

Learner Resource & Assessment

Manage Human Resources Strategic Planning

BSBHRM602



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BSBHRM602
Manage Human Resources Strategic Planning

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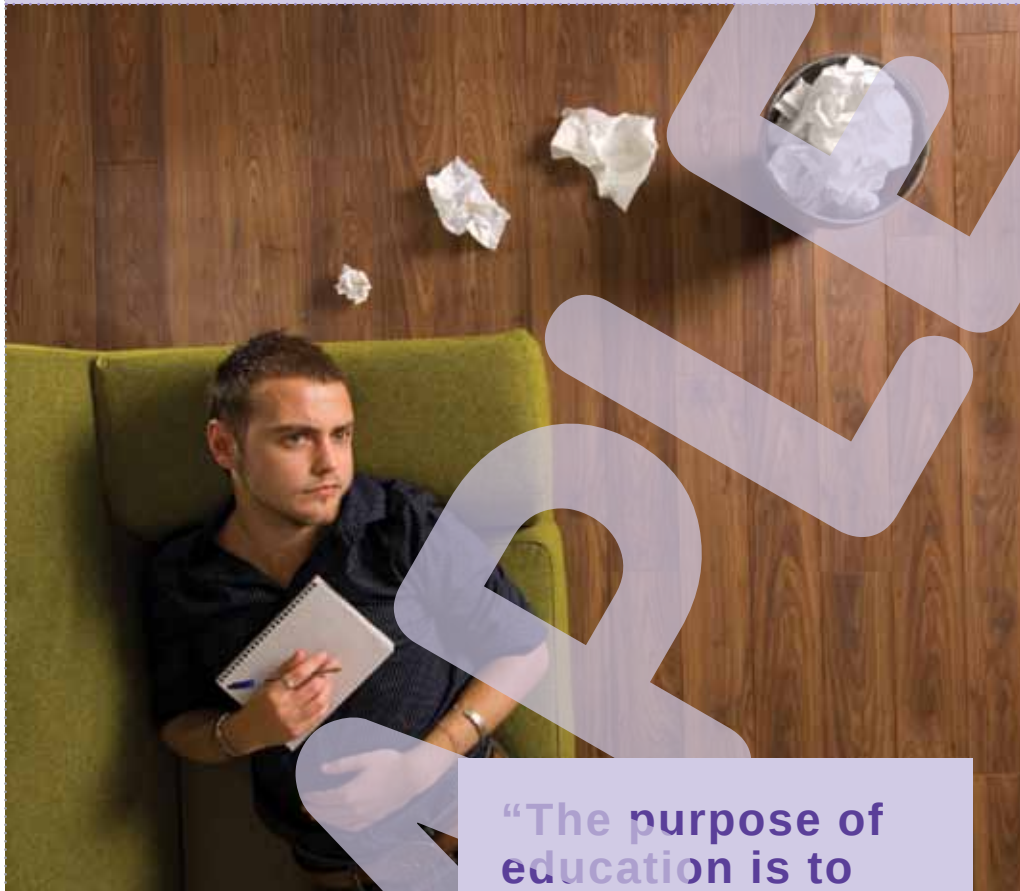
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About BSB Business Services Training Package



“The purpose of education is to replace an empty mind with an open one.” Malcolm Forbes

About the Business Services Industry

The BSB Business Services Training Package covers a diverse range of industries and occupations. Business Services covers a range of cross-industry functions and services supporting the commercial activities of all industries.

Defining Qualifications

When units of competency are grouped into combinations that meet workplace roles, they are called qualifications. These qualifications are aligned to the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). Each qualification will have 'packaging rules' which establish the number of core units, number and source of elective units and overall requirements for delivering the qualification.

Delivery and Assessment of Qualifications

RTOs must have the qualifications (or specific units of competency) on their scope to deliver nationally recognised training and assessment. RTOs are governed by and must comply with the requirements established by applicable national frameworks and standards. RTOs must ensure that training and assessment complies with the relevant standards.

Qualification Training Pathways

A pathway is the route or course of action taken to get to a destination. A training pathway is the learning required to attain the competencies to achieve career goals. Everyone has different needs and goals, and therefore requires a personalised and individual training pathway.

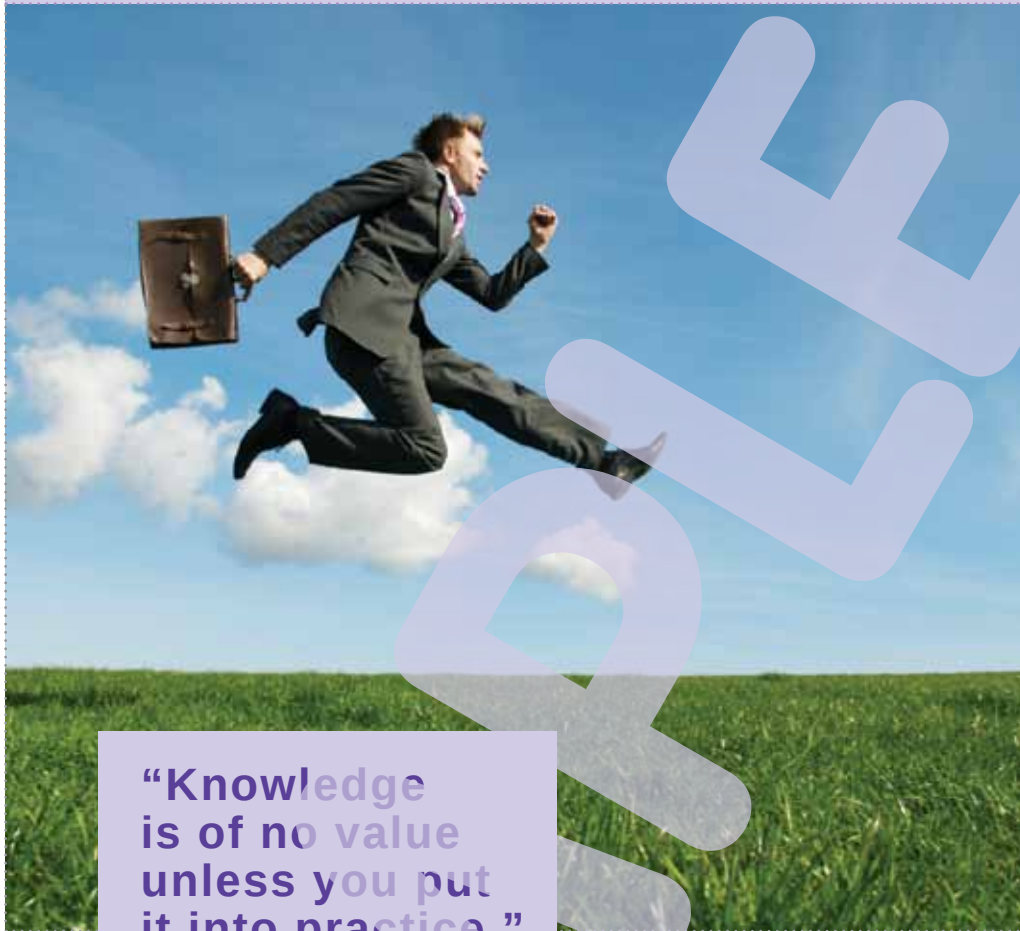
Foundation Skills

Foundation Skills are the non-technical skills that support the individual's participation in the workplace, in the community and in education and training.

Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)

This Assessment meets the five ACSF core skills as described in the Foundation Skills mapping.

Introduction



“Knowledge is of no value unless you put it into practice.”

Anton Chekhov

This unit of competency is all about developing, implementing and maintaining a strategic approach to the management of human resources in an organisation. It will help you with the skills you need to demonstrate competency for the unit BSBHRM602 Manage Human Resources Strategic Planning.

This manual is broken up into three Elements. They are:

- 1. Research Planning Requirements**
- 2. Develop Human Resources Strategic Plan**
- 3. Implement Human Resources Strategic Plan.**

At the conclusion of this training you will be asked to complete an assessment pack for this unit of competency. The information contained in this resource will assist you to complete this task. You will also require someone who is able to assess your performance and verify the evidence you supply.

On conclusion of this unit of competency you will have demonstrated skills and knowledge necessary to develop, implement and maintain a strategic approach to human resources.



ELEMENT 1:

Research Planning Requirements



Performance Criteria Element 1

- 1.1 Analyse strategic plans to determine human resource strategic direction, objectives and targets
- 1.2 Undertake additional environmental analysis to identify emerging practices and trends that may impact on human resource management in the organisation
- 1.3 Identify future labour needs, skill requirements and options for sourcing labour supply
- 1.4 Consider new technology and its impact on job roles and job design
- 1.5 Review recent and potential changes to industrial and legal requirements

Research Planning Requirements

Analyse Strategic Plans to Determine Human Resource Strategic Direction, Objectives and Targets

This resource is about the development of effective Human Resource Management (HRM) strategies in the workplace. We will be examining the processes associated with researching, developing and evaluating Human Resources (HR) strategies and strategic plans.

HRM is the term used to describe formal systems devised for the management of people within an organisation. The responsibilities of a human resource manager fall into three major areas: staffing, employee compensation and benefits, and defining/designing work.

HRM is also a strategic and comprehensive approach to managing people and the workplace culture and environment. Effective HRM enables employees to contribute effectively and productively to the overall organisational direction and the accomplishment of the organisation's goals and objectives.

The role of HRM in organisations has evolved over many decades to become an area of management often seen as central to organisational viability and sustained competitive advantage. In today's organisations, the HR Manager contributes to the development and achievement of the organisation-wide strategic plan and objectives. So consequently the HR strategic objectives should support the overall strategic business plan and objectives. To be successful in their role, the HR Manager needs to be highly knowledgeable about the design of work systems in which people succeed and contribute. This strategic partnership impacts on HR services such as the design of work positions; hiring; reward, recognition and strategic pay; performance development and appraisal systems; career and succession planning; and employee development.

Human Resource Responsibilities

- **Learning and Development**

The HR function is heavily related to the development of staff. To this end, you may need to examine processes for identifying learning gaps and developing program effectiveness, as well as reviewing case studies of personnel who have received development.

- **Work Health and Safety (WHS)**

WHS is a critical aspect of modern work in Australia; it keeps all staff safe and ensures that their wellbeing is considered while at work. Strategies in this area could involve examining current processes, looking at hazards, reviewing policies and procedures, investigating incidents and looking for trends in any such data.

- **Performance Management**

Performance management is closely related to learning and development. Performance reviews are a critical aspect of this area as is the development of performance improvement plans. Your strategies in this area could focus on the development of plans, their effectiveness, and the techniques used to conduct performance reviews.

- **Rehabilitation and Return to Work (RTW) Schemes**

If a staff member is injured, they may require rehabilitation and RTW schemes. These may be internal or external. Knowledge of cost effectiveness of schemes, effectiveness of RTW schemes and rehabilitation processes will be required.

- **Remuneration**

Most staff work for money. Therefore, the amount of money they are paid can play an important role in ensuring staff remain loyal to you. Staff turnover, reasons for staff leaving, remuneration levels compared to other organisations, and how levels are set may all be considered during the development of your strategic plans.

- **Selection and Recruitment**

Getting the right staff in the first place is an important way of reducing staff turnover, therefore researching the strategies and processes used by an organisation is a useful way of making improvements to the function. You may consider current practices, tests used, how selections are actually made or how successful selection and recruitment processes have been.

- **Succession Planning**

In human resources planning, you are looking to develop and move individuals through an organisation in such a way that they gradually progress upward. Succession planning should be considered. Does the organisation have a formal system and strategies in place to achieve this, and how effective is it? Does it relate to performance management and learning processes?

All of these areas are included in the development of a strategic plan for human resources. So how do you decide exactly what areas are of most concern to your organisation?

For some managers, the choice of areas to investigate more closely when developing a strategy is relatively straightforward. However, for many it can be a slow and frustrating process. Selecting an appropriate area of concern (or areas of concern) can lead to better strategic plans at the end of the process and will certainly result in a more fulfilling process for the individual and the organisation.

Strategic Plans

Strategic HR planning is the starting point of HR management. It links HR management directly to the strategic plan of your organisation. Most mid- to large sized organisations have a strategic plan that guides them in successfully meeting their missions. Organisations routinely complete financial plans to ensure they achieve organisational goals and while workforce plans are not as common, they are just as important.

Even a small organisation with as few as 10 staff can develop a strategic plan to guide decisions about the future. Based on the strategic plan, your organisation can develop a strategic HR plan that will allow you to make HR management decisions now to support the future direction of the organisation. Strategic HR planning is also important from a budgetary point of view so that you can factor the costs of recruitment, training, etc. into your organisation's operating budget.

Strategic HR management is defined as:

“Integrating human resource management strategies and systems to achieve the overall mission, strategies, and success of the firm while meeting the needs of employees and other stakeholders.”

- **The Organisation**

The organisational context within which they work is a very significant factor to consider when analysing strategy. Yet the identification and selection of an issue for the investigation can be very complex and confusing. One reason for this is how interrelated many features of HR are.

Trying to isolate an issue for analysis that it is linked to others can prove frustrating and difficult. If you are exploring an issue in an organisation where you already work, take a step back and look at it from a different viewpoint. Where at all possible, part of the process should involve discussions with managers and colleagues. Listening to their ideas may allow you to determine how you might enquire into the issues. You should consider:

- What is currently not working?
- What changes are likely to happen soon?
- What developments in HR may impact on our organisation?

- **Current Research**

Looking at the research that is being undertaken in universities around the world may help you determine what to examine strategically. Browse through recent editions of any HR journal and make a list of the articles and features. Look at their titles and summarise what they are all about. Each of these could act as a trigger to identify one or more areas of research that could be incorporated into your strategic planning.

- **Past Assignments**

You may like to look back at past work assignments and projects that you have worked on. If you are still studying, looking back over recent course work may prove useful. What topics or assignments did you find most useful? Could you use your knowledge from these areas to implement strategic change within your organisation?

Once you have decided on two or maybe three topics, you now have to select the one that is most likely to lead to a successful strategy in terms of delivering value for your organisation. Look at:

- *Organisational Relevance*

Where a strategy has clear potential value to the organisation and where the organisation is enthusiastic for the enquiry to be undertaken there is a greater chance that it will be completed successfully.

- *Access to data*

A strategic investigation will only be feasible if the data needed, or sources for the data, actually exist or can be generated (within budget) within your timeframe.

- *Resources required*

Although basic computer systems and the like will be available to most of you, specialist software or other resources may not be. Check to ensure you are able to gather everything you need to implement a particular strategy before you begin.

This evaluation must be a major part of the decision-making process when examining current and potential strategy within your organisation. You must also take into account all relevant stakeholders. It is important to identify any strategy that should be ruled out based on the factors above and then begin establishing a focus for the planning processes.

We will now move on from selecting strategy to examining the aspects that are already in place within your organisation. Strategy is complemented by policy and procedures. Let's look at what these are and the role that they play.

- **Policies**

Policies are written by organisations to ensure that staff and stakeholders act responsibly and make rational, well-informed decisions. They help it to be consistent in its approach to decision making and problem solving across the organisation's locations if appropriate. In order for staff and stakeholders to understand their responsibilities within the organisation, it is very important that policies and procedures are adopted and clearly communicated to everyone.

Guidelines are developed to assist and guide members in the workplace in relation to policy implementation. Guidelines are also intended to complement the development of local workplace policies and protocols.

A policy is a formal statement of a principle or rule that members of an organisation must follow. Each policy addresses an issue important to the organisation's mission or operations.

A procedure tells members of the organisation how to carry out or implement a policy.

Policy is the 'what' and the procedure is the 'how to'.

Policies are written as statements or rules. Procedures are written as instructions, in logical steps.

- **Procedures/Guidelines**

These are standard, step-by-step methods of operating in line with best practice – essentially they put your policy into practice (and so are also related to the achievement of appropriate strategy). They relate back to a specific policy statement and may offer advice or set expectations about how a policy or regulation should be implemented or how an activity is carried out.

Policies and procedures allow an organisation to ensure that all staff are aware of:

- The nature of the organisation
- What they should expect from the organisation
- What the organisation expects of them
- How policies and procedures work at your organisation
- What is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- The consequences of unacceptable behaviour.

The establishment of strategy and policy can help an organisation demonstrate that it meets requirements for the legal aspects of HRM, particularly in relation to industrial relations.

Reviewing Strategy

Reviewing and revising your existing HRM Strategy is a critical component of effective management in HR. Establishing good strategy sets the ground work for improving operations ensuring policy and procedures promote good practice.

All organisations maintain policies and procedures. They offer staff a great opportunity to effect overall institutional behaviour, and they are extremely useful as a source of information about how things work (or how the organisation thinks they should work). They are a record of the organisation's official position on a number of matters.

- **Policies and Procedural Review**

Reviewing policies and procedures helps to determine whether an organisation has addressed a particular issue and whether the policy instructions are in compliance with the law. The failure to provide a policy or procedure is not usually

unlawful, so you as a researcher must assess whether such a failure indicates a problem that can be confirmed in other ways. But where an organisation has written a policy or procedure, it must conform to legal requirements. Review the policy and procedure manual and any other documents that set forth the organisation's operating standards, including inter-office memoranda, training materials and staff directives

- **Existing Successful Strategies Review**

Before reviewing your HR strategy it can be useful to identify any existing strategies that are working well in your organisation and assessing what aspects make them successful. For instance, does the strategy:

- Give overall direction? A strategy, that enhances experience and skills or increases resources and opportunities, should point out the overall direction without dictating a particular narrow approach
- Fit available resources and opportunities? A good strategy takes advantage of current resources and assets and embraces new opportunities
- Minimise resistance and barriers? When initiatives set out to accomplish important things, resistance (even opposition) is inevitable. However, strategies need not provide a reason for opponents to attack the initiative. Good strategies attract allies and deter opponents
- Reach those who it is targets? To address the issue or problem, strategies must connect the intervention with those who it should benefit.
- Advance the mission? Taken together, are strategies likely to make a difference to the mission and objectives?

- **Organisational Strategy Review**

Once you have established a baseline for what should be included in a given policy, you should begin the process of reviewing the organisation's strategies that are currently in place line-by-line for compliance with statutes, regulations and organisational policy as well as internal and ethical standards. Draft an analysis of deficiencies in strategy and make specific recommendations for changes and additions. Encourage the organisation to promote understanding of the overall strategy to be taken as part of staff development and to use the strategies as a basis for staff training.

- **Ensure Implementation of Revised Strategic Plans**

Once a review has taken place, promote recommendations for revised strategies to staff. This should involve explaining how the proposed strategic plan is more consistent with organisational and legal requirements and provides better/clearer guidance to staff.

- **Continue to Promote your Strategies**

Review the strategic plan annually and recommend revisions to address continuing problems or new legal requirements. Promote continued training of staff on organisational strategy. Refer to and use strategy in the training, emphasising revisions.

Related Legislation

Legislation is the act of making or enacting laws. When people talk about 'the legislation', they mean a law or a body of laws. The legislation in a state or territory are the laws enacted specifically to control and administer the state or territory.

- **Regulations**

Regulations are the way that the legislation is applied. They are generally very specific in nature, and are also referred to as 'rules' or 'administrative law'. These are administrative 'rules' that describe rights and allocate responsibilities. They can take many forms such as being legal restrictions established by a government authority, a self-regulating mechanism for an industry such as a trade association, social regulations such as 'norms', co-regulation or market regulation. They are actions of conduct imposing sanctions such as a fine.

“Strategic planning is worthless – unless there is first a strategic vision.”

John Naisbitt



- **Codes of Practice**

Codes of Practice are sets of guidelines and regulations to be followed by members of some profession, trade, occupation, organisation etc. They are not usually covered by law, but rather by agreement of participants or members. Data in the Codes of Practice database consists of several different types - Codes of Practice (Australian & International) and Standards (Australian & International).

For more information about codes of practice, visit: <http://www.business.gov.au/business-topics/selling-products-and-services/fair-trading/Pages/codes-of-practice.aspx>

- **Ethics**

Ethics is a system of moral principles that helps us determine right from wrong, good from bad. Ethical principles refer to the values of openness, honesty, integrity, impartiality, accountability, tolerance, respect for people, fairness and personal responsibility.

Many organisations have implemented Codes of Ethics which outline the ethical principles, values and behaviours expected of staff in that organisation.

Most codes:

- Define ethics as a system of moral principles that allows people to determine right from wrong, good from bad behaviour in their daily life or in a situation where there is a conflict of interest
- Explain why that industry needs a code of ethics
- Set out how to behave in situations where there are ethical dilemmas
- Identify basic principles as part of its voluntary code which it believes is 'doing the right thing'.

It is important that businesses are in tune with the wishes of the society they serve or they run the risk of tarnishing their image, and alienating their shareholders, stakeholders and customers. This would be bad for business, reducing growth and potentially affecting profit.

Undertake Additional Environmental Analysis to Identify Emerging Practices and Trends that may Impact on Human Resource Management in the Organisation

The world of work is changing. Organisational structures are becoming flatter. There are a number of drivers of these changes. Global shifts such as population growth, the rise of megacities, shifting economic power, climate change, natural resource degradation and food security – not only demand new thinking, but also will change how business and communities work together. The technology revolution will help provide new ways to solve these problems and provide new ways for individuals, small teams and large organisations to connect and collaborate, enabling us to not just work harder, but also smarter.

A successful human resources strategy complements an organisation's mission and goals – so what works for an industry giant won't necessarily be suitable for a small business. The factors influencing HR activities aren't static: to maximise recruitment and retention, and to minimise employee issues, small business managers must continually monitor internal and external environmental factors and adjust their HR strategy accordingly. To do that, it's important to know what these internal and external factors might be.

- **Competition**

The extent of competition in your industry affects your organisation's ability to recruit qualified workers. Industry giants find that candidates seek them out. There is no need to spend money advertising each position in such a case, because candidates will visit the organisational website of their own accord. Small businesses typically don't have the same branding power or organisation reputation, though, and need to actively seek qualified candidates for critical positions. In such a scenario, a human resources department will need to focus on developing recruitment materials and attending job fairs to promote the organisation and attract applicants. Similarly, HR should develop programs and incentives to retain key employees.

- **Compensation**

Labour supply drives the amount of compensation a business must offer to attract employees. In an oversaturated market, when unemployment is high and many more qualified candidates exist than job opportunities, the amount of compensation you must provide is less than when a shortage of candidates exists and you are competing against multiple other organisations to recruit employees. HR must continually evaluate the compensation structure by conducting industry- and location-specific salary surveys to ensure wages remain competitive enough to attract and retain key staff members but low enough that the business remains financially competitive. HR must also ensure that the internal compensation structure is fair – for example, experienced workers with specialised qualifications should earn more than recent college graduates performing the same tasks.

- **Legislation**

Legislation impacts all HR activities. Federal and state legislation typically dictate how long a business must retain personnel records and other employee data, what can be stored, and how. The *Privacy Act* places obligations on employers to safeguard the confidentiality of employee information and to make sure organisational managers operate within the confines of law. HR professionals must stay abreast of legislation and train managers on their responsibilities.

Some of that legislation includes:

- *Equal Employment Opportunity Act (Commonwealth Authorities) 1987*

This Act refers to the right of all employees to be treated fairly and equitably regardless of their culture, religion or beliefs in relation to the recruitment, selection, accessing information, supervision and management.

The main focus of EEO is to ensure:

- › Fair workplace practices
- › The making of unbiased management decisions
- › Recognition and respect for the cultural and social backgrounds of all staff and customers
- › Providing access for all employees to training and development.

The *EEO Act* helps ensure that workplaces are free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment. It works to improve conditions so as to reduce employees feeling any negative attitudes or feeling isolated at work.

When hired by an organisation, employees are to:

- › Work to the best of their ability and complete all tasks and duties given to them
- › Work in collaboration with all their colleagues, regardless of any cultural diversity that may exist
- › Refuse to accept or to tolerate any form of harassment.

For more information visit: <http://www.business.gov.au/business-topics/employing-people/Pages/equal-employment-opportunity-and-anti-discrimination.aspx>

○ *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

The Federal *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (D.D.A.) provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability. It encourages everyone to be involved in implementing the Act and to share in the overall benefits to the community and the economy that flow from participation by the widest range of people.

Disability discrimination happens when people with a disability are treated less fairly than people without a disability. Disability discrimination also occurs when people are treated less fairly because they are relatives, friends, carers, co-workers or associates of a person with a disability.

For more information visit: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au>

○ *Age Discrimination Act 2004*

Age discrimination occurs when people are treated unfavourably because of their age, or because of assumptions made about people of that age. Common examples of age discrimination include preferring to hire younger over older workers regardless of competence, refusing to consider job applications from people over pension age, or sacking younger workers when they reach the age where adult wages will apply.

However, specific laws that set age requirements are not age discrimination. For example, laws that limit alcohol sales to adults, or laws requiring that anyone aged between 6 and 17 must attend school, are not age discrimination.

For more information visit: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au>

- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*

Racial discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than another person in a similar situation because of their race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin or immigrant status. The *Racial Discrimination Act* aims to ensure that Australians of all backgrounds are treated equally and have the same opportunities.

This Act makes it against the law to treat people unfairly, or to discriminate against them, on the grounds of race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, and immigration status.

The Act also makes racial hatred against the law.

For more information visit: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au>

- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*

This Act protects people from unfair treatment on the basis of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or relationship status, pregnancy and need to breastfeed. It also protects workers with family responsibilities and makes sexual harassment against the law.

For more information visit: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au>

- *Fair Work Act 2009*

The Fair Work Commission (FWC), formerly known as Fair Work Australia (FWA), is the Australian industrial relations tribunal created by the *Fair Work Act 2009* as part of the Rudd Government's reforms to industrial relations in Australia.

FWC's functions include the setting and varying of industrial award, minimum wage fixation, dispute resolution, the approval of enterprise agreements, and handling claims for unfair dismissal. It is the successor body to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, though it also performs functions previously performed by the Workplace Authority and the Australian Fair Pay Commission.

FWC is an independent body with the power and authority to regulate and enforce provisions relating to minimum wages and employment conditions, enterprise bargaining, industrial action, dispute resolution, and termination of employment.

The *Fair Work Act* is an attempt to create a more national system for regulating industrial relations in Australia. Each state has the discretion to hand over some or all of their industrial relations powers to the Commonwealth, and should a state decide to refer their powers to a centralised and national industrial relations system, all the employees of that state would effectively be covered by the national *Fair Work Act*. This new national body has taken over the roles of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) in matters of workplace disputes and industrial actions. It is also involved in the process of determining national industrial relations policies, including setting minimum wages and regulating the award system. Since the introduction of the *Fair Work Act*, all states except Western Australia have referred their powers to the Commonwealth.

For more information visit: <http://www.fairwork.gov.au>

- *Industrial Relations*

The national industrial relations system (governed by the *Fair Work Act 2009*) covers private sector workers in all states except Western Australia. Awards and enterprise agreements must also be met.

Internet Guides about Industrial Relations:

- › A guide for young workers

Available at: <http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/711/A-guide-for-young-workers-best-practice-guide.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y>

- › Key Internet Links on Employment Law

Available at: http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/Browse_by_Topic/employmentlaw#Legislation

- › Industrial Law

Available at: <http://www.worldlii.org/catalog/79.html>

- › Hot Topics: Employment and the Law

Available at: http://www.legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/guides/hot_topics/employment_and_the_law/

- › Young workers and students

Available at: <http://www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/young-workers-and-students>

- › University of Sydney Law Library (Free Web Law)

Available at: http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/libraries/law/lig_primary.html

- *Privacy Act 1988*

The *Privacy Act 1988* (Privacy Act) is an Australian law which regulates the handling of personal information about individuals. This includes the collection, use, storage and disclosure of personal information, and access to and correction of that information. The *Privacy Act* includes:

- › 13 Australian Privacy Principles that apply to the handling of personal information by most Australian and Norfolk Island Government agencies and some private sector organisations

- › Credit reporting provisions that apply to the handling of credit-related personal information that credit providers are permitted to disclose to credit reporting bodies for inclusion on individuals' credit reports.

The *Privacy Act* also:

- › Regulates the collection, storage, use, disclosure, security and disposal of individuals' tax file numbers

- › Permits the handling of health information for health and medical research purposes in certain circumstances, where researchers are unable to seek individuals' consent
- › Allows the Information Commissioner to approve and register enforceable APP codes that have been developed by an APP code developer, or developed by the Information Commissioner directly
- › Permits a small business operator, who would otherwise not be subject to the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) and any relevant privacy code, to opt-in to being covered by the APPs and any relevant APP code
- › Allows for privacy regulations to be made.

For more information visit: <http://www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-act/the-privacy-act>

- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act)*

Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation is designed to ensure a safe and healthy workplace, and to reduce the number of injuries in the workplace by giving all staff responsibilities. Employers, self-employed people, those in control of work premises, machinery and substances, designers, manufacturers, suppliers and workers all have obligations with regard to workplace health, safety and welfare.

Although it differs in detail from state to state, in general Australian WHS legislation is aimed at:

- › Providing and maintaining a safe working environment and safe systems of work
- › Providing information to employees in relation to health, safety and welfare in the workplace.

Employees also have responsibilities under the health and safety laws. They must:

- › Follow instructions and rules in the workplace
- › Work and behave in ways which are safe and do not endanger the health and safety of anyone in the workplace.

You can be disciplined by your employer or be prosecuted under the health and safety law in your State or Territory if you do not comply.

WHS Regulations

WHS is regulated by Commonwealth and state and territory government bodies.

Workplace Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying:

Workplace harassment, victimisation and bullying are abuses or misuses of power characterised by aggressive behaviour or actions that intimidate, humiliate and/or undermine a person or group. Power can be due to organisational level, or occupation of any position having standing within the organisation, organisational knowledge or experience, gender, age or physical

power. Workplace harassment, victimisation and bullying are unacceptable and are not to be tolerated under any circumstances. They may cause emotional damage, reduce morale and subsequently the loss of trained and talented employees.

Federal and state anti-discrimination/equal opportunity laws protect you from harassment and victimisation including: age; breastfeeding or pregnancy status; career status; disability or impairment; gender identity; being a union member (or not); sexual activity; marital status; sexual orientation; physical features (not including 'accessories' like tattoos or piercing); political activity or belief; race; religious belief; gender.

Harassment is behaviour that another person does not want and does not return and or offends, embarrasses or scares that person. Harassment is against the law if it is about a person's disability, sex, race, colour, national or ethnic origin; any element covered in EEO legislation, or is of a sexual nature.

Harassment refers to behaviour towards an individual or group of individuals, that may or may not be based on the attributes and could be defined as 'the repeated less favourable treatment of a person by another or others in the workplace, which may be considered unreasonable and inappropriate workplace practice. It includes behaviour that intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates ...' (ref. An Employer's guide: Workplace Bullying, Queensland Department of Employment, Training and Industrial Relations, 1998) in circumstances where a reasonable person would have anticipated the possibility that the other person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated by the conduct.

Often harassment in the workplace involves a misuse of power. This might be a person in authority who intentionally undermines, humiliates or destroys the confidence and self-esteem of an individual or group. Harassment may occur between people of any gender.

Under federal and state legislation unlawful harassment occurs when someone is made to feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated because of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin; sex; disability; sexual preference; or some other characteristic specified under anti-discrimination or human rights legislation. It can also happen if someone is working in a 'hostile' - or intimidating - environment.

Sexual harassment is behaviour of a sexual nature that is unwelcome, unsolicited and unreciprocated. The gender and sexual orientation of the perpetrator or victim is irrelevant.

Examples of Harassing Behaviour

Harassment may be subtle or overt and includes, but is not limited to, the following forms of behaviour:

- > Abusive and offensive language or shouting
- > Constant unreasonable criticism about work or performance, often about petty or insignificant matters
- > Deliberate exclusion, isolation or alienation of a staff member

- › Allocation of humiliating or demeaning tasks, or sabotaging a person's work
- › Setting of impossible deadlines with unrealistic expectations of work
- › Spreading gossip or false and malicious rumours with an intent to cause harm to a person
- › Sarcasm or ridicule
- › Threatening gestures or actual violence
- › Inappropriate comments about personal appearance
- › Electronic harassment such as through email, SMS
- › Hazing or bastardisation (such as harmful or humiliating initiation rituals).

Victimisation occurs when a person does an act, or threatens to do an act against a person because:

- › They have made a complaint, (complainant) or are associated with a person who has made a complaint under this policy, or
- › They have had a complaint made against them (respondent) or are associated with a person who has had a complaint made against them under this policy.

Bullying is a form of harassment. Bullying behaviour is based on the misuse of power in human relationships. From an occupational health and safety perspective, workplace bullying is defined as: repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person or group of persons at a workplace, which creates a risk to health and safety.

'Unreasonable behaviour' is behaviour that is offensive, humiliating, intimidating, degrading or threatening. It includes, but is not limited to:

- › Verbal abuse
- › Initiation pranks
- › Excluding or isolating employees
- › Giving a person the majority of an unpleasant or meaningless task
- › Humiliation through sarcasm, or belittling someone's opinions
- › Constant criticism or insults
- › Spreading misinformation or malicious rumours
- › Setting impossible deadlines
- › Deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience certain employees
- › Deliberately withholding information or resources, that are vital for effective work performance
- › Manipulating the impression of others to split the work group into taking sides
- › Displaying written or pictorial material which may degrade or offend certain employees.

Examples of bullying include yelling, abusive language, continually criticising someone, isolating or ignoring someone, imposing unnecessary pressure with overwork or impossible deadlines and sabotaging someone's work, or their ability to do their job by withholding vital information and resources.

Additional information for managers and supervisors related to workplace harassment can be found in the 'Prevention of Workplace Harassment Advisory Standard 2004' guidelines which are at <https://www.qld.gov.au/law/your-rights/workplace-rights/harassment-and-bullying/> and also at the following websites: <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au>

o *Parental Leave*

Parental leave is defined as unpaid leave and includes:

- › Leave for the birth of a child to a pregnant employee;
- › Leave for the birth of a child of an employee's spouse;
- › Leave for the adoption of a child.

All full and part-time employees who have had at least 12 months continuous service with an employer are entitled to take parental leave. As well as this, long-term casual employees (that is casual employees who have been with a given employer on a regular basis for at least 1 year) are entitled to take parental leave. Casual employees who are not long-term casual staff, seasonal employees and pieceworkers are not entitled to parental leave.

Provided that an employee has completed 12 months continuous service with the same employer, they do not have to complete another 12 months at work to be eligible for a further period of parental leave (assuming they become pregnant within 12 months of the previous birth).

It does not matter whether an employee is married, unmarried or living in a de-facto relationship, there is still an entitlement to parental leave. There is also no required age to be eligible for parental leave.

o *Industrial Relations Strategy*

Industrial relations strategies are those strategies that are concerned with the management and regulation of relationships between the organisation, the individual staff member, and groups of staff within the working environment. The industrial relations section of the Human Resources strategy is involved with looking at the way that you work with employee representative bodies, as well as any monitoring procedures that are in place and developing proposals for management's consideration with regard to improving the way industrial relations is handled (and any changes to the environment).

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Objectives of the Strategy and Policy

Sound employee relations strategies must be based on:

- An effective process for communication and participation
- A safe and effective work environment
- Commitment and motivation of all staff.

To this end, your strategies in this area must attempt to:

- Promote communication at all levels of the organisation
- Determine where conflicts may arise and look for ways of eliminating them.

SWOT Analysis

HR departments can perform a SWOT analysis to look at a specific HR practice or to that examine the overall functionality of the HR department. SWOT analyses internal factors that impact HR practices, such as strengths and weaknesses; this type of analysis also examines external factors, such as opportunities and threats that affect HR practices.

As you go through the tool and think about how you can use it, you will see that it's not just for looking at the business as a whole, but as a starting point for developing strategies for sales teams, service departments and individuals. A SWOT analysis involves identifying your business's:

- **Strengths**

Determining the strengths of your HR practices involves looking at how well your HR staff handle employee requests – staff that welcome questions from employees and applicants alike is an obvious strength based on HR's goal to provide efficient customer service to employees. Other potential strengths include the functional expertise and knowledge of HR disciplines. HR specialists whose knowledge of best practices and procedures are capable of carrying out functions that support the HR department's goals, are considered strengths or internal factors that impact HR practices.

- **Weaknesses**

Internal weaknesses threaten the efficiency of some HR practices. For example, if the HR department doesn't have the necessary technology for processing employment functions, it results in an HR department that isn't capable of fulfilling its obligations. Likewise, HR practices suffer when staff don't have the knowledge base necessary to process the employment functions or the required technical expertise. Significant internal factors that further threaten viability of HR practices might be budget constraints, which may prevent HR from outsourcing activities that can be more efficiently handled by an outside provider.

- **Opportunities**

Opportunities are external factors that can improve or sustain effectiveness of HR practices. An unlikely factor that can have a tremendous impact on HR practices is a labour market saturated with HR practitioners. When there is a greater availability of HR experts, it means salaries will likely be lower than if there were fewer HR experts available in the labour market. When HR can secure talent that brings innovative and creative solutions for improvement, there are numerous opportunities for improving HR practices. In addition, opportunities for HR practices include increased revenue for the organisation that can trickle down to additional funding for HR activities.

- **Threats**

Factors that threaten your HR practices can stem from business loss and the subsequent budget cuts that could follow. In addition, threats to the efficiency of services to employees are competing businesses that might be offering more competitive wages and thereby recruiting talent from your organisation. Alternatively, external factors such as ineffective outsourcing services force HR practitioners to wonder why HR activities were outsourced in the first place. Threats come from emerging competitors, economic uncertainty in the market the organisation serves or factors such as a diminished labour pool and lack of training and development opportunities for HR staff.

SWOT Example

Strengths

- Existence of previous strategic human resources planning efforts offers several innovative solutions
- Tools to improve human resources activities are available (e.g. interview guide and training manual)
- Experienced workforce dedicated to mission. Employees feel 'part of the team'

Weaknesses

- Failure to communicate formally and informally, both cross-functionally and within departments
- No continual evaluation and updating of human resources practices and policies
- Lack of accountability of managers and employees to achieve clear and measurable performance levels

Opportunities

- 'Personnel' allow for more creative and flexible options (e.g. for compensation and staffing)
- Advanced technologies are available to foster more effective human resources activities
- Availability of information about best practices in human resources

Threats

- Budget constraints imposed by legislation
- Government is moving toward privatisation increasing the competition for services
- Other organisations may attract employees and business away from us

Identify Future Labour Needs, Skill Requirements and Options for Sourcing Labour Supply

Workforce Planning

Workforce planning is about forecasting your current and future staffing needs in relation to your strategic business objectives, then addressing matters relating to the supply of labour, for example are there candidates with the skills you require available? The final step is to get the right balance between labour demand and supply, so that you have the right number of employees, with the right skills at the right time.

Why Conduct Workforce Planning?

Your organisation's business plan should give you a clear idea of what you want to achieve in your business. Common reasons for workforce planning include:

- Struggling with the workload generated by your business
- Regulatory changes, market changes or new technology that may force you to look at how you run your business
- Poor staff performance
- Planned business growth.

There are a number of steps that should be followed to identify future labour needs and skill requirements.

Step 1 – Looking at your Current Staffing Situation

Good HR records may be a good starting place to develop a profile of your existing staffing situation. Additional information can be obtained by conducting staff surveys, talking to department managers and by having conversations with staff. Questions you should ask yourself are:

- What are my employees' characteristics (what generational mix does the organisation have, what are their salaries, who do they report to etc.)
- What skills do they have?
- What is our staff turnover rate?
- How satisfied are our workers?
- Are age patterns unbalanced in any work area which might suggest future attrition?
- Are there significant performance problems in any area?

Identifying the knowledge, skills and abilities of your current staff can be achieved by developing a skills inventory for each employee. The skills inventory should go beyond the skills needed for the particular position. List all skills each employee has. Perhaps employees have hidden potential that your organisation could tap into. Education levels and certificates or additional training should also be included.

An employee's performance assessment form can be reviewed to determine if the person is ready and willing to take on more responsibility. You can also look at the employee's current development plans. Ask your employees for feedback on any problems, concerns or areas for improvement they may have. What are their strengths and development needs? What does the consultation with your current workforce tell you regarding workforce issues? What is working well or what could be improved? What are the current workforce priorities, based on your workforce profiling and analysis?

Step 2 – Forecasting HR Requirements

The next step is to forecast your HR needs for the future based on the strategic goals of the organisation. Realistic forecasting of human resources involves estimating both demand and supply. Questions you will need to think about include:

- How many staff will we need to achieve the strategic goals of the organisation?
- What jobs will need to be filled?
- What skill sets will people need to have?

When forecasting demand for HR, you must also assess the challenges that you will have in meeting your staffing need. What are your options? Will you upskill existing workers? How easy will it be to attract new employees with the appropriate skills? Should you take on school leavers or new graduates and train them up?

Step 3 – Future Workforce Profile

Based upon the strategic direction of the business, where is the organisation likely to be in 3-5 years time? Think about your future products and services, stage of the business cycle and needs of your workforce. What future products and services will be provided by the organisation (link to strategic plan)? What are the workforce implications and issues resulting from these? What is the workforce supply and demand? What future skills and competencies are required? What future workforce issues are you likely to face? What are the future workforce priorities, based on your workforce profiling and analysis?

What might happen to your workforce over 3-5 years considering demographics, the ageing workforce, generational expectations, development needs and changes in job roles? What is likely to shift and change? What are the possible (3-5) scenarios that might emerge in the future? What does the ideal or desired workforce look like?

Step 4 – Gap Analysis

The next step is to determine the gap between where your organisation is now and where it wants to be in the future. What are the areas that need to be managed and developed? The gap analysis includes identifying the number of staff and the skills and abilities required in the future in comparison to the current situation. You should also look at all your organisation's HR management practices to identify practices that could be improved or new practices needed to support the organisation's ability to move forward.

Questions to think about include:

- What new jobs will we need?
- What new skills will be required?
- Do our present employees have the required skills?
- Are employees currently in positions that use their strengths?
- Do we have enough managers/supervisors?
- Are current HR management practices adequate for future needs?
- What are the cost implications involved in bridging this gap? This doesn't just mean wages, you'll also need to think about turnover, training, inexperience and long term vacancies if there is a high turnover of staff due to badly thought-out jobs.

The next step is to identify and prioritise strategies relating to recruitment, workforce management and development, staff retention and general human resource issues.

Again, it's useful to think about:

- **Attraction Strategies** – what methods will you use to help ensure you attract the right people, from the widest possible sources to your organisation? This strategy will include HR activities such as defining organisation and job structures, recruitment, and selection.
- **Development Strategies** – what do you need to do to get people working most productively for you? This includes having effective induction processes, training processes, developing your talented people, planning for succession and managing and improving performance.
- **Retention Strategies** – what steps do you need to take to ensure that you meet a diverse range of employees' needs and have a productive culture in which people want to work? How can you keep talented, valued employees, even during a downturn?

Labour Supply Analysis

Once a business has forecast what its future requirements are likely to be, it is then important to determine how many employees will be needed, with what skills and when. Labour supply may come from within the organisation or outside. The first step therefore, is to do an analysis of the skills currently within the business. If skills are not available internally, then they may need to be sought externally. If looking externally, factors such as availability of skills within the job market will be a major consideration.

If a business is short of employees to achieve the business objectives, effective recruitment strategies will need to be devised. Future labour needs may include aspects such as:

- **Job design /Competency**

What skills will be required? Can the skills of existing staff be upgraded or will new staff be required? How will new staff be attracted and retained?

- **Number**

How many staff will we need in the future? Will the organisation continue to grow / become more mechanised / need to seek overseas labour? How will additional staff be managed in an economic downturn?

- **Quality / Remuneration and Reward Programs / Career Development**

What type of training, experience, and qualifications will we require? Are existing HR systems able to sustain and be useful with regard to new skills? How will performance be managed?

- **Type / Flexible work options**

Will we require full-time, part-time or casual staff? Can we cater for job sharing? How will we cope with maternity leave?

If a business has too many employees, effective strategies will need to be created to manage retirements, redundancies and if necessary, dismissals.

Workforce planning is imperative to businesses wanting to plan their growth and limit situations where they are faced with too many or too few employees or the wrong skill sets. Workforce planning can help business owners see how their employees (by forecasting numbers of staff with specific skills) can help them achieve their strategic business objectives.

Internal policies and procedures impact the related HR activities. For example, if the organisation is committed to promoting from within, HR must ensure employees receive appropriate training and development to be ready for promotion when the time comes. HR should monitor the number of employees eligible for retirement and ensure potential replacements or other staff members are trained to avoid a sudden departure of business knowledge. If the organisation is unionised, HR must engage in collective bargaining with the union on matters of representation. External influences, political factors and organisational culture all influence the number of grievances and complaints HR must respond to.

Options for Sourcing Labour Supply

There are a range of options that can be explored when seeking staff and a range of recruitment options that can be considered. You will find more detailed information if you search www.fairwork.gov.au.

- **Hiring Casual Labour**

The term 'casual employee' is not defined in the *Fair Work Act*, nor is it generally defined by the applicable modern award or enterprise agreement, other than being defined as an employee engaged and paid as such. Normally, a casual employee is paid only for the time actually worked (in many industrial instruments this is subject to a minimum payment per engagement) and does not receive payment for public holidays (except under certain circumstances and unless they worked on these days), personal/carer's leave, or annual leave. An important aspect of this type of employment is that the employee's services may be terminated without notice.

Generally, the employer is required to provide a casual with a minimum payment for each time the casual is required to start work (although this provision was unenforceable under a pre-reform federal award).

- **Hiring Casual Staff**

Small businesses, along with many larger organisations make regular use of casual employees. Casual employees offer businesses many advantages over full-time employees, but also pose some disadvantages. Casual employees are a good way to cover short-term peaks in workload or fill gaps when one staff member leaves and while recruitment takes place for a new permanent employee. Another significant advantage of casual employees is that they offer flexibility. An organisation has no obligation to schedule casual workers for 38 hours per week if the workload does not require it. Therefore managers only need to schedule them when work is needed so they can be employed on varying days and at varying times. Many businesses use casual workers to fill evening and weekend hours not covered by full-time workers.

One of the downsides of employing casual workers, however, can be their lack of commitment relative to permanent employees. Full-time workers generally 'buy in' to the organisation more strongly and feel a deeper attachment than do casual workers. As well, casual workers, especially those who work more temporarily or seasonally, usually have less knowledge and familiarity with the organisation and this can affect employee performance on both tasks and service. Training can help offset these issues, but casual staff will take longer to gain experience than full-time workers.

- **Recruiting Apprentices or Trainee Employees**

Australian Apprenticeships (also known as traineeships) are a training contract between an employer and an employee, in which the employer provides training and the apprentice learns the occupation or trade. At the end of the training the apprentice gains a nationally recognised qualification. Apprentices may be

employed on a full or part-time basis, can be of any age, and may already hold a qualification. Training can be totally on-the-job, or involve a combination of on and off-the-job programs. Apprentices' wages vary depending on qualifications and the type of training and industry.

- **Hiring New Graduates**

There are many good reasons for employing graduates. New graduates earn lower salaries than more experienced employees but have huge potential. Their ideas and skills can make a huge difference to the bottom line of your organisation. You have the opportunity to shape them into the type of employee you need, so they become part of your organisational culture. As graduates have developed a habit for learning they are usually keen to continue this learning in the work environment. Graduates often bring new ideas and apply current thinking from their studies while also increasing the diversity within the work team. They are generally enthusiastic and willing to take on challenges. Graduates are often better able and more willing to adapt to change. Providing a career path for a graduate enables them to reach management level within your firm and solve succession planning concerns.

- **Employing People from Overseas**

Businesses can benefit from bringing in employees from overseas if they need skills that are in short supply in Australia, or if they want to discover new ideas and technologies. Sometimes it isn't possible to train up employees to meet the demands of business. You might have a position that needs to be filled and you can't wait for someone to be upskilled. Or maybe your business is just surviving and you don't have the time or money to provide training.

Your options are to employ workers from overseas who are already in Australia and have rights to work in Australia, such as international students, visitors on working holiday visas or skilled migrants who come to Australia on a skilled visa. Alternatively you can sponsor a worker from overseas on a permanent or temporary basis.

- **Employing Off-Shore Workers**

Offshoring is the relocation of a business process from one country to another—typically an operational process, such as manufacturing, or supporting processes, such as accounting or call centres. Typically this refers to an organisational business, although state governments may also employ offshoring. More recently, offshoring has been associated primarily with the outsourcing of technical and administrative services supporting domestic and global operations from outside the home country ('offshore outsourcing'), by means of internal (captive) or external (outsourcing) delivery models.

The economic logic is to reduce costs, sometimes called labour arbitrage, to improve corporate profitability. Jobs are added to the destination country providing the goods or services (generally a lower-cost labour country), but are subtracted in the higher-cost labour country. The increased safety net costs of the unemployed may be absorbed by the government (taxpayers) in the high-cost country or by the organisation doing the offshoring.

- **Outsourcing**

Outsourcing is an effective cost-saving strategy when used properly. It is sometimes more affordable to purchase a good from organisations with comparative advantages than it is to produce the good internally. An example of a manufacturing organisation outsourcing would be Dell buying some of its computer components from another manufacturer in order to save on production costs. Alternatively, businesses may decide to outsource book-keeping duties to independent accounting firms, as it may be cheaper than retaining an in-house accountant.

- **Using Contractors or Consultants**

Consultants are paid to share their expertise and knowledge to help businesses attain goals and solve problems. Consulting is a wide-ranging field with positions in innumerable industries.

Consultants are paid to share their expertise and knowledge to help businesses attain goals and solve problems. Businesses often hire consultants to supplement their staff and save the costs of hiring a full-time employee. As a person new to the organisation, consultants view the situation from a fresh perspective. Because a consultant isn't beholden to any particular corporate culture, co-worker scrutiny or morale, consultants can act as the catalyst for change. While there are no degree requirements for a consultant, they do need to have vast knowledge and experience in a particular field. In addition to expertise, a consultant should have a track record of past accomplishments. Individuals with higher levels of education and experience will generally receive greater compensation for their services. Consulting is a broad area of interest and, from businesses to personal services, there's a consulting opportunity for practically every industry.

Independent contractors run their own business, hiring out their services to other organisations.

Unlike employees, independent contractors negotiate their own fees and working arrangements, and can work for a variety of clients at one time. If you have specific expertise, independent contracting can be an ideal way of capitalising on your knowledge.

As an independent contractor, your entitlements and obligations differ from an employee in many ways. Save time and money by being aware of your rights and responsibilities before contracting.

- **Hiring Staff Through an Agency**

Employment agencies perform recruitment and selection processes for organisations that don't have the time, expertise or resources needed to manage the employment process. Some employment agencies provide temporary workers, and others provide permanent candidates. Employment agencies usually have considerable expertise in short-listing appropriately qualified employees and can be a cost effective option for many organisations.

- **Upskilling Existing Staff**

Skills shortages and technological and demographic change mean that now, more than ever, many of the skills needed by Australian business must come from the existing workforce. Training in an employee's area of expertise is always recommended, but you can also think from a succession planning and career advancement perspective and talk to your employees about what other prospects they may like to explore within the organisation. A workforce that is undertaking continuous education is going to be an effective strategy in ensuring you stay ahead of your competitors.

Developing your employees' skills through training can improve your business and help it stay competitive. Upskilling staff has other benefits for the organisation including:

- Greater staff retention and commitment
- A more qualified workforce
- Increased productivity
- Improved quality
- Less wastage.

Once you have a clear idea of the role you want to fill, you can then advertise the position. This means making sure that suitable applicants hear about the opportunity, find the job appealing and match it with their expectations, skills and experience. The best way to advertise will depend on the type of job and the industry your business is in. Consider options such as online job sites, newspapers and industry publications, social media, business or industry contacts, shop windows or recruitment agencies. When preparing your job advertisement, list the skills and experience you are looking for. Remember to let applicants know what's in it for them by including information about the location, salary and benefits of the job.

Emerging Practices and Trends

Emerging practices and trends may include:

- **Ageing Workforce**

Australians are working longer into older age and consequently employers are having to become increasingly skilled at managing an ageing workforce. Almost one in three organisations expects the number of employees over the age of 60 to increase significantly by 2020. This is broadly in line with the expectation that the Government will extend the state pension to 70 and beyond, forcing more people to stay in work.

The age of retirement is being pushed back as state benefit systems fail to keep pace with low birth rates and rising life expectancy. This major shift in demographics will force more of the workforce to remain active in the employment market into later life.

According to figures published by the Australian Treasury in their 2004 report *Australia's Demographic Challenges*, 25 per cent of the population will be aged over 65 in 40 years—more than double the current level. At the same time, growth in traditional workforce ages is predicted to slow to almost zero. Mature employees represent a valuable and often untapped source of increased productivity for organisations.

- **Changes In Consumer Patterns Or Community Expectations**

Recently there has been a major trend to purchasing online, and often from overseas, rather than going to retail outlets. Over the Christmas holiday period in 2013, retailers received approximately half the holiday foot traffic they experienced just three years ago. The decline in foot traffic signifies a shift in the way consumers shop and buy. This will impact the number of 'floor staff' required as well as impacting on the IT staff required. As consumer patterns change, HR must be ready to adjust to such new situations.

Likewise, when community issues emerge such as staff safety when travelling home after late night shifts in areas considered 'risky', HR must develop appropriate strategies to help ensure employees' safety.

- **Economic Trends**

Recently, and almost overnight China's stock market plunged to record lows. The impact that had on Australian retailers, travel and tourism and building at the time of writing is still to be assessed. It could be a major setback for Australia as was the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2007/8. If the Chinese are unable to continue to build the two huge resorts in Brisbane and Cairns alone, it could have a significant impact on employment. This means that HR departments in many industries could be flooded with applicants and in retail and tourism, a dearth of jobs result.

- **Labour Market Trends**

Continuing on from the previous bullet, the labour market has 'booms' and 'busts' both of which impact severely on HR. Even in a relatively 'normal' situation, in many industries the season impacts on staffing numbers – think Christmas!

- **Multi-Generational Teams**

The modern workplace is no different to those of years past, with Generation Y, Generation X and baby boomers all coexisting in the same office. But as more boomers work possibly past retirement age, and tech-savvy millennials continue to graduate and enter the workforce, the stark differences in the values, communication styles and work habits of each generation are becoming increasingly pronounced.

Each generation brings their own set of skills and cultural norms. A successful office should be a melting pot of different generations, personalities and talent, all coming together and working towards a common goal. That is the only way an organisation will ensure they are bringing fresh perspectives to oftentimes common problems.

However, as the younger generations become the 'bosses' how will the older, more experienced generations react to this? This is another emerging issue for HR.

- **New Products Or Services**

You probably do not even remember when computers or even mobile phones were not around. If you do, you will appreciate the changes that this brought to our lives – and the lives of many HR people.

New products or services require new skill sets, often new people and certainly training.

- **New Technologies**

Again, new technologies require new skill sets, often new people and certainly training.

- **Political Or Legislative Changes**

The introduction of the *Paid Parental Leave Act* was a huge change and brought new challenges to HR departments everywhere. Finding replacement staff on a temporary basis who actually have the skills and are happy to work for a few months can be challenging.

- **Qualification or Educational Changes**

The enormity of skilled migration has changed enormously in the past two decades. Retail, for example is one of Australia's largest industries employing over 1.2 million workers across 140,000 businesses and the sector generates 4.5 per cent of our gross domestic product. It is an industry being transformed by a range of forces: globalisation and new forms of competition; new technologies and the growth of online sales; and changing demographics, economic conditions and consumer preferences, such as a greater focus on sustainable practices and immigrants. Its future lies in developing an Omni-channel approach. This is where a mix of shopping channels and customer experiences is offered from physical bricks and mortar stores, to solely online or 'pure play' retailers.

The skill levels of sales staff are becoming increasingly important also. Employees need a deeper level of product knowledge, more sophisticated interpersonal skills and higher levels of digital literacy. Managers need to acquire new skills in developing innovative business models and high-end Information and communications technology (ICT) solutions. This is the case in many industries.

There is also the situation where skilled migrants are not able to have their qualifications accepted in this country. Employers have been known to sit a 'skilled' worker who does not hold an Australian-accepted qualification alongside an Australian qualified worker and having the 'qualified' worker sign off all work completed by both workers.

These, and similar situations confront HR in the modern world and appropriate policies must be developed by organisations to manage them.

- **Working Internationally**

When hiring internationally, there is greater emphasis on a number of responsibilities and functions such as relocation, orientation and translation services to help employees adapt to a new and different environment outside their own country. There is also the selection issue. The selection of employees requires careful evaluation of the personal characteristics of the candidate and his/her spouse.

This means that training and development must extend beyond information and orientation training to include sensitivity training and field experiences that will enable the manager to understand cultural differences better. Managers need to be protected from career development risks, re-entry problems and culture shock.

Consider New Technology and its Impact on Job Roles and Job Design

Technology has changed the business world many times over. In the Information Age, the advent of computers and the Internet has increased that impact significantly. Many businesses cannot even function without the use of computer technology. This impact is seen in nearly all areas of business, including human resources, where technology continues to have a significant impact on HR practices.

- **Recruiting**

One way in which human resources has been significantly impacted by technology is in the area of recruiting. Before the Internet, HR recruiters had to rely on print publications, such as newspapers, to post jobs and get prospects for open positions. Other methods such as networking were also used, but HR recruiters did not have the ability to post a job in one or more locations and have millions of people see it all at once. Technology has made recruiting more efficient and, in the hands of the right recruiter, more effective as well.

- **Training**

Information technology makes it possible for human resources professionals to train new staff members in a more efficient manner as well. The ability to access organisational information and training programs from remote locations eliminates the need for trainers to work directly with new hires on all training. Some interaction will always be necessary on some level, of course, but training in virtual classrooms makes it possible for the HR professionals to train a large number of employees quickly and to assess their progress through computerised testing programs.

- **Data Storage and Retrieval**

Human resources professionals generally process a considerable amount of paperwork and also have to keep much of that paperwork on file for a considerable period of time. The use of electronic imaging has made it possible

for organisations to store and retrieve files in an electronic format. Technology also makes it possible for human resource professionals to simply print the forms that are needed for employees. Printing on demand eliminates the need to dig through an endless number of files in the file cabinet to find what is needed.

- **Performance Management**

Traditional performance management is being replaced with innovative performance solutions. In today's workplace, human resource managers need to rethink organisational management, including managing, evaluating and rewarding staff. Enhanced performance management is another by-product of technological improvement. Human resources professionals can use computer technology to assess employee performance and also to get employee feedback for the betterment of the organisation. Various software programs make it possible for human resource professionals to examine employee performance using metrics to ensure that employees are meeting performance standards. Employees that don't measure up can be offered to additional training or let go in favour of a replacement who can come in and do the job.

Job Roles and Design

IT has created many new jobs or types of work. Some examples of newly created jobs now common in traditional organisations include:

- Knowledge managers
- Systems analysts
- Database and network administrators
- Webmasters and web site designers
- IT Security professionals
- App developers
- Social media managers
- Cloud computing services specialists
- Sustainability experts
- Bloggers

Roles are changing due to heavy use of four technologies:

- Laptops
- Handheld terminals
- Mobile phones.

High quality laptops are now said to be the most important and widely used of all mobile work technologies.

Telecommuting is another change that has come about through technological advances and has gained popularity since the late 1990s because:

- It lowers corporate overheads. Telecommuting workers don't take up office space, lowering facilities costs
- Workers who are given increased flexibility are more productive and express higher levels of job satisfaction.

Work has changed, and continues to change. It is increasingly knowledge-based so workers don't need to be 'at work' to do their jobs. Telecommuting enables workers to shift their work to accommodate their lifestyles, esp. parenting or living in locations far from the office. More powerful PCs + cheap, high speed telecom (ADSL, cable modem) mean telecommuters can connect to corporate network efficiently.

A simple framework can be used to assess how emerging technologies may affect work. This framework is useful in designing key characteristics of jobs by asking key questions such as:

- What tasks will be performed?
- How will the work be performed?
- Who will do the work?
- Where will the work be performed?
- How can IT increase performance, satisfaction and effectiveness of the workers doing the work?

Review Recent and Potential Changes to Industrial and Legal Requirements

Advances in technology and the applications of technology, particularly in regards to social media and smart phones, have dramatically changed the way we collect and use personal information. Personal information can be transferred globally and more rapidly now than ever before. This has influenced the way we think about privacy and the protection of personal information.

Recently there has been much discussion about an individual's ability to gain recourse if defamed or maligned on social media. The introduction of sales tax at source on items being bought from overseas online is another change.

Each of these and the *Privacy Act* requirements has the potential to impact heavily on us all and particularly HR. It is the responsibility of the HR staff to stay current. For more information about Commonwealth Legislation visit: <https://www.comlaw.gov.au/>.

HR industry periodicals and associations are another way of staying current with industry changes and legislative changes.

Key Points Element 1



- **Once you know the strategic direction, objectives and targets, you are able to start an analysis.**
- **Your analysis must include an environmental scan, estimation of future labour needs and skill requirements and how you will source the necessary labour.**
- **There must be thought as to how new technology will impact on the job roles and design.**
- **Consideration must also be given to potential impact of industrial and legal requirements.**

Element 1 – ‘True’ or ‘False’ Quiz

		True	False
Q	HR journals are not useful for setting strategy.		
Q	HRM strategy requires careful consideration of the business environment.		
Q	Reviewing policies and procedures helps to determine whether an organisation has addressed a particular issue and whether the policy instructions are in compliance with the law.		
Q	Legislation rarely changes.		
Q	Strategy should be planned.		
Q	Ergonomic planning would be part of a strategic HRM direction.		
Q	Equal Employment Opportunity means providing equal access to jobs for all employees and your prospective employees in your workplace.		
Q	Succession planning involves looking to your future work needs.		
Q	Learning and development is not a function of HRM.		
Q	Policies are standard, step-by-step methods of operating in line with best practice.		