Strategic Workforce Plan YYYY–YYYY

Add name of organisation

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[Head of agency] foreword

This plan will be read by your leaders, managers, and employees. It will be used by HR to shape workforce initiatives.

Your head of agency may wish to add a personalised foreword that gives high-level, strategic context for the plan. Content for this section might include:

* why you developed the plan
* how it aligns to the organisation’s strategic goals and priorities
* why the plan and the planning process are important
* what the plan aims to achieve
* what you would like the reader of the document to do.

Aim to keep this foreword short, between 250 and 500 words, and no more than 1 page long. The executive summary on the next page will summarise the plan itself.

Change the title of this section to match your head of agency (for example, ‘Chief Executive Officer’s foreword’).

If your head of agency does not wish to add a foreword, still add the above content on this page to set the context for the plan. Keep to the same suggested content and word limit, but simply title this section ‘Foreword’.

Executive summary

This template will help you communicate your strategic workforce plan. You should use the [NSW Government’s Strategic Workforce Planning Framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-08/2022_Strategic%20Workforce%20Planning%20Framework.pdf) (or a similar framework from your cluster or agency) to develop your plan. Outcomes from the planning cycle in the framework will help you populate the template’s 3 sections:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Template section | Framework reference |
| 1. ‘Workforce strategy’ | Core requirement 3: ‘Identify’ |
| 2. ‘Analysis’ | Core requirement 2: ‘Compare’ |
| 3. ‘Context’ | Core requirement 1: ‘Align’ |

To develop your plan:

1. First complete the ‘Context’ section by considering how your plan fits with your organisation’s strategic objectives. Add other references or appendices as needed.
2. Complete the ‘Analysis’ section by assessing your organisation’s current and desired future state. Identify gaps, issues, trends and themes to get to this state.
3. Complete the ‘Workforce strategy’ section by developing focus areas and tangible strategies to achieve the desired state.
4. Summarise your plan in the ‘Executive summary’ section as your last step.

When complete, the plan will prioritise what readers need by outlining the strategy first, followed by the evidence supporting it, and finally the strategic context and background information.

The NSW Public Service Commission (the PSC) used this template for its Strategic Workforce Plan 2022–2025. You may want to review that document as an example of how to populate the template.

In the executive summary, the PSC specified this document was a high-level plan supplemented by more detailed implementation plans for initiatives. You may decide to do this or include implementation details in this document.

### List with solid fill Workforce strategy

Summarise the key points of the ‘Workforce strategy’ section here.

You may have arranged the section by focus areas, themes and initiatives, as the PSC has done in its sample plan using this template.

But you could also group your findings:

* by how they align to organisational priorities or objectives
* by challenges or risks you identify
* by trends
* using the 6 Bs of workforce management (build, buy, borrow, bind, bounce, boost)
* using any other order that emerges from the strategic workforce planning process.

### Statistics with solid fill Analysis

Summarise the key points of the ‘Analysis’ section here. The section should assess your organisation’s current and future workforces, and outcomes from scenario planning.

It may also include relevant and validated external data, such as:

* labour market data
* workforce supply and demand data
* recruitment and employee data
* wider industry trend predictions
* organisational structure analysis.

### Information outline Context

Summarise the key points of the ‘Context’ section here. The section should capture:

* how the workforce strategy aligns to key organisational business goals for the next 3–5 years
* key business drivers, such as vision and mission statement
* the framework used to build the plan.

Once you have completed the executive summary, check that it:

* mirrors the structure of the plan
* summarises the whole plan
* communicates the key messages quickly.

The summary should be high-level, telling the reader where to find further detail in the document. Limit it to one page where possible, but 2 pages at most.

You may decide to include implementation details in this plan. The PSC supplemented their high-level plan with a more detailed implementation plan for each initiative.

Workforce strategy

Strategic workforce plan

At a glance

Once you’ve written this section, summarise its main points in this box. But limit this summary to 5 or 6 lines.

Use this section to present the outputs from the ‘Identify’ phase of the NSW Government’s Strategic Workforce Planning Framework.

Consider adding a table to outline the focus areas, themes and initiatives in your plan, or other ways you have grouped your findings, such as:

* by how they align to organisational priorities or objectives
* by challenges or risks you identify
* by trends
* using the 6 Bs of workforce management strategy (build, buy, borrow, bind, bounce, bot)
* using any other order that emerges from the strategic workforce planning process.

Keep the table very short, under half a page. It should give readers a sense of the strategy at a glance, without going into any detail.

Adapt the table below to suit your findings. The first 2 focus areas in this table are examples from the PSC. Use your focus areas to structure the rest of this section.

### Focus area 1: Career development, progression and stability

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Themes | Initiatives |
| Maximise development opportunities and maintain our cultural advantage | 1. Build key future capabilities |

### Focus area 2: The war for talent

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Themes | Initiatives |
| Have a strong, differentiated employee value proposition (EVP) | 2. Rebrand the PSC EVP and improve recruitment template and practices3. Pursue a family inclusive workplace certification |

### Focus area X: [Topic]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Themes | Initiatives |
| Add table rows as needed  | Add suitable icons to focus area rows, if relevant |

## Focus area 1: [Topic]

### Answer the key questions

Use the blue-shaded paragraph style in the template to highlight any initiatives that relate to this focus area, if relevant. For example:

**Initiative 1:** **Build key future capabilities**

Section 1 of this report should outline your workforce strategy, what you will need to have in place to support it, and how you will measure each initiative’s success.

How you are going to measure success is important. You could include it at a high level in this report and save the detail for an implementation plan, as the PSC has done in its sample plan using this template. Or you can include the detail in this document.

Use these questions as a guide:

* What we will do?
* How does this address the key challenges and opportunities we identified?
* How does this align with our organisation’s strategic objectives?
* What does success look like?
* How will we measure our results?

These questions relate to the ‘Implement’ and ‘Review’ phases of the [NSW Government’s Strategic Workforce Planning Framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-08/2022_Strategic%20Workforce%20Planning%20Framework.pdf). The PSC offers [resources to help you implement the framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/strategic-workforce-planning/tools-and-resources-to-implement-the-strategic-workforce-framework).

## Focus area 2: [Topic]

### Add an analytical subheading to capture your finding

See section 6.1 for tips on writing clear and consistent headings.

Use the blue-shaded paragraph style in the template to highlight any initiatives that relate to this focus area, if relevant.

The research you do for the ‘Analysis’ section of this report will identify issues the plan should address. To start populating this section of the plan, break these issues into:

* focus areas – broad topics the plan will focus on
* themes – subsections of your focus areas
* initiatives – specific actions you will take
* any other order that emerges from the strategic workforce planning process.

## Other ideas to consider

Use the blue-shaded paragraph style in the template to highlight any initiatives that relate to this focus area, if relevant.

### Add an analytical subheading to help readers scan

You might need another subsection to describe elements, approaches or strategies that:

* apply across multiple focus areas
* already exist or are in development
* you may investigate in the future to support key initiatives.

For example, the plan might include further changes your organisation will consider to embed this strategy, such as:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Element  | Details |
| An agile project management model and ways of working | We may revise our waterfall project model and develop templates that support the agile method. |
| Technical guidance and communication protocols | We may create guides for how to use existing collaboration tools to ensure consistency, improve outputs and boost productivity. |
| A 4-day work week | This would allow for seasonal work and pathways for retirees. |

### A detailed implementation plan will supplement this report

As section 1.1 notes, how you are going to measure success is important. If you choose to save the detail for an implementation plan, as the PSC has done in its sample plan using this template, add a subsection to capture this.

Analysis

Workforce trends

At a glance

Once you’ve written this section, summarise its main points here. But limit this summary to 5 or 6 lines.

Use section 2 to present the outputs from the ‘Compare’ phase of the [NSW Government’s Strategic Workforce Planning Framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-08/2022_Strategic%20Workforce%20Planning%20Framework.pdf).

This section should describe high-impact trends and explain their implications and risks for your organisation.

This template shows how you might divide the content into 2 subsections: Trends at your organisation and external trends. But you can also structure this section by criteria, such as scale of impact, certainty or timeframe.

This section includes the outcomes from:

* scenario planning, to identify possible future events and their implications for workforce size and costs
* analysing future ways of working, the impact of emerging technologies and the need for organisational and work redesign
* reviewing external labour market trends and their potential impact on workforce requirements
* forecasting the demand for workforce capacity and capability over the defined period
* defining the culture and conditions needed to effectively meet workforce requirements
* completing workforce gap analysis by comparing the existing internal and external workforce with future requirements, culture and conditions to identify potential shortages, surpluses and areas of risk.

## Trends at [organisation]

### Add an analytical subheading to capture each key trend

Also consider the following current state interview questions:

* What attracts people to your organisation?
* What makes people stay?
* When people leave, where do they go and why?
* What workforce challenges is your area currently facing? (Think about recruiting employees with specific capabilities, developing employees and retaining them.)

## External trends

### Consider DEGEST factors

Consider how the following factors may change your organisation's work over the next 3 to 5 years:

* demographic
* economic
* government and policy
* environmental
* social andcultural
* technology.

For guidance refer to the ‘Compare’ section of the PSC [resources to help you implement the framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/strategic-workforce-planning/tools-and-resources-to-implement-the-strategic-workforce-framework).

### Add an analytical subheading to capture each key trend

Summarise trends like:

* fiscally constrained environment
* emerging technologies
* your workforce moving from cities to regional areas
* the workforce becoming more multigenerational
* automation changing how employees can add value
* industry specific trends job vacancy rates by occupation
* job vacancy rates by public and private sector jobs
* job vacancy rates in the public sector by state.

Describe each trend and its:

* impact on work, workforces, occupations and the organisation
* risks and implications
* opportunities.

# Workforce capability

At a glance

Once you’ve written this section, summarise its main points here. But limit this summary to 5 or 6 lines.

Use section 3 to present the outputs from the ‘Identify’ phase of the [NSW Government’s Strategic Workforce Planning Framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-08/2022_Strategic%20Workforce%20Planning%20Framework.pdf).

This section should compare your organisation’s current and future capabilities, and identify any gaps and the future capabilities you will need to deliver strategic objectives. Link these gaps to any development priorities your organisation has.

## Capability analysis

### Add an analytical subheading to capture your findings

This section outlines current and future capability gaps and developmental needs. May include outputs from:

* performance and development plans
* current state analysis
* scenario planning
* research
* workshops, interviews and/ or focus groups with key stakeholders and subject-matter experts in your organisation.

Also consider the following current state interview questions:

* What do people need to know or be able to do to deliver on your organisation’s strategic objectives?
* How has that changed from the capabilities we needed in the past?

## Capability profile

### Outline the types of capabilities in your organisation

Consider a list or table to describe capabilities, mindsets and workforce strategies.

The PSC used capability types to organise their profile. If you wish to do this, the below table includes guidance on the classifications used (accelerator, core, requisite and non-core capabilities).

When referring to capabilities you may also use the [NSW Public Sector Capability Framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/capability-framework/the-capability-framework) but remember to reflect the language used by the people involved in the consultation process.

The PSC used the 6 Bs of workforce management to organise their workforce strategies. For guidance on the 6 Bs model, refer to the ‘Implement’ section on the PSC [resources to help you implement the framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/strategic-workforce-planning/tools-and-resources-to-implement-the-strategic-workforce-framework).

| Type | Capabilities | Mindset | Workforce strategy |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Accelerator | These capabilities:* speed up strategy execution
* usually involve non-technical capabilities
* not always captured in role descriptions
* often hard to find and easy to lose.
 | Examples include:* agile
* growth
* customer or citizen focused
* outcomes-focused.
 | Examples include a mix of:* build
* buy
* borrow
* bind
* bounce
* boost.
 |
| Core | These capabilities:* contribute to strategy
* are essential for outcome delivery
* are often unique to PSC roles
* usually have a small variance between high and low performance
* can be recruited or developed, or mobilised within the business
* need engagement to be applied.
 |  |  |
| Requisite | These capabilities:* are required by the business at a particular time
* could be bought or borrowed over a short period
* have limited impact on long-term business performance
* do not require developing long-term relationships with stakeholders or customers
* apply to research-based roles attached to short term projects.
 |  |  |
| Non-core | These capabilities:* are no longer required either due to a shift in strategy or changes in the environment, role or digital transformation
* may represent a retraining opportunity.
 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

# Workforce profile and current state

At a glance

Once you’ve written this section, summarise its main points here. But limit this summary to 5 or 6 lines.

Use section 4 to present the outputs from the ‘Compare’ phase of the [NSW Government’s Strategic Workforce Planning Framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-08/2022_Strategic%20Workforce%20Planning%20Framework.pdf).

This section should provide a snapshot of the current workforce, along with an analysis of your organisation’s retention and recruitment. This may include details from workforce data, current state interviews, exit surveys and People Matter Employee Survey results.

## Our workforce

### Add an analytical subheading to capture your workforce profile

Give this section an appropriate level 3 heading, such as ‘Our workforce profile is mainly ongoing, mid-level advisors’.

This section covers how your workforce is segmented. We recommend that you cover the following topics:

* total headcount
* average age
* gender and female representation in senior leadership roles
* breakdown of diversity and inclusion profiles
* breakdown of grades
* breakdown of employment types (ongoing, non-ongoing, casual and contract)
* absenteeism and leave (planned and unplanned)
* talent challenges your agency faces.

### Group your content logically

Once you’ve researched these topics, group your information into logical chunks of a similar size. Apply this chunking process throughout each section of the plan.

Place each chunk under an analytical subheading. For example:

| Subheading | Covers |
| --- | --- |
| Most of our workforce is ongoing, mid-level advisors | * breakdown of grades
* breakdown of employment types
 |
| Overall headcounts have decreased along with planned leave time | * total headcount
* absenteeism and leave
 |
| Our workforce is getting older | * average age
 |

## Retention

### Add an analytical subheading to capture your findings

You would typically cover the following topics as they relate to employee retention:

* qualitative data from exit surveys
* secondments and transfers
* resignations and retirements
* voluntary and involuntary redundancies
* average tenure by ongoing and temporary staff
* staff turnover rate by age, gender, diversity group, job grade and financial year
* percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
* percentage of employees with a disability
* percentage of culturally and linguistically diverse employees or employees from a non-English-speaking background
* percentage of women in leadership roles.

Also consider the following current state interview questions:

* What makes people strive in their role?
* What do people say to others about working at [organisation name]?
* What has their career experience been like?

In each section, cover not just the data but also any analysis of challenges, risks and opportunities related to it. For example, if there is a high number of transfers or secondments, provide commentary on why employees are moving.

## Attraction and recruitment

### Add an analytical subheading to capture your findings

We recommend that you cover the following topics as they relate to attraction and recruitment:

* employee value proposition and market’s brand perception
* recruitments, as well as recruitment time, issues and process improvements
* attraction of diversity group, as well as targeted recruitment activities
* number and percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees by job grade
* percentage of employees with a disability by job grade
* percentage of culturally and linguistically diverse employees or employees from a non-English-speaking background by job grade
* percentage of women in leadership roles.

In each section, cover not just the data but also any analysis of challenges, risks and opportunities related to it. For example, we could hire more culturally and linguistically diverse people given 2021 census data indicates 48.2% of Australians have a parent born overseas.

Context

Our organisation and plan

At a glance

Once you’ve written this section, summarise its main points here. But limit this summary to 5 or 6 lines.

Use section 5 to present the outputs from the ‘Align’ phase of the [NSW Government’s Strategic Workforce Planning Framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-08/2022_Strategic%20Workforce%20Planning%20Framework.pdf).

This section should capture:

* how the workforce strategy aligns to key organisational business goals for the next 3–5 years
* key business drivers, such as vision and mission statement
* the framework used to build the plan.

## About the [organisation]

### Our organisation […]

In this section, outline what your organisation does and values. Give it an appropriate level 3 heading, such as ‘Our organisation enables a world-class public service’.

#### Role

Briefly outline your organisation’s role and who you serve. Remember that your readers likely already work for your organisation, and do not need much detail.

#### Purpose and ambition

Summarise your organisation’s purpose and ambition.

#### Values

Summarise your organisation’s values. You might like to display these in a table.

Responsibilities

Summarise your organisation’s responsibilities by division and branch. For example, which branch designs and delivers policy, or implements government directions? Consider presenting this information in a table:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Part of organisation | Responsibilities |
| Name of branch | Summary of responsibilities |
| Name of office | Summary of responsibilities |

## About the strategic workforce plan

### This plan aligns our workforce with our strategic objectives

This section should make it clear which strategy this plan aligns to.

Use a bulleted list to summarise what this plan will help your organisation achieve and how it aligns with your organisation’s strategic objectives. For example:

This plan will help our organisation to:

* understand and prepare for future workforce changes and needs
* manage change more flexibly
* improve employee mobility and provide more job security.

### The plan was built through our framework

If you developed your plan using certain frameworks or standards, briefly summarise them here. For example, the PSC developed its Strategic Workforce Plan 2022–2025 using the [NSW Government’s Strategic Workforce Planning Framework](https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-08/2022_Strategic%20Workforce%20Planning%20Framework.pdf). Your cluster or agency may also have a framework you could use.

You can include images from the frameworks or standards.

### The plan draws on multiple sets of data

Briefly tell your readers:

* what quantitative and qualitative methods you used
* what data you used
* where this data came from
* when the data was created.

#

# References and notes

At a glance

The first part of this section summarises plain English advice that you should apply throughout your plan. This material is owned by Plain English Foundation.

The rest of section 6 is a template for your references.

## Plain English advice

### Choose the right type of heading

Use precise and information-rich headings that don’t go over 1 line. This helps readers to skim the headings of your plan for key content.

The Plain English Foundation identifies 3 types of headings:

* **Descriptive:** Our workforce
* **Question:** Who do we hire?
* **Analytical:** We are hiring more people with a disability.

These headings work effectively for the different parts of your plan. Use:

* **descriptive** headings for Heading 1
* **descriptive** or **question** headings for Heading 2 (but choose only one type)
* **analytical** headings for Heading 3.

Use a heading type for each level consistently throughout your plan. Do not use different types of headings at the same level of the information hierarchy.

### Use design elements to break up dense blocks of text

Your plan should be easy for readers to scan, with plenty of white space and design elements that support the content. Whenever you have a set of information, consider if it could be more clearly presented in a list or table.

Also consider using graphics and visual elements — such as scatter plot graphs or a starburst diagram — to highlight key points and analysis. But make sure they are accessible.

You can use stock photos in the report if they align to your document style, but recognise that doing so may make your document longer.

You can also use the ‘Quote/callout’ paragraph style in this template to highlight direct quotes or killer facts that support your content. But use this sparingly, as too callouts many will break up the flow of your plan.

Stick to the template styles

Use only the set paragraph and table styles in the template to ensure your plan meets NSW Government branding and colour requirements.

Remember to delete or type over any instructional text or standard text you don’t need.

### Use icons to highlight focus areas or key ideas

This template uses 3 icons for the 3 main sections of the plan. These are optional.

To add icons that relate to your focus areas, or to highlight other key elements, insert these from the icon set available in later versions of MS Word. Go to Insert, Icon, then browse for a suitable icon. Once the icon is inserted, click on it to show a Graphics Format tab in your MS Word ribbon where you can change the colour as needed.

### Use plain English expression

The template uses a clear, reader-friendly structure and design. But it also needs to be written in plain English. Follow the Plain English Foundation’s expression advice by:

* choosing short, simple expressions (‘to’ not ‘in order to’; ‘for’ not ‘for the purpose of’)
* using an average sentence length of 15–20 words
* preferring active to passive voice (‘The agency considers’ not ‘it is considered that’)
* eliminating repetition and process detail (‘is developing’ not ‘is in the process of developing’).

For more information, see the plain English section of the [Australian Style Guide](http://www.australianstyleguide.com/).

## Reference list

This section should include the details of the sources you cite in your plan.

Check if your cluster or agency has a preferred referencing style. The PSC used the [Australian Government Style Manual format](https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/referencing-and-attribution) for references.

## Endnotes

Use endnotes (rather than footnotes) to avoid disrupting the flow of text.

To ensure your endnotes populate on this final page of the document:

1. Click ‘Insert’ in the menu.
2. Click ‘Footnote’ from the dropdown menu.
3. Under Location, select ‘Endnotes’ and the ‘End of Document’ option.

If your document doesn’t have endnotes, delete this section.