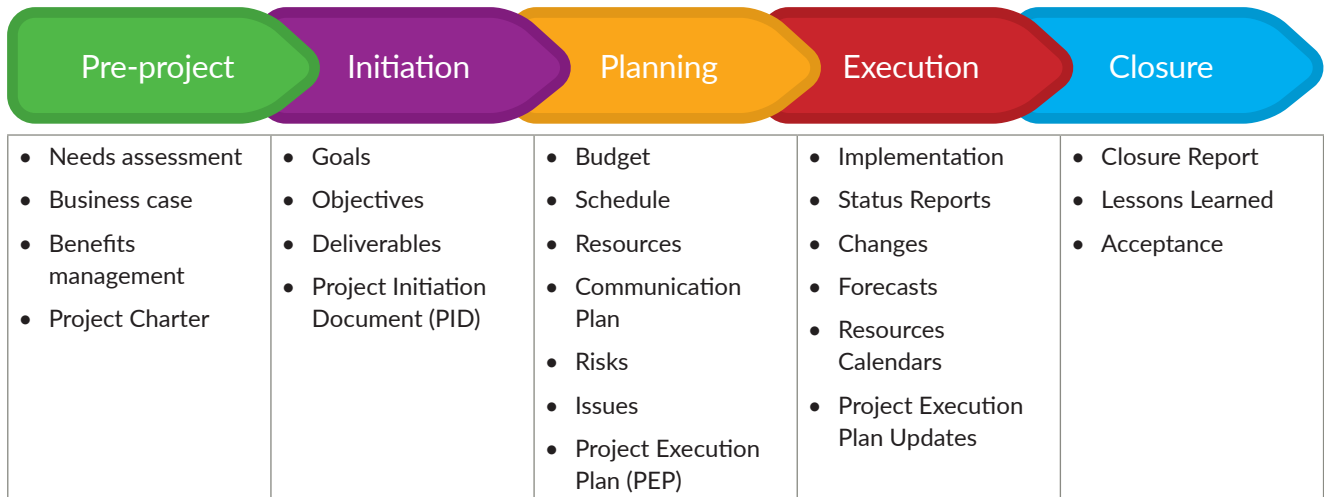| Pre-project	Initiation	Planning	Execution	Closure
• Needs assessment • Business case • Benefits management • Project Charter	• Goals • Objectives • Deliverables • Project Initiation Document (PID)	• Budget • Schedule • Resources • Communication Plan • Risks • Issues • Project Execution Plan (PEP)	• Implementation • Status Reports • Changes • Forecasts • Resources Calendars • Project Execution Plan Updates	• Closure Report • Lessons Learned • Acceptance

Figure 2: Phases of Project Management

Before moving on to cover the workforce planning process in detail let's examine the Roles and Responsibilities required for successful Strategic Workforce planning.

Who is responsible?

As with any significant project, the **Initiation and Planning** phase focuses on ensuring the appropriate project management principles are in place, including project definition, business case/justification and establishing the **Workforce Planning team**. The former should be approved at Senior Management or Board level, thereby establishing the strategic component of the process. Workforce Planning is often considered a process owned by the HR Department, rather than Management as a whole, and benefits from having a Senior Management champion to drive, promote and support the process.

HR can build support for Workforce Planning, including educating Management Board Members and other senior managers on the benefits to be derived, as well as the difference between Operational and Strategic Workforce Planning.

Workforce Planning Roles and Responsibilities

The table below is just a guideline and we recognise that each organisation's structures may differ and that the responsibilities detailed may fall to different roles.

However, whatever the structures, **leaders and line managers are essential in supporting activities for strategic workforce planning** and so, need to understand the relevance of it to their business strategy.

At senior levels, both HR Managers/Business Partners and Senior Management should support and drive the strategic end of the process and set the agenda for organisational development and change.

Develop a broad scope definition for the project:

What are you trying to achieve; by when; what is in and out of scope; what are the deliverables; who are the stakeholders; and who and what are key to delivery.

Workforce planning needs strong links across an organisation's functions and into strategic planning and finance in particular. Involving some of these other stakeholders in the design of a workforce planning approach will not only be informative but will help with implementation down the line.

Figure 3: Participation spectrum

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Senior Lead	Responsibility
Senior Management	Project Owner Project sponsor	• Secretary General or Head of Office, as Accounting Officer assumes full accountability for strategic Workforce Planning Senior Manager e.g. Director of Corporate Services or equivalent • Champions workforce planning to the Management Board and other senior managers • Provides high level direction and support • Makes decisions, if required • Participates in workshops
Workforce planning team	Project Manager/Lead Team Members should include at minimum HR data coordinator Financial Controller / Officer	• HR Manager • Project Management framework • Complete environment scanning • Collate data and reporting • Facilitate workshops • Managing communications • Data gathering • Data verification • Data analysis • Risk analysis • Financial projections and budgets
HR Business Partner/ Manager		• Key member of SWFP team • Participates in workshops • Participates in environment scanning • Facilitates change • Implements, monitors and evaluates plan
Business Manager(s)		• Translates business strategy into activities that drive workforce planning needs • Identifies internal challenges for the workforce plan • Profiles the current workforce skills and numbers • Determines the future workforce skills and numbers requirement • Works closely with HRBP to develop workforce plan to meet business objectives

Section 2 – Understand the Organisation and its environment

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Organisation's Business Strategy

Strategic Workforce Planning begins and ends with the Organisation's mandate, key goals and business strategy.

It is informed by the business strategy in the first instance, but it then becomes integral to the business strategy delivery.

- Business strategy succeeds or fails based upon the execution of that strategy by people – but which people?

- What roles are critical for the implementation of the business strategy?

- All roles are important, but some will be of high value strategically (at a point in time).

- A successful business strategy can require re-imagining existing roles or defining completely new roles and/or retrenching obsolete roles.

As part of the overall business planning in the Property Registration Authority, Business Managers complete a Divisional Planning template which includes a 'workforce planning extract. **(Appendix 2).** This informs workforce planning by identifying potential knowledge and skills gaps and initiatives planned. It requires Business Managers to amongst other things: examine performance indicators; develop succession and knowledge transfer plans; account for any work transformation and prioritise the interventions required.

Awareness of strategy in your organisation – ask yourself these questions...

Does your organisation have a clearly defined strategy and annual plan? How familiar are you with that?	
Who in your organisation is responsible for making the strategic decisions?	
Who has contributed to that strategy?	
Is the strategy clear to the whole organisation?	
Are you clear on how the organisation creates value?	

Understanding the external environment

A PESTLE analysis provides an effective framework to understand the external 'big picture' factors that impact on your organisation. PESTLE looks at six key factors - political, economic, sociological, technological, legal and environmental.

PESTLE Analysis

Environmental
e.g. Global warming and need to switch to sustainable resources; ethical sourcing; demand for remote working etc.

Political
e.g. Tax policy; environmental regulations; trade restrictions; political stability; programme for government etc.

Economic
e.g. growth/decline; exchange markers; agricultural market: wage rates; working hours; labour force etc.

Sociological
e.g. demographics; social issues; diversity; career attitudes; university data for skills/ qualifications etc.

Technological
e.g. new and emerging technologies (AI, Robotics, Blockchain etc.) impacts of these on your organisation

Legal
e.g. organisational mandate; changes in legislation impacting employment; quotas; access to materials, resources etc.

Figure 4: PESTLE Analysis

More information available from the CIPD at https://www.cipd.co.uk/ Images/pestle-analysis-template_ tcm18-27107.pdf

Understanding your overall operating environment

As outlined earlier, strategic workforce planning is informed by the business strategy in the first instance and then becomes integral to the business strategy delivery.

Therefore, it is vital not only that you know your organisational strategy but also that you understand your organisation's operating model and environment The operating model is the combination of roles, skills, structures, processes, assets and technologies that enable an organisation to deliver its services or product offerings.

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis on your organisation is a good way to analyse your organisation's overall operating environment. It will help you identify the positive aspects of the organisation (what you are doing well); where there are aspects that are within your control and detract from the value of your organisation in delivering in its mission for the citizen; opportunities or external positive factors that exist that your organisation can benefit from and threats or external negative factors that could place your organisational strategy at risk.

Strength (s)
e.g. What do you do well; internal resources (knowledge, skills, reputation, staff retention), tangible assets such as use of technology etc.

Weaknesses (w)
e.g. What do you lack or where are there areas to improve internally? (Skills, resources, technology etc.)

Opportunities (O)
e.g. External factors that can assist you to prosper (technology, economic factors, customer perception etc.)

Threats (T)
e.g. External factors beyond your control (Govt regulation, economy, health crisis, reduced funding, increased competition etc.)

Figure 5: SWOT analysis

Section 3: Review current workforce

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Having analysed the internal and external environment of your organisation, you can now use workforce segmentation techniques and workforce analytics to identify the knowledge, skills, abilities and other factors required for current and future workforce roles.

Workforce segmentation

While all roles are important, workforce segmentation helps you to identify the roles that are most critical to meeting your organisation's strategy.

As a good place to start, is to group different job functions into job families where people in these roles share a similar level of competence such as skills, knowledge and capabilities.

It is important to involve senior management and business leaders to develop a shared understanding of what constitutes 'strategic or critical' roles within your organisation.

Business managers can provide insights on:

- Divisional and functional priorities
- New technologies (IT unit)
- Pay Bill (Finance unit)

- Business process improvements
- Business activities and workflows
- New and/or specialist skill sets requirements

Broadly speaking, the workforce for most organisations can be segmented into four categories, in terms of relative scarcity and business value or impact

Questions to ask business leaders to help facilitate that decision making would include:

- Are these roles on projects that will drive the achievement of the business objectives?
- Are these roles performing activities others cannot do or are not equipped to do?
- If we lost this role, will it result in business disruption and/or delivery of services to the citizen?
- Are these roles engaged in work achieving results that have a direct impact on the reputation of the organisation?
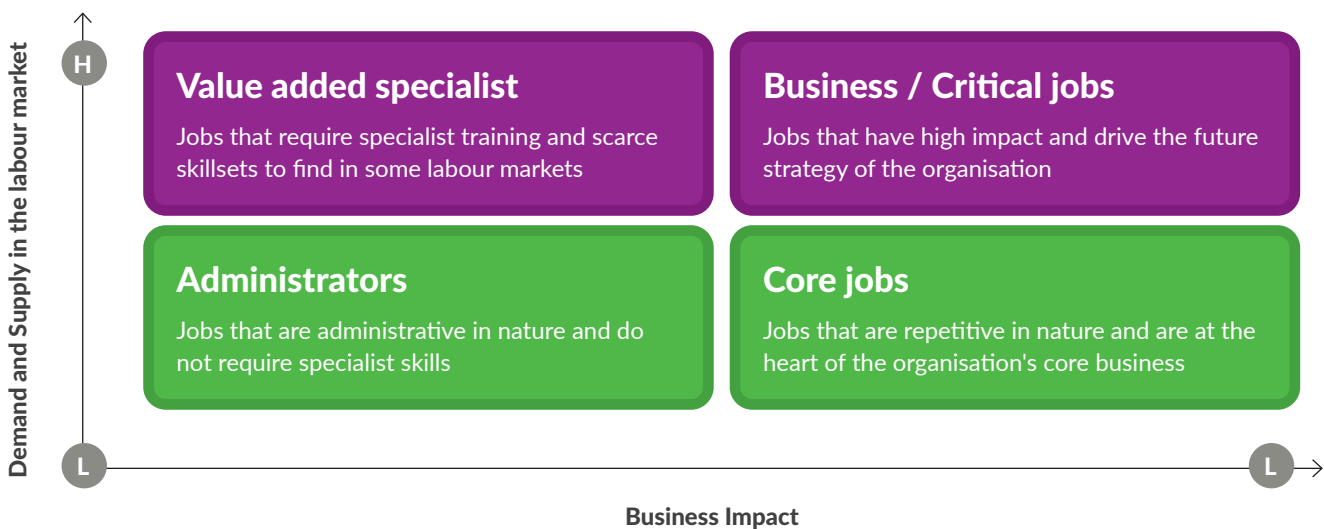- Are these roles contributing to building capability without which achievement of organisational goals is at risk

Value added specialist
Jobs that require specialist training and scarce skillsets to find in some labour markets

Business / Critical jobs
Jobs that have high impact and drive the future strategy of the organisation

Administrators
Jobs that are administrative in nature and do not require specialist skills

Core jobs
Jobs that are repetitive in nature and are at the heart of the organisation's core business

Demand and Supply in the labour market

Business Impact

Figure 6: Workforce segmentation

Data-sets for SWFP

Having broadly segmented the roles required, you need to assess your current workforce. The following list of data (though not exhaustive) will assist you in developing your strategic workforce plan and inform business decision making;

Current employees
• Staff numbers (FTE and Headcount), grade, gender, years' service, retirement eligibility
• Types of contracts, full/part-time, permanent, fixed term contract, secondment, contract
• Geographic location
• Specialist skills or qualifications
• Salary costs including overheads

Staff turnover
• Leavers – voluntary, retirements, dismissals, long term illness, death in service
• Destinations and reasons for leaving
• New hires by grade and gender and cultural background
• Patterns of internal movement – promotions, transfers, mobility
• Secondments
• Temporary Assignments

Skills, capabilities and attitudes
• Data on educational qualifications on entry
• Data on educational qualifications achieved post entry through refund of fees
• Data on work related training courses/modules completed
• Data on developmental training courses received
• Data on experience in different areas of work and duration
• Performance management data
• Learning and Development requirements
• Staff engagement survey results

Talent profile
• As per workforce segmentation exercise – identify critical roles by function, skill and knowledge
• Identification of key specialisms required to achieve strategic objectives
• Identification of high and low performers
• Identify development required by individuals and groups for career progression

External labour market
• Competitors for labour – terms and conditions offered
• Availability of skills required and locational imperatives
• Current unemployment and emigration rates
• Demand for remote working, work life balance and family friendly policies
• Employer of Choice issues

Appendix 2: Additional Data-sets for Strategic Workforce Planning

Section 4: Identify future workforce

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Model the future workforce

At the outset one of the definitions we cited for Strategic Workforce Planning was having - "The right people, with the right skills, in the right roles, at the right time and the right cost' is what will ultimately deliver the right results for an organisation". *(CIPD)*

The CIPD provide a very useful five 'rights' principle that can be applied when translating your organisational strategy to workforce planning:

Right shape: the right workforce composition in terms of structure, purpose, ratio of managers to professional and administrative staff, the right demographic mix

Right skills: capabilities necessary to meet future goals and bridge current gaps

Right location: availability of people with the right capabilities at the right locations to meet changing requirements

Right size: the number of people for the jobs and skills needed to achieve your goals efficiently and effectively

Right cost: an effective employee/cost ratio, benchmarking pay and reward, training budgets, the cost of recruitment, development and mobility costs

Figure 7: Five rights principles

https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/workforce-planning-guide_tcm18-42735.pdf

How do you estimate your workforce requirements?

There are many methods for this, probably the best way to start is to meet with your business managers to discuss the roles in their areas. A useful guide is provided by the SWFP Unit in Civil Service Human Resources Division.

Role of interest:		
Types of potential changes that will impact on the role	Anticipate changes impacting on this role	Resulting scenario plans for simulation
Business growth/contraction		
Competency/Skill changes		
Flexible working / remote working		
Geographic considerations		
Technology changes		
Business process changes		
Environment changes		
Social changes		

Budget plays a very important part of forecasting future workforce requirements. If a budget (cost or headcount) has already been set, then you can work out how many people you can afford to employ. However, resources should be allocated or linked to levels of business activity.

Scenario planning

Scenario planning can tackle uncertainty directly by looking further ahead at alternative views of the future. It is useful in assessing the risks of different organisation futures. **While it cannot predict what will happen it allows us to look at 'what if' situations.** We have seen key parameters change in the past (e.g. Brexit, economic downturn etc.). Managing unknowns and assumptions can be one of the harder parts of workforce planning, however it creates a space to help us consider what might occur in the future.

Scenario planning allows us to identify specific uncertainties or different realities and how they might affect our future business operations.

Most recently the COVID-19 Health emergency has required us to identify critical roles from our Business Continuity Plans to enable us to continue to provide essential services to our citizens. It has also necessitated the move to remote working for a large number of roles, we need to prioritise this into the future to meet the objectives for remote working outlined in the recent **Programme for Government**.

We should review our 'lessons learned' from this period, examine any operations and/or processes that have migrated to alternative platforms and the impact that may have for your future workforce requirements (numbers, skills etc.).

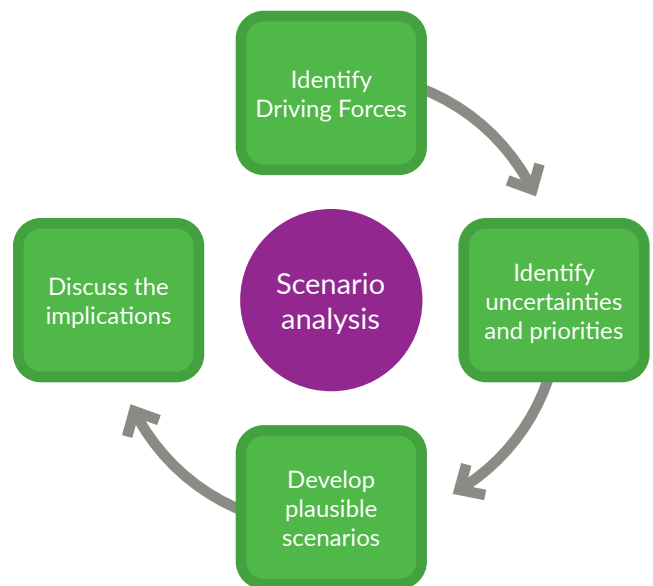A typical process for scenario planning looks like this:

Figure 8: Scenario Planning

Identify the workforce gaps against future needs

Remember identifying gaps while planning the workforce requirements of the future is not just about **RECRUITMENT**, the information you have gathered to-date will help you identify the gaps you need to address, some of these include:

- Gaps where the likely availability of people is lower than the needs, will need to develop existing staff or recruit

- Negative gaps, where you have more people in certain groups than are needed, you may need to consider skills development or redeployment

- Newly required specialist skills to meet the organisational mandate
- Gaps in skills, but not in numbers, you may need to look at training or re-skilling. Ensure you capture the required skills in future role profiles when recruiting

To back-fill or not to back-fill?

Too often when an employee leaves, there is a reaction to either replace like for like or to re-distribute work amongst existing staff. The workforce is changing and therefore we need to challenge ourselves in terms of the role and the type of skills required into the future.

As referred to earlier and included at **Appendix 2**, our colleagues in the Property Registration Authority use this format with their Business Managers when discussing skills/ knowledge gaps and possible solutions.

Having established what the future may look like together with the skills and competencies that may be required it is necessary to compare that information with the information gathered from the analysis of your current workforce. Once the imbalances have been identified it will then be necessary to prioritise based on their impact.

Prioritisation of Gaps and Needs

Having segmented the roles earlier you can now prioritise the workforce gaps and needs.

What gaps do you have (or are likely to have) that are critical to achievement of the business strategy and are in high demand in the labour market? Is there capacity to build these competencies from within your current workforce?

Do you have gaps for specialist roles, which may be scarce to find in the labour market and may be difficult or lengthy to build within your workforce?

Do you have gaps that are core to the delivery of your service, while these may not be scarce in the market, you will need to consider how you can grow these skills from within and also protect the skills currently within your workforce.

Where gaps are identified that are administrative in nature and freely available in the market, it will give you the opportunity to review the job roles and determine they could be streamlined or delivered by an alternative staffing strategy.

Once gaps have been identified, assigning an appropriate risk category is considered best practice. As with any risk management exercise, determining the level of risk associated with each gap and the overall risk appetite of the organisation is paramount. Identifying critical gaps in terms of risk (i.e. those which have both high likelihood and high impact) is essential as it allows effective prioritisation and the development of initiatives and risk mitigation strategies to address, or narrow, the gap. Risks identified should be included in the organisation's risk register.
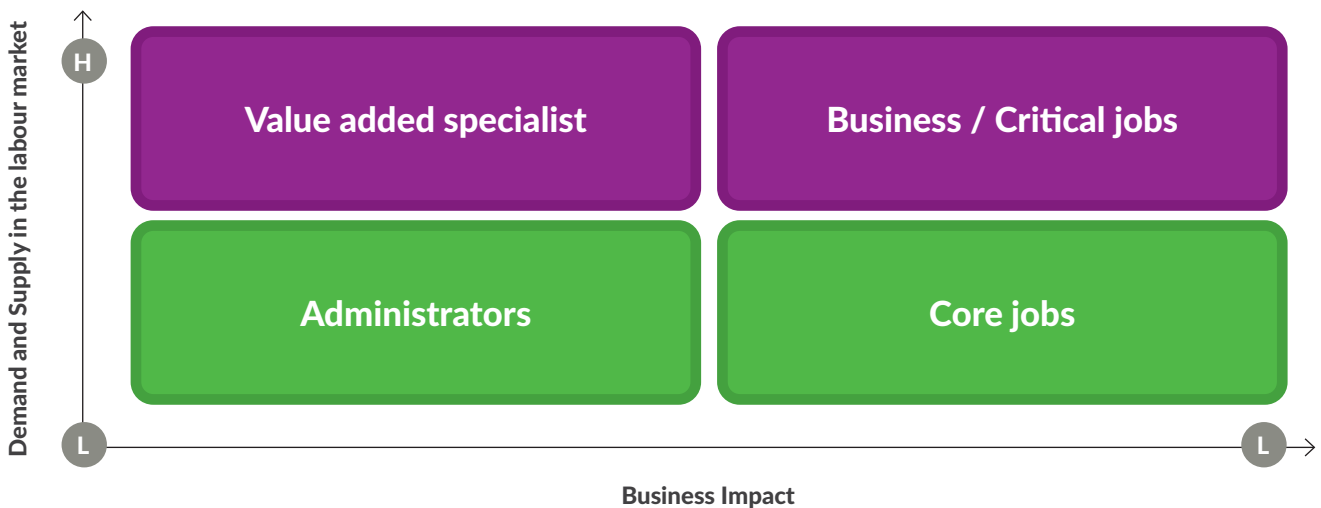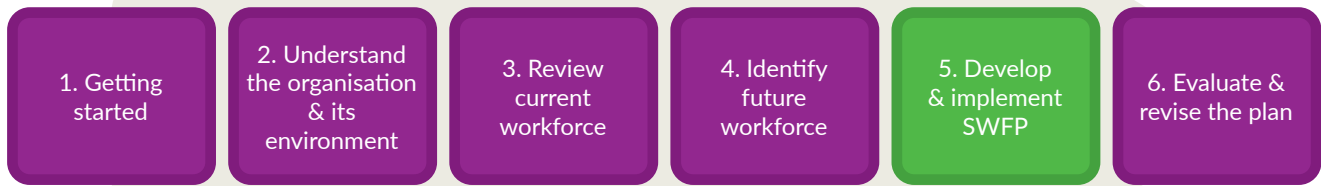

Figure 9: Prioritisation of Gaps and Needs

It is useful to summarise the action areas by workforce group and will assist you in drawing up your Action Plan. A template such as the one below (with examples) may help you in doing this.

Workforce Group/roles	Future staffing need	Current workforce	Resourcing issues, risks, gaps	Priority actions/options to mitigate risk
IT specialists	• High attrition	• 1 leaving within 3 months • 1 retirement by year end	• Will need at least 5 over next 3 years • Risk of inability to recruit • Need to grow our own expertise	• Support relevant professional training for existing staff • Examine recruitment drive to college students
Project Managers	• Requirement to manage two large projects	• Insufficient resources to manage projects	• Short term requirement for 6 months	• Look to buy skills for short term • Examine secondment opportunities from other areas • Look to develop skills within current workforce

Section 5: Develop and implement SWFP

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Once the gaps have been identified, analysed and prioritised it will be possible to develop your Workforce development plan which will set down how you intend to deal with them.

The workforce development plan is an action plan detailing the actions you will take to take to meet future needs. When determining your plan, you should take the following options into consideration:

- Redesign and remodelling of jobs
- Opportunities for joint delivery or shared services with partners
- Sources of recruitment
- Review of qualification and entry requirements for posts that are difficult to recruit
- Greater job flexibility e.g. more flexible working

- Increase learning and development opportunities
- Process redesign and improvement
- Productivity improvement
- Re-skilling and up-skilling
- Remote or Homeworking

Risk and options analysis

When you are developing strategies and initiatives to address your workforce gaps you will have several options. Some may address only one of your gaps, while other may address several. The template below when populated can help assess the various strategies by comparing the gaps they will address, noting the potential limitations of implementing the strategies and initiatives.

Gaps to be addressed	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk	Mitigation / initiative options	Other gaps that will be addressed	Limitations	Alignment with Org objectives	Success likelihood	Residual risk	Est Cost	Responsibility
E.g. shortage of Policy Analysts	Likely	High	High	Introduce graduate policy programme	Pending retirements with policy skills over 3 years	Budgetary constraints / graduate supply	Key Org objective	High Medium Low			

Figure 10: Risk and options analysis

As mentioned at the outset, SWFP is a continuous and not just a once off exercise. The plan should also include key performance indicators to measure progress and clearly indicate resource implications. It should also take account of other initiatives that may impact upon the plan.

The Action Plan

You can use the following style template to outline your chosen strategies and initiatives (in order of priority) and the responsibilities, key performance indicators, timeline, milestones and resource requirements. As recommended at the outset, Line Management and HR Managers should be involved in this process to ensure you develop a tangible and realistic Action Plan.

Strategies & Initiatives	Priority	Responsibility	KPI & target	Timeline	Milestones & deliverables	Budget & resource requirements
E.g. introduce graduate policy programme	High	HRM (implementation) CEO (owner)		Jan 2021 to June 2021	Jan 2021 – advertise Feb 2021 – interviews Mar 2021 – announce positions June2021 – start date	1 x HR Staff required for duration of the timeline

Figure 11: The Action Plan

Section 6: Evaluate and revise the plan

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For SWFP to be effective it should be subject to regular review and evaluation. The review process should be integrated into the annual business planning process and should be updated when major initiatives/changes are planned. It should be included as a formal standing Agenda item at Senior Management/Board meetings.

Ongoing monitoring and oversight also involves meeting reporting requirements to DPER, Internal Audit, C&AG audits, Compliance reports, oversight by a parent Department or non-executive board etc.

The following may assist when monitoring and evaluating:

- Business Plan targets, outcomes and performance indicators
- Business Activity levels
- Productivity levels
- Backlogs and progress made in eliminating these
- Planned actions and strategies and progress with the implementation of these
- Individual staff objectives and proposed outcomes
- Proposed system and organisational changes and progress with these
- Monitoring of actual costs and benefits against business plan estimates
- Qualitative information and performance indicators in such areas as organisational culture, values, communication and change and staff views regarding these
- Did your workforce projects achieve their objectives?
- Reflect on learning that has occurred. What worked well? What could be improved?
- Were there any unexpected outcomes?
- Were the actions and strategies completed and do they fulfil the goals?
- Did the action plan accomplish what your organisation needed?
- Have the conditions changed so that the strategies and actions need to be modified?

- Are your organisation's workforce planning assumptions still valid?
- Do the workforce gaps still exist?
- Are there new emerging specialisms which should be considered?
- Are the knowledge and skills of employees being developed quickly enough to become effective?
- Do new recruits have the needed knowledge, skills and level of expertise?
- Have all risks identified been mitigated?

Workforce plans should be reviewed by management teams on a regular basis, not only to see if planned actions are taking place, but also to check that the plans remain relevant.

Some critical issues to monitor and report on include:

- Staff in post and costs (salary plus overheads) including temporary and agency staff, as well as any contractors
- If staffing is on track against requirements
- Changes in employee composition (remember diversity of staff is proved to add value to an organisation)
- Workforce flows – starters/leavers compared to previous years, exit interviews, employee surveys, and retirement trends
- Review of workforce risks, including talent availability, labour market, succession planning etc.

See **Appendix** 4 for a table including a number of review processes and reporting basis which should be considered as part of your strategic workforce planning process.

Section 7: Conclusion

Remember, SWFP is an ongoing process, the most important thing is to **'start'**, everything will not fall into place perfectly in year 1 or indeed in year 2, however the learnings, data collection and analysis undertaken will help anticipate and address your future workforce requirements to help achieve your organisational objectives.

(Some top tips on workforce planning from CIPD are included at Appendix 5)

Section 8: References and useful resources

CIPD—Workforce Planning Practice

https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/workforce-planning-guide_tcm18-42735.pdf

Workforce planning in the Irish Public Service

https://www.ipa.ie/_fileUpload/Documents/WORKFORCEPLANNING.pdf

Public-Service-Project-Management-Handbook.pdf

https://www.ops2020.gov.ie/app/uploads/2020/01/20191210_OPS-2020-Action-10-

Boyle R (2018), *Public Sector Trends, The Institute of Public Administration [Accessed via* *https://www.ipa.ie/_fileUpload/Documents/PUBLICSECTORTRENDS2018.pdf*

DPER (2014) The Civil Service Renewal Plan – A Vision and Three Year action Plan for the Civil Service [Accessed via https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/4171/101218152156-e1206bb2c0964a53888531e0c96c356e.pdf#page=1]

DPER. (2020) *Our Public Service 2020* [online] [Accessed via https://www.ops2020.gov.ie/]

Health workforce planning models, tools and processes in five countries

https://www.hrb.ie/fileadmin/publications_files/Health_Workforce_Planning_Models_2016.pdf

Appendix 1

Property Registration Authority - Strategic Workforce Planning Objectives

Overall Aim

To enhance the alignment in the PRA of HR Management with its operational requirements and strategic goals and thereby increase organisational agility when responding to Government priorities and a changing environment.

Objectives

1. To maintain systematic data about the PRA workforce, including any risks related to the achievement of strategic goals.

2. To clearly articulate HR strategies aimed at rightsizing the PRA workforce based on strategic priorities and associated risks.

3. To facilitate collaboration with managers and the Finance Unit in the proactive management of pay bill to enhance workforce capacity and capability.

4. To facilitate opportunities for PRA staff to develop themselves in line with the PRA's strategic goals

5. To align annual business planning with the implementation of workforce plans

6. To enhance strategic HR management in the PRA through evidence based, transparent and accountable decision making in the allocation of available resources

Appendix 2

Property Registration Authority – Divisional Planning Template – WFP extract

6 Year X Workforce Planning (identifying and filling skills / knowledge gaps)	
Existing Resources: X AP, X HEO, X EO, X CO, X RMD, X EIC, X EOM	
Statistics on skills / knowledge gaps arising (inc. retirements, special leave arrangements etc.):	
Under each heading list examples of initiatives planned and key performance indicators and any innovations planned	
Identifying and prioritising knowledge and skills gaps:	Proactive absence management:
Prioritising casework:	Proactive performance management:
Re-structuring/re-allocation/re-assignment of functions and work undertaken:	Optimising uptake of learning and Development interventions:
Business process interventions undertaken:	Facilitating employee wellbeing and diversity:
Succession planning methods used:	Knowledge management:
Future Innovations Planned:	

Appendix 3
Recommended data collection for SWFP

Data Set	Description	Comments
Total Staff numbers	Number of staff in each role, grade, section	To gather current position
Staff Numbers by FTE	Number of Staff full time equivalents	To gather current position
Staff Turnover	Employee age & years' service	To understand trends for turnover in terms of age and service
	Retirement eligibility	To understand predictions for possible future retirements
	Exits excluding retirements	Who exited the organisation and destinations (mobility, promotion, private sector etc.)
Geographic location	If staff spread across a number of offices	To help inform current position and future planning
Remote /in office /hybrid		To help inform current position and future planning
Gender balance	Gender breakdown by grade	To provide guidance for actions to build greater gender balance
Mobility	New hires by Grade and if new to civil/public service	To understand resource pool
Flexible working arrangements	FTE vs Headcount, by grade and gender	To inform the People Strategy and benchmark current position
Career progression	Number of internal promotions by grade and gender	To assist succession planning and inform the L&D strategy
Absence rate	Number of long and short-term absences Lost time rate Gender/grade based?	To understand trends and link to policies and people strategies
Learning & Development	Skills Register	To assess current talent pool skills and competencies
	Educational qualifications on entry and achieved post entry through refund of fees	To assess current talent pool skills and competencies
	Job specific training Developmental training	
Performance Management	Participation rate Performance Improvement Plans	To assist with succession planning and L&D planning
Staff Costs	Average cost by grade	To support budget requirements
Staff Survey	Survey reports	To measure staff engagement, opportunities etc.

Appendix 4
Suggested review processes and reporting basis

Implementation and review forum	Action	Reporting basis
Management Board	Quarterly update by HR Manager	Standing item on Agenda
Compliance Unit	Completion of annual Compliance template for Compliance Unit	Annual compliance report and provision of assurances to Accounting Officer
Budgetary Committee	Participation in meetings by HR Manager and Head of Operations	Oversight of budgetary expenditure including paybill
Ongoing liaison between HR and Finance Unit	Monthly monitoring of data on paybill and staff numbers and projected exits	Ensuring adherence to projected workforce planning figures Liaison with Financial Controller a requirement of DPER guidelines
Performance oversight meetings with Parent Department if applicable	Usually, twice yearly on progress (Accounting Officer, Head of Operations and Financial Controller)	Annual oversight and performance agreement with Parent Department
WFP returns to DPER (or Parent Department if applicable)	Workforce Planning iterations to DPER or Parent Department Completion of updates as requested	Oversight by DPER
Annual Audit procedures	Internal Audit external - service providers Quality and Compliance Audits – process and projects C&AG Audits, annual appropriation accounts review, VFM review	Audit and Risk Committee oversight Provision of assurances to Accounting Officer Quality Management framework Compliance obligations Constitutional and parliamentary oversight

Appendix 5
Top tips for Workforce Planning *(provided from CIPD)*

Start with the organisation strategy and the external factors that might affect the organisation; use scenario planning to explore possible futures and identify risks.

Organise workforce planning to suit your organisation, for example; what is best done internally and what needs to be done locally, what by HR and what by managers and leaders at different levels?

Clearly communicate responsibilities for workforce planning.

Ensure that whoever is tasked with workforce planning has the know-how they need. Asking the right kinds of questions is a very good start. Access is also needed to relevant data, people in the organisation who understand the issues, and decision-makers who are the customers for workforce planning.

Develop simple but reliable and relevant data about organisation activity and the workforce, with data fields classified and reported in a consistent manner.

Focus workforce planning activities on the real resourcing risks. These tend to arise in workforce groups that are key to organisational performance – such as critical roles and roles that are hard to recruit for or take a long time to train for.

Plan for workforce requirement and availability in terms of skills as well as numbers, so you can identify and address current and upcoming skills gaps.

Plan for a stronger emphasis on growing skills internally and increasing the flexibility and resilience of existing employees; this mitigates the risk of not being able to find skills externally.

Remember to look at how you will replace leavers from a job group (including those who move to other jobs internally), not only to fill new roles. Planning for necessary workforce reductions is as important as planning for growth.

Consider planning on varied timeframes for different purposes – not just the normal annual cycle but short-term workforce deployment and longer-term strategic workforce planning. Workforce plans can also run alongside specific organisation change programmes.

Use analysis to turn data into useful management information and insights, addressing real business problems and informing decisions.

Use it to help managers surface and share their assumptions and understanding, to identify options and agree on actions that better align the workforce with organisation needs. A workforce planning mind-set creates habit of challenging assumptions and looking for relevant information to inform employment decisions.

Ensure workforce plans link to practical action in the recruitment, development and deployment of people, and where appropriate in work design, reward and so on.