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## Human resource management — Workforce planning

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [Foreword - Supplementary information](#)

The committee responsible for this document is Technical Committee ISO/TC 260, *Human resource management*.

Introduction

This International Standard has been developed in response to worldwide demand for **Workforce Planning** advice and support to enable industry, organizations and businesses of all sizes to advance their workforce planning capabilities and to respond more effectively to the current and projected demands of the labour market, the dynamic international business environment and its increasing complexity.

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# Human resource management — Workforce planning

## 1 Scope

This International Standard provides Workforce Planning guidelines and a framework that are scalable to the needs of any organizations regardless of size, industry or sector. It is relevant to anyone with an interest in the topic or associated topics. All requirements in this international standard are applicable only to the extent that they are not in conflict with, or prohibited by, applicable law and government regulations.

## 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/DIS30400:2015 (E) Human Resource Management Terminology

ISO/WD 30408: 2015 Guidelines on Human Governance

ISO/WD 30405: 2015 Guidelines on Recruitment

ISO31000:2009 Risk Management Principles and Guidelines

ISO/TR 31004:2013 Risk management – Guidance for the implementation of ISO 31000

ISO Guide 73:2009 Risk management – Vocabulary

IEC 31010:2009 Risk management – Risk assessment techniques

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply / the terms and definitions given in ISO/DIS 30400:2015 Human Resource Management Terminology and the following apply.

### 3.1

#### **workforce**

people who provide a service or labour to contribute to business or organizational outcomes

### 3.2

#### **planning**

process of thinking about and organizing the activities required to achieve a desired outcome

### 3.3

#### **workforce planning**

systematic identification, analysis and *planning* (3.2) of organizational needs in terms of people

Note 1 to entry: It is a process used to generate business intelligence to inform business of the current and future impact of the external and internal environment on the business, enabling the business to be resilient to structural and cultural changes to better position itself for the future.

#### 3.3.1

##### **strategic workforce planning**

*workforce planning* (3.3) which usually covers a defined period of time, aligned to organizational strategy

Note 1 to entry: The scope of *planning* (3.2) can include identifying the *workforce* (3.1) assessments and benchmarking, HR policy frameworks and associated processes on current and future organizational strategic objectives.

#### 3.3.2

##### **operational workforce planning**

*workforce planning* (3.3) which covers a defined period of time, aligned with the organization's *planning* (3.2) cycle, and which focuses on gathering, analysing and reporting on workforce planning strategy

Note 1 to entry: The shorter-term *planning* (3.2) activities of staffing or scheduling can be excluded.

## 4 Value of workforce planning

### 4.1 General

Workforce planning identifies current, transition and future workforce demand and supply and in doing so makes explicit the human resource requirements of an organization. It enables management to anticipate and respond to identified needs to strengthen organizational performance outcomes.

Strategic Workforce Planning is relevant because we live and work in a global knowledge economy that is highly connected and interrelated. Furthermore, the environment within which it operates is uncertain and constantly changing. To operate effectively in this environment, organizational leaders and organizations are required to plan and predict for future growth. This requires flexibility, adaptability and resilience.

Organizations can be perceived as a collection of capabilities. The value of strategic workforce planning is that it enables organizational growth and success by connecting HR strategy and practices to business strategy and financial plans.

Workforce planning also plays a critical role in managing change including growth, no change, decline, restructure, amalgamations and closure.

### 4.2 Relevance of workforce planning to different stakeholders

There are many influences involved with workforce planning. It is used by organizations of all sizes, industries or sectors to enable them to respond more effectively to the current and projected demands of the labour market.

Internal stakeholders include employers, leaders and people. This knowledge can be gained from a comprehensive management process to advise leaders and to ensure that the human



capital, and therefore organizational capabilities, required to create and executive the business strategy are present within the organization.

### 4.3 Value to Organizations

Workforce planning applies to organizations of all sizes, industries or sectors. Though the objectives and outcomes of each plan are often consistent, the complexity varies with the nature and size of an organization.

Workforce planning strengthens the capacity to:

- retain existing staff, skillsets, and attract high-performing staff;
- manage the workforce to avoid skill shortages or oversupply with regard to:
  - economic cycle (growth, no change and decline)
  - uneven or cyclical market demand, and
  - under-utilized labour market

in order to maintain the best skill mix and to identify, monitor and manage workforce risk

- adopt new business models and new technology;
- plan the HR function
- remain competitive with regard to the workforce:
  - at regional level;
  - across industry sector; and
  - globally,

### 4.4 Value to Industries or Sectors

Industry representative groups engage in workforce planning for their industry sectors to:

- identify the required skills and ensure the industry has access to a pool of appropriately skilled people;
- lobby governments and the education industry to ensure that they are training enough people to fill future skills needs within the industry;
- protect the reputation of the industry sector by ensuring that it has the skilled workforce required to deliver; and
- create and maintain flexibility of labour by accommodating workers who swap jobs by keeping their skills in the sector and or in the region.

#### 4.5 Value to Regions

Regions will undertake regional workforce planning themselves and encourage and support local businesses to undertake this to:

- ensure that local employment opportunities are a good match for the skills of the residents of the region and vice versa;
- encourage local businesses to utilize the skills that exist in the community;
- create a planning base for attracting and supporting new industries/employers to the region;
- manage the impact of demographic changes and other economic factors on the region, including:
  - helping to maintain regional workforces to support essential community services like elder care, medical and community development; telecommunications, transport, infrastructure.
  - targeting programs to attract new residents with the right skills to complement existing workforce needs;
  - supporting longevity and sustainability of local industries and increase the productivity of local enterprises to increase job opportunities and promote regional growth; and
  - encouraging regional growth through better employability of workers and workforce mobility.

#### 4.6 Value to Governments

Governments can support and undertake a range of workforce planning initiatives at the economy wide, regional, industry, individual enterprise, country and global level.

They are key external stakeholders of an organization.

They can promote greater productivity and economic prosperity, by providing for laws regulating the labour market and tackling inequalities. They can contribute by building resilience and agility in the economy to enable it to prosper, absorb shocks, adapt and respond to the impact of global factors, including periods of rapid structural change brought on by changing global demand and competition.

#### 4.7 Value to People

Workforce planning enables people to know the current and future talent requirements of the organization.

#### 4.8 External and internal influences

Workforce planning generates business intelligence to inform business of the current and future impact of the external and internal environment on the organization, enabling the organization to be resilient to structural and cultural change to better position itself for the future. These influences can be complex and comprehensive, and include the following:

— External influences: Local, regional, national and international economic, political, social and demographic labour market environment, industry and Government regulation, compliance, legislation, technology.

— Internal influences: Varying market conditions, local and global economic cycle, workplace policy and practices, workforce mobility, amalgamations, upsizing, downsizing, closures, new entities, cost reduction, competition, productivity, new products and services, retaining talent, building business resilience, capability building.

All require change management to determine business risk and to ensure that management priorities, policies and practices effectively respond to strategic, regulatory and operational needs. Workforce planning enables workforce risk assessment and identification of risk mitigation strategies.

Workforce planning is an integral part of Director fiduciary responsibilities for Governance, Finance, Operations, Risk and Compliance.

## 5 Structure of workforce planning

### 5.1 General

Workforce planning continually faces new challenges from increasing globalization, enhanced technologies and the shift in workforce demographics. It requires navigation through the dynamic and often complex economic, legislative, social, environmental and industrial environment in which the plans operate.

### 5.2 Structure of workforce planning

*Workforce Planning* is now defined as two separate but interrelated tasks requiring different knowledge and skill sets consisting of the following:

*Strategic workforce planning* (3.3.1)

*Operational workforce planning* (3.3.2)

### 5.3 Process of workforce planning

*Workforce planning* is an active and continuous process in the organizational planning cycle.

*Workforce planning* is the responsibility of the senior management of the organization and should be aligned and consistent with its organizational strategies and governance. It includes a review mechanism, risk management and compliance with laws, regulations and international conventions.

*Workforce planning* is supported by the process and systems available to gather, analyse and report on workforce demographics and planning strategies.

## 6 Key components of workforce planning

### 6.1 General

There are many different ways to develop a workforce plan. An organization may have completed some, but not all, of the steps. This guideline provides a detailed and validated