



Workforce planning



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Australian Standard[®]

Workforce planning

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by Standards Australia Committee MB-009, Human Resources and Employment.

This Standard builds on the Standards Australia Handbook HB 299—2008, *Workforce Planning*. It has been developed in response to Australian and international demand for workforce planning advice, methods, services and technology.

The objective of this Standard is to set out the key features of a workforce plan and outline how to go about creating one. This Standard describes a framework for strategic, operational and workforce management planning which is flexible and transferrable to any size and type of organization.

This Standard is intended to enable industry 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 national and international business environment and the increasing mobility of the global labour force. The adoption of this Standard from a strategic perspective will assist business leaders to identify the workforce implications of their current and future business strategy. From an operational perspective it offers consistent language, framework, principles and process for workforce planning that are scalable to the needs of any business.

The Standard also enables aggregated data gathered through workforce planning to be compared to labour market information and analysis at industry, regional and national levels. It strengthens the capacity of businesses to compete in the international labour market.

The term 'informative' has been used in this Standard to define the application of the appendix to which it applies. An 'informative' appendix is only for information and guidance.

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FOREWORD

Workforce planning, has become an increasingly sophisticated area of practice and more and more organizations are using it. Workforce planning is about managing our most precious resource—people. As it becomes a strong, evidence-based discipline, it is rising from within organizations to sit beside the financial plans and business strategies required for organizations to prosper. Progressive businesses are using workforce planning to leverage local and global labour market flows to improve productivity.

There are many drivers of workforce planning. It is used by businesses of all sizes to enable them to respond more effectively to the current and projected demands of the labour market and the dynamic international business environment.

Workforce planning is regarded as a business imperative with businesses increasingly holding the CEO or Board of Directors accountable for evidence-based workforce plans in just the same way as they require financial and strategic plans. It is internationally regarded as an emerging discipline requiring specific skills and knowledge.

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.

There is considerable international evidence that shows businesses that integrate workforce planning into normal business practice are more likely to retain mission-critical employees and manage workforce exits and entries effectively, making them better equipped to respond to their short, medium and longer term business demands, than those who do not. There is a need to ensure the expectations and requirements of an increasingly diverse and mobile workforce are more closely aligned with those of business in Australia.

STANDARDS AUSTRALIA

Australian Standard Workforce planning

SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL

1.1 SCOPE

This Standard provides workforce planning guidelines and a framework that are scalable to the needs of any organization regardless of size, industry or sector. This Standard offers—

- (a) definitions;
- (b) an introduction to strategic, operational and workforce management planning;
- (c) an overview of how stakeholders can utilize workforce planning; and
- (d) a description of a workforce planning framework and guidance on how to implement it.

NOTE: Appendix A provides a list of questions for stakeholders to consider in relation to the application of workforce planning.

1.2 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

The following document is referred to in this Standard:

AS/NZS ISO
31000 Risk management—Principles and guidelines

1.3 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Standard, the following definitions apply:

1.3.1 Super ordinate planning

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

1.3.2 Super ordinate workforce

People who provide a service/labour (paid and unpaid) to contribute to business or organizational outcomes.

1.3.3 Workforce

Whoever is delivering the business services or making the business products. It includes the ongoing/permanent staff, the contingent workforce, contractors, casuals, volunteers, consultants, locums, seconded personnel, supply chain workforce and outsourced providers.

1.3.4 Workforce planning

The systematic identification, analysis and planning of organizational needs in terms of people.

NOTE: Workforce planning 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. For a detailed definition of the three elements of workforce planning, see Clause 2.2.