

Do skill shortages have you stuffed?

Is your workforce packed and heading out the door?

Is your game plan ready for when the chips are down?



FOOD, TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

Workforce Planning Guide



A basic handbook for business owners and operators
in the Food, Tourism and Hospitality industries



WELCOME

About Us

Food, Tourism and Hospitality Industry Skills Advisory Council SA Inc (FTH Skills Council) is one of nine Industry Skills Boards which were established by the South Australian Government to play a significant role in identifying current and emerging skills and workforce development needs within each of their industry sectors. The Boards have been instrumental in building awareness of the importance of workforce development and planning. By working directly with industry, community and government, the FTH Skills Council has a role to:

- Promote and support the adoption of best practice workforce development strategies and workforce planning
- Propose, manage and broker workforce development programs to industry
- Assist in training package development, review and endorsement
- Provide industry advice on skill requirements to influence training and education systems and pathways
- Influence Government's policy directions for workforce development.

This booklet is one of a series of publications the FTH Skills Council has produced to support South Australian industry to attract and retain an appropriate workforce for current needs and future growth.

January 2009

Recent developments in global financial markets mean that it is very difficult to predict with any degree of certainty what the short and medium term outlook for the South Australian economy will be. There is concern that the current developments, as they play out, will impact adversely on jobs in South Australia.

Major projects are expected to create thousands of new jobs in SA over the next decade. Even if some of the projects are delayed, particularly because of the recent financial turmoil, the size and nature of the projects mean that there is still a good chance that South Australia will maintain positive economic growth and job expansion.

It is anticipated that at least 250,000 people will be required for these new projects and to replace those leaving the workforce in the next ten years. While global economic instability is a cause for short term concern it is important that we don't lose sight of the medium term challenge of attracting and retaining skilled people in the context of an ageing workforce. Workforce planning helps us to avoid making short-term decisions that have the potential to compromise future growth prospects.

Competing with other industries in a \$ for \$ battle for staff just isn't an option for most Food, Tourism and Hospitality businesses. Workforce Planning - followed by decisive action - is therefore critical to sustainability.



Who should read it?

This booklet has been written specifically for owners and operators in the South Australian Food, Tourism and Hospitality Industries. No, it isn't a manual for HR practitioners. It's for the people who make the high-level decisions in businesses - the people who understand best how the business works and what it needs in order to keep going. It's for the people who hold the vision about where the business might go in the future - the people who are responsible for making the right choices to see that it gets there.

Why would you want to?

BECAUSE 'CRUNCH TIME' IS HERE!

Governments, analysts and employers have been talking for some time about 'the ageing workforce'; 'skill shortages' and 'labour shortages' - and there has already been some activity to address these issues. Some of these 'big picture' actions will help - such as moves to encourage increased workforce participation from a number of previously 'disengaged' groups of people and training infrastructure initiatives to facilitate skills development. However, businesses also need to take urgent action individually! In today's tight labour market, Workforce Planning is no longer about preparing for future growth - it's become critical for survival. Workforce Planning for your own business is down to you!

What will you find inside?

Don't expect a rundown of all the contemporary theories and philosophies about staff attraction, recruitment, development and retention. This booklet is much more basic than that. It's about what you need to do before you take these steps - so that, when you do, they're effective.

The contents include:

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Suggestions as to where you can find more information are included at the end of the booklet and a loose-leaf Workforce Planning Checklist is enclosed as a practical 'working' resource.

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF WORKFORCE PLANNING

Workforce Planning is similar to many other components of business - it's about matching supply with demand. To do this, you need to look at 'what you've got'; 'where you're going'; and 'what you will need to get there' - and then take action to ensure you're ready.

However, effective Workforce Planning is not a 'stand-alone' project - it's not something you do 'only once', separate to the rest of your business.

The external environment in which your business operates is dynamic (it changes over time) and includes variables that impact on the size and shape of the workforce you need to conduct your business.

The 'internal environment' - the workplace - is also dynamic. Impacts come not only from what's happening elsewhere, but also from the systems, processes and infrastructure you have in place at any given time. Workforce Planning therefore needs to be integrated throughout the business - to be an interwoven part of all aspects of your business operations. There's no point in building a workforce around poor production techniques or ineffective management programs, or without the appropriate support mechanisms in place to manage it.

And then there's the people who make up the workforce - they're changing too. Some changes are demographic - more mature-age people, more women, more people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds - but these demographic changes also bring with them changing expectations and needs. All these changes need to be understood and accommodated.

So Workforce Planning is a continuous process. It needs to look outside the business; inside the business; then clearly identify what you have to work with and predict what you're going to need in the future - so that you can develop and implement appropriate actions to fill the gaps your planning exposes.

Model 1.1 Impacts on Workforce Planning



WHAT'S HAPPENING OUTSIDE THE BUSINESS?

What the workforce pool 'looks like'

South Australia's current workforce is about 750,000¹ people - with two in every five of them already older than 45. The current ratio of working age people to aged people is 6:1 - by 2031 that ratio will be 3:1. (South Australia has an older age profile than the national average.)

Only one in every five people in our workforce has a Certificate III or Certificate IV qualification and about the same proportion has a university degree. (Almost half of South Australians don't have any post-school qualification.) Almost one third of South Australians work in part-time jobs.

What this means for SA employers

Two in every five South Australian employers are already reporting difficulties in recruiting staff. However, things are about to get worse!

It's been forecast that South Australia will experience a 43% reduction in the annual employment growth rate between 2005 and 2010 due to population ageing - compared to a national reduction of about 25%. In fact, 206,000² workers will be required in the next ten years just to replace those leaving the workforce due to retirement or other reasons!

But the Food, Tourism and Hospitality industries are growing

Yet, at the same time as analysts are predicting a significantly reduced workforce pool, they're also predicting strong growth in the Food, Tourism and Hospitality industries!

The SA Food Plan 2007-2010 targets an 8% annual growth in the value of finished food products - challenged by skill shortages particularly in process workers; and in senior and middle management.

Growth in the value of in-bound tourism of around 7% per annum for the next few years - from increases in both visitor numbers and in average 'spend' - will directly influence accommodation, entertainment, cafes and restaurants. Upward pressure on jobs will escalate in industries where there are already acute shortages in cooks, chefs, housekeeping and front-of-house staff. So, even a brief appraisal of the future for Food, Tourism and Hospitality could predict a labour market saturated with unfilled vacancies - unless something changes. However, there's still one critical factor to consider...

There's going to be stiff competition from other industries!

There are more than 250 major projects either underway or approved to start in South Australia within the next five to eight years - many of them in Defence, Mining or Construction.

The 'good news' is the combined value of these projects is more than \$42 billion - the 'scary' part for employers is that they will require an additional 133,000³ workers! Competing with these industries in a \$ for \$ battle for staff just isn't an option for most Food, Tourism and Hospitality businesses. Workforce Planning - followed by decisive action - is therefore critical to sustainability!

1 Unless otherwise stated, statistics on this page are from An Environmental Scan of Trends and Developments Impacting on the Australian Workforce, National Industry Skills Committee, April 2008. 2 and 3 Keating, M, Review of Skills and Workforce Development in South Australia, for the Economic Development Board June 2008.



INSIDE THE BUSINESSES

WHAT'S HAPPENING INSIDE THE BUSINESS?

Workforce Planning is part of all business areas - strategic, functional and infrastructure - and before you can get too far into planning your ideal workforce, you need to take a close look at what's happening internally.

STRATEGIC

Where are you now? Where are you going to be?

Strategic aspects of your business likely to influence the size and shape of your workforce include your vision for the future and how you plan to achieve that vision through mid-term and long-term planning. Are you expecting your business to grow in the next 12 months? Three years? Five years?

Your strategic planning should also include attention to the partnerships and alliances you could develop to assist any Workforce Development pathways you may take.

FUNCTIONAL

How do you do it now? How could you do it better?

This isn't just about identifying production or service needs. It's about looking for productivity gains that can influence workforce size and identifying required technical knowledge so you can form a better understanding of the optimum 'shape' of your workforce - where you'll need higher level skills and qualifications. Job process and workflow design can influence both size and shape. All functional aspects are obviously influenced by your sales and marketing functions and requirements for new product development.

INFRASTRUCTURE

What are the physical things to consider?

What do you need to manage employees?

The physical work environment isn't the only infrastructure component to influence your Workforce Planning. Having the appropriate 'soft' infrastructure in place is critical. The complexity of the mechanisms required for workforce management and support is closely linked to the size and shape of that workforce. However, all components are needed, even if - in a very small business - they're all provided by the one person!

STRATEGIC

- Vision
- Mid-term and long-term planning
- New business development
- Supplier partnerships
- Relationships with peak bodies
- Other stakeholder relationships

FUNCTIONAL

- Production or service needs
- Productivity improvements
- Job process designs
- Workflow design
- Marketing and sales
- Technical knowledge
- New product development
- Supply chain/procurement

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Physical work environment
- Leadership structure
- Management structure
- HR management systems
- Training and development systems
- Workforce design
- Reward and recognition programs
- Workplace flexibility designs
- IT and technical support

LOOKING AT WORKFORCE DEMAND

Using an organisational chart

Reviewing all three business areas is critical to effective Workforce Planning, because you need to be very clear about the 'demand' side of things before you can identify whether you have an appropriate workforce 'supply' - or whether you need a plan to plug 'gaps'.

Organisational charts are useful for mapping an overview of the workforce. Most businesses use them as a means of plotting hierarchy and reporting lines. However, with appropriate detail included, they can actually depict your demand for 'human capital' - the type of employees you need to invest in - and expose succession hotspots.

Reviewing the functional side of your business may result in an organisational chart that now has some 'empty boxes' - because you redesign job roles, change work groups, improve production processes or restructure workflow.

Putting some dedicated time into reviewing strategic plans may add some other positions to the chart - because you know you'll need to accommodate predicted growth (either generally or in specific work areas).

Adding in the detail

Workforce demand, however, isn't just about 'positions' on an organisational chart - it's about the work the people in those positions actually do. You need to look at each position on the chart and ask:

- What are the responsibilities and actual tasks attached to this position?
- What are the 'specific skill-sets and competencies required to complete those tasks and fulfil those responsibilities?
- What sort of training is needed for people to become competent in this position?
- What are the aptitudes required for people to successfully undertake this training?
- Does the position require experience over a period of time before it can be performed well?
- How does the position contribute to your business goals?

Sometimes, this type of questioning may send you back to the review process again, because it exposes previously unidentified links between work groups - or identifies the need to redesign some jobs that are requiring higher level skills for only a small proportion of time.

Thinking ahead to accommodate change

When you later move into 'gap analysis' as part of your Workforce Planning, the questions about training and experience will help to set timeframes - and the question about how the position contributes to the business goals will help to identify 'critical areas to address'.

However, now's also the time to consider what 'consequent' demand will flow from your business review. For example, if your workforce is going to grow by a significant number, do you need to build in more supervisors or managers? If you are intending a significant restructure, do you need more change-management people? Or if you intend your existing management team will effect the transformation, do you need other people to relieve some of their current workload?



EVALUATE

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR WORKFORCE?

Ok, so now you know what's happening in the external environment - and what's predicted to happen over the next few years. You've also looked internally at your long term business strategy, reviewed functions, processes and infrastructure - and you have a fair idea of what workforce demand you have for now and the future.

The next step is to take a really close look at the 'supply' side of things - what's happening in your workforce and what's likely to happen.

This isn't just a head-count. It's about creating a really clear 'picture' of your workforce that can guide later actions. Understanding why you're doing this, will help you gather the right kind of information.

Why you need broad information about your workforce

Marketers usually adopt a process called 'segmentation' when selling to their customer base - which breaks the customers or potential customers into segments or specific groups - and then uses specific tactics for each group to either attract or retain them as customers. This approach works because groups of people may be looking for different things from the same product.

For example, marketers promoting a car to 'young singles', might emphasise its 'sporty appearance' - but when promoting the same car to 'young couples with children', the emphasis might be on 'safety' or 'luggage space'.

To apply this type of thinking to Workforce Planning, you need to gather a little extra information about your employees. Basic statistics may help you to identify where you have gaps in the workforce - and where you are likely to have gaps in the future - but the extra information you put into your workforce profile will help you to identify what specific groups of people are likely to 'want' from you - so that you can tailor your recruitment, development and retention strategies. Your workforce profile, therefore, needs to be developed in a way that allows you to cross-match specific pieces of information.

Developing a basic workforce profile

The table to the right provides an overview of the type of information you'll need in order to build a basic workforce profile. Some of this information may already be available to you in your current employee records or from initial job applications. Other useful data you may already have on hand from the results of skills audits or job satisfaction surveys.

However, your workforce - like the external and internal environment - is dynamic. Some of the things you want to know will have changed since people first began work with you and some of the information you need won't be on your current job satisfaction surveys.

A basic workforce profiling survey is therefore often the best way to gather this information.

You may choose to outsource this process and employ a specialist to do the survey for you, but if you have a relatively small workforce and a workplace culture that will encourage staff to willingly participate, you could attempt to obtain the information in-house.

Either way, you'll need to ensure your communication systems are working effectively - that staff understand why you're asking the questions you're asking; how the information they provide will be used; and what the benefit is likely to be for them.

GATHERING INFORMATION FOR A BASIC WORKFORCE PROFILE

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE & COMPETENCIES	This isn't only about the skills, knowledge or competencies they had when hired. You need to include any training they've had since then, but you're also interested to know about 'hidden' skills, competencies and knowledge - things not used in their current job with you.
EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS	Again, it's not just about the qualifications they were hired with and any extra qualifications they've gained on-the-job - you may be surprised to learn what people are doing in their lives away from work that can add real value to your business planning.
AGE & GENDER	It's important that you don't make any assumptions about what age and gender information 'means' - but cross-reference to find out. You may discover, for example, that many of your male employees have child-care responsibilities and need 'family-friendly' policies as often as women. Maybe older employees stay with you longer, but younger employees seem to leave more quickly - or the other way around. This could help you to identify what expectations you're not meeting. If you have a large proportion of mature-age employees, you need to check your succession planning is appropriate. If you have only one or two women (or men) in larger work groups, you might consider whether more 'balance' would be helpful. Again, it's important to highlight that recording age and gender from your records is only about matching with other information - neither age nor gender can really tell you much on its own.
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION	If people are travelling a long way to work for you, does that signal changes might be afoot if opportunities open up closer for them? Is there something you can do in your 'Reward and Recognition' planning to compensate for this?
FIRST' LANGUAGE & CULTURAL NEEDS	This will help you to provide appropriate supports for individual employees, but also in planning some 'balance' across the workforce so that employees don't feel isolated.
WORK/LIFE BALANCE NEEDS	Asking this question may bring further surprises. You may already understand young parents have needs to be accommodated – but mature-age employees may have the same needs, because they're either caring for elderly parents or grandchildren.
APPROACHING 'TRIGGER POINTS'	How many staff are approaching the end of an apprenticeship or traineeship? How many employees have hit a plateau on their career pathway? Staff who see no way upward need other incentives to stay. Perhaps even a 'sideways' move can help?
INTENTIONS & PLANS	Sometimes this information can be a little tricky to extract, but it's worth asking about intentions. Sometimes the response may be positive - for example, mature-age workers may not be as intent on retirement as you assume. Others who declare their intention to retire may be persuaded to a transitional phase.
ENGAGEMENT & JOB SATISFACTION	If you haven't recently conducted a job satisfaction survey, you'll also need an indication of how 'engaged' people feel with the workplace and how 'satisfied' they feel in their current job.
TURNOVER OR RETENTION RATES	You probably already compare your general turnover rate to industry averages and analyse the data according to specific departments or work areas. Workforce profiling will now allow you to examine the data from different perspectives.
EMPLOYMENT TENURE	The duration of employment with you can give valuable information when matched with other data. For example, if your largest turnover is in short term employees, you might need to look at your induction and settling processes - if it's the long term employees leaving, you need to investigate the cause.



IDENTIFYING CRITICAL AREAS TO ADDRESS

The enclosed Workforce Planning Checklist has some general questions which will help you to pull together all the information you've been gathering. At this point, you should be able to work through Step 1 and Step 2 on the checklist.

Identifying the critical areas to address in Workforce Planning is basically about working out the probability and consequence of employees leaving your organisation, together with the probability and consequence of not being able to immediately fill any vacancies with suitably qualified and experienced personnel.

Where are 'the gaps' between what you have and what you need?

Basically, Workforce Planning is about aligning your predicted workforce with your business plan. Your workforce profiling will have given a good understanding about what your workforce currently 'looks like' and some very good hints as to what it actually might be 'about to look like'. Identifying 'gaps' is about turning those hints into predictions:

- What are the skills and competencies you're likely to lose because of employee characteristics (such as age or family commitments)?
- What are the skills and competencies you're likely to lose because you'll need to move other employees into those vacated positions?
- What is your general turnover rate? How many people are you likely to lose through 'natural attrition'?
- Is the turnover generally higher in some sections of your business?
- Is there anything else that's likely to mean more people leave than you thought?

Once you have a 'predicted' workforce profile, you can overlay this on your predicted workforce demand to identify gaps in:

- Numbers
- Capabilities and competencies
- Skills
- Expertise.

When are 'the gaps' considered critical?

Exposing critical areas is about identifying which 'at risk' roles are most important to achieving your business goals. There are a number of considerations - apart from your workforce profiling - which can help to expose roles that are at risk:

- Which positions are traditionally hard to fill? Are they specific job roles? Are they in specific sections of the business?
- Which positions have a long 'lead time' for competency? That is, do some roles require a specific training course over a period of time if you can't attract qualified people? Do some roles, even for qualified people, require longer practical experience on-the-job before you can expect competence?
- Don't forget the external environment - are there new businesses starting up that may 'head-hunt' your best people? Are there businesses closing down or restructuring nearby that may provide people with at least some transferable skills and competencies?



NEXT STEP - WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

By now, you should be able to complete Step 3 on the enclosed Workforce Planning Checklist - and be thinking about what you can do to address your shortfalls. Step 4 is about strategy formulation.

Options to address 'the gaps'

Sometimes businesses confuse 'Workforce Planning' and 'Workforce Development'. The work you've been doing to this point has been about gathering and analysing information. There's still more planning to go - but this next step in the planning process is about using the knowledge you've acquired to identify ways you can achieve the workforce you need. The most commonly used options are:

- Retention of the workforce you already have - where your business review has found that appropriate
- Development of the workforce you already have - so that people have the skills and experience to fill positions in your critical areas
- Recruitment of new employees.

Retention

Some employers in the Food, Tourism and Hospitality industries seem to have 'given up' worrying about high turnover rates - and actually perpetuate the 'revolving door' by focussing efforts on recruitment. However, in today's tight labour market recruitment is no easy task! Retention is nearly always less expensive than recruitment and should be the 'priority' approach. Retention activities ideally should be part of a comprehensive structure of strategies and tactics. However, comments here and in the 'Quick Tips' section (to follow) can stimulate thought as to what actions are appropriate for your business.

Much has been made of 'workplace culture' - and it's true this has a significant effect. However, the over-arching guide should be the marketer's 'segmentation approach' discussed earlier. You need to find what it is employees want from you. Apart from individual consultations or 'job satisfaction' surveys, revisiting your workforce profile could help to identify areas to focus on. Some of the initiatives you may need to review include:

- Workplace Flexibility - including transition to retirement for mature age workers and family-friendly practices for parents
- Reward and Recognition Practices - which can be financial or non-financial
- Leadership and Management Practices - 'soft' infrastructure plays a significant role in creating a workplace culture that either has people loyal to their employer or ready for the door
- Communication systems and processes - to encourage a seamless 'two-way' flow of information
- Career Development - because one of the main reasons people leave their jobs is to develop their career.

Even if your Workforce Planning has identified a surplus in some skills or in some sections of your business, retention of staff should still be a priority where these 'surplus' employees have potential for you to develop rather than recruit the skills you need to fill 'gaps'. Redeploying is a cost effective process - especially if you plan for it early enough.

RECRUIT & RETAIN



RESUME

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a challenging career in the accounting field

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- 2007-2008 - **Chadwick By Ltd**
 - Senior Accountant
 - Management of a business unit
 - Account
- 2006-2007 - **Widley Accounting Firm**
 - Senior Accountant
 - Managing team: development of various projects
 - HR Management
 - HRIS
 - Communication
- 2004 - 2006 - **Widley Accounting Firm**
 - Senior Accountant
 - Senior Accountant
 - Senior Accountant
 - Senior Accountant
 - Senior Accountant
 - Senior Accountant

EDUCATION

- University of Toronto
- Accounting - Bachelor of Commerce
- CPA (CMA)
- Human program

REFERENCES

- John Doe
Senior Accountant
Widley Accounting Firm

Development

Defining clear career pathways for staff is not just a critical success factor in keeping your staff - it's also part of your succession planning because it helps people to develop expertise in key areas.

Succession planning is particularly important for leadership roles, but they aren't the only targets. Think of key roles in your business that require expertise and problem solving ability. What would happen if new and inexperienced people were suddenly thrust in these positions?

Effective workforce development and succession planning will also give you:

- Greater flexibility in the workplace to cover the peaks and troughs of business
- Increased workplace morale - because it relieves pressure on key staff who may need a break, yet clearly demonstrates career opportunities for others
- Enhanced team cohesion - because people know and understand the needs and pressures of others
- An opportunity to capture and transfer the knowledge of your long term employees.

Ideally, you will have current employees who can be developed to fill other roles as part of your succession planning and this development could include:

- Formal or informal mentoring arrangements
- Interchanging employees among roles to develop experience in multiple roles
- Offering specific fixed terms in other positions
- Formal training in specific aspects of the job
- Supporting employees who want to undertake additional training in roles other than their own.

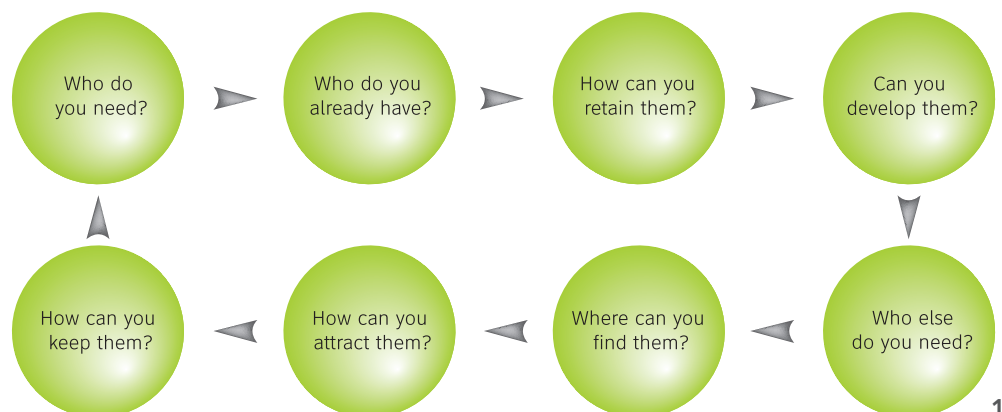
However, if you find that you don't have employees with the right aptitude to develop into more senior or more specialised roles, your succession planning will have helped to identify that you need to hire people with these specific aptitudes when you are next recruiting - and can flag the career development opportunities as a drawcard.

Recruitment

Again, recruitment is a specialist topic, requiring more intense treatment than this publication allows. However, some questions to consider in the context of Workforce Planning:

- Did your workforce profiling expose skills and competencies or qualifications that you didn't know you had? Do you therefore have an opportunity to fill a 'hard-to-find' job role internally - and then recruit for the 'easier-to-find' job?
- Promoting vacancies and future needs internally also gives staff the opportunity to approach or refer people they know. Some employers actually have an incentive/reward system in place for referrals which result in a filled vacancy.
- Have you considered approaching former employees to return? 'Boomerangs' are common in the Food, Tourism and Hospitality industries and occur for a number of reasons - including changes at your workplace; changes at their current workplace; and changes in their lives.
- When recruiting, do you target generational balance as an overall strategy?

Model 1.2
The Workforce Planning Circuit



QUICK TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED

FOR WORKFORCE PLANNING

REVIEW BUSINESS STRATEGY, PRODUCTION PROCESSES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- What are the potential future directions? What are the challenges to these options?
- What are the internal and external factors likely to impact on the workforce profile?
- Are the functional processes as lean as they can be?

ANALYSIS AND FORECAST

- What workforce profile do you need to achieve the business strategy?
- What are the specific skills and competencies?
- How is that likely to change in the next year? Three years? Five years?

GAP ANALYSIS

- Are there any shortfalls between what you have and what you need? Is there any surplus?
- Can any 'surplus' staff be developed to 'fill gaps'? What specific capabilities do you need to develop? Do you need to upgrade qualifications?
- Do you need more/better management, leadership and technical support?
- Are you at risk of losing key 'corporate knowledge' (important to the future of the business)?

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- How can you best get your workforce from where it is now to where it needs to be?
- What can you do to improve retention? How can you better 'target' recruitment? What training and staff development is most critical for your business - or could help with retention and recruitment because it's what people want? What do you need to do to ensure people are ready to step into key positions if current staff leave? What can you do to improve current leadership or performance management?
- Develop action plans for each component of your strategy.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- How can you match recruitment and retention strategies to the specific 'wants' of different generations and specific 'needs' of targeted groups?
- How can you communicate and involve staff in what you're trying to do?
- Is recruitment progressing according to plan? How about staff development? Have your retention rates improved in the areas you need them to?
- Are you ensuring key business knowledge is being captured, shared and retained?

FOR RETENTION

KEEP THE COMMUNICATION FLOW HAPPENING

- Does communication with your staff end with the induction program? Two-way communication is a key retention tool. You need to convey expectations clearly and consistently - but you also need to learn about staff expectations, 'wants' and intentions.

UNDERSTAND WHAT WILL MAKE THEM STAY

- Three reasons given by Australian workers for leaving their jobs are: a lack of career and promotion opportunities, leadership and management practices and a lack of flexibility to meet changing needs for work/life balance.
- People stay in jobs that meet their expectations and offer balance for their life. They stay with businesses that show they value their workers.

FIND WAYS TO MEET 'WANTS', 'NEEDS' AND 'EXPECTATIONS'

- How can you introduce more flexibility? Can you accommodate variable start/finish times for full-time roles? Can you offer 'compressed time' (e.g. five days work over four days)? How can you be more flexible with rosters? Can you reduce the number of split shifts?
- In food processing, do you really need to start shifts at 4am - or is it just because it's always been that way? Do you need to start new staff on a Monday? A mid-week start, with a weekend recovery period, may be a solution for those who find it tough to last that first week.

FOR RECRUITMENT

- How do you let your staff know they're valued? Do you have a 'reward and recognition' program apart from their wages?
- What can you do to help staff achieve their personal goals?

FIND WAYS TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT

- You're not always going to be able to promote people - but your staff still need to feel they're progressing.
- How can you offer development opportunities? Do you have an in-house training program? Can you provide financial support and/or time for people to train and gain qualifications externally?
- Can you delegate new responsibilities or job rotation to increase the spread of skills?

PROVIDE APPROPRIATE LEADERSHIP AND 'SOFT' INFRASTRUCTURE

- Do you give positive feedback on a job well-done? How do you manage performance when things aren't going so well? Do you have mentoring or coaching programs in place?
- Do you always follow through on commitments to staff?

USE A 'TARGETED RECRUITMENT' APPROACH

- Recruiting 'in a hurry' is the most common mistake made by employers under pressure.
- 'Who' does your workforce profiling and gap analysis say you should be looking for? Who does your diversity planning say you need? Who do you need to recruit now for later development as part of your succession planning?
- Developing a clear picture of 'who' you want impacts on 'how' you perform the next steps.

BE PREPARED

- Do you have job descriptions and person specifications ready for all job roles? Do they consider how the role fits with your overall strategy as well as the work you need now?
- Job descriptions and person specifications can be very simple documents - but they do need to be in writing. For the business, they clarify the skills, experience, qualifications, knowledge and attributes needed to do a job well - for potential recruits they explain exactly what the job entails, what functions they'll perform and how reporting relationships will work.
- Potential recruits want to know first, 'Can I do the job?' then 'Do I want the job?' Use information packs to tell them about your business and 'what's in it for them' such as career pathways, workplace flexibility etc.

TAILOR THE WAY YOU ADVERTISE THE POSITION

- What is the best method of attraction? Will the group you're targeting see your ad on the internet? In mainstream newspapers? In your local newspaper? Or will you most likely reach them through a recruitment agency or job network provider? Have you advertised the vacancy internally and asked staff for referrals?
- Targeted advertising not only includes where you advertise the position, but how you word your requirements and what you promote as incentives to applicants.
- What do you have to offer that sets you apart from other employers? What will be particularly attractive to the type of applicant you're seeking?

INTERVIEW ACCORDING TO THE CHARACTERISTICS YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

- 'Getting the right person into the right job' is the most critical factor in staff retention - so don't only look for skills and experience. Look for a match in 'values' and desirable attitudes.

18 FIND MORE INFO



WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

The **FTH Skills Council** website describes a number of its major projects in the **Workforce Planning and Development** section. Although the projects target specific sectors, the project resources can be adapted for other industries.

Additional information is available under the **Tools and Resources** section of the website.

www.ftskillscouncil.com.au

The **South Australian Government's Workforce Information Service** website contains a section dedicated as a **Workforce Development Showcase**. The showcase offers a variety of tips and tools across six themes: Current and Future Workforce Issues and Planning; Attraction and Retention of Workers; Upskilling Existing Workers; Skills Recognition; Training Linkages and Methodologies; and Career Development.

www.workforceinfoservice.sa.gov.au/industryinfo/wdshowcase

Standards Australia has produced a **Workforce Planning Handbook** (HB 299 - 2008) which includes guidelines for an approach to incorporating workforce planning into normal business practice. The document, published in April 2008, is not a 'Standard' and it is not intended to be prescriptive - but includes a number of useful references and a checklist for implementing a workforce planning project. The Workforce Handbook is available in hard copy or for purchase (at a small fee) from the link below.

www.saiglobal.com/shop/Script/Details.asp?DocN=AS0733785719AT

This document has been produced by Food, Tourism and Hospitality Industry Skills Advisory Council SA Inc

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