

Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture

Queensland Government ICT workforce planning methodology

Component 2: Forecast future needs

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Information security

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Breadth of scope

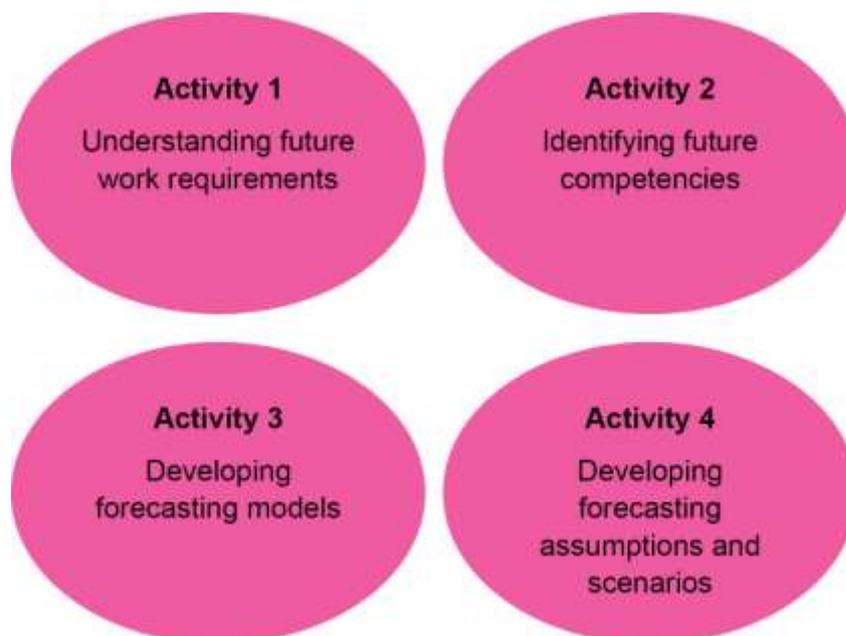
Before beginning a workforce planning process, it is important to decide how broad the plan should be. Asking some basic questions might help establish this.

Questions such as:

- What is the focus of the plan?
- Why are we doing it?
- What do we want to achieve?
- Is this plan for the whole business unit, a particular work unit or critical roles across a business unit?
- Where does the plan 'fit' in terms of the organisation's hierarchy of plans; that is, strategic, operational, corporate, specific purpose?

Forecast future needs





The key aim of this component is to identify the workforce that will be needed to deliver the organisation's future mission and work requirements.

This information is then documented to develop a future workforce profile.

What activities are undertaken?

The activities to complete when forecasting future organisational needs include:

1. understanding the future work requirements of the organisation
2. identifying future competencies
3. developing forecasting models
4. developing and articulating forecasting assumptions and scenarios.

Activity 1: Understanding future work requirements

Forecasting future work requirements involves identifying the type of work that will need to be performed to meet future organisational goals, as well as how it will be performed.

Inputs to identifying future work requirements for the organisation include:

- organisational business plans and vision, the *ICT Resources Strategic Plan*
- current workforce profile (including competency levels, composition and numbers).

Techniques for forecasting future workforce needs include:

Techniques	Description	When to use
Focus group	Small group facilitated discussion enables anecdotal evidence to be obtained	Highly specialised fields, to gain information quickly
Survey	Employee surveys of intentions can help predict likely outcomes and identify impending changes	Best conducted on a regular basis to obtain trends, high reliability
Delphi technique	Draws together subject matter experts and engages them in assessing likely impacts and their assessments of future directions and trends	Specialised area, to obtain senior input
Force field analysis	Small group brainstorm force field analysis to identify forces that promote and resist change	Significant external barriers present
Scenario planning	Narrative statements of possible futures for the organisation	Lack of clarity and ambiguity of future

Key questions to explore when understanding future work requirements include:

- What type of work will be done in the future?
- What are the critical core organisational competencies that will be required to support the organisation's future vision and culture?
- What new knowledge, skills and abilities do specific positions/job groups/work areas need to perform in the future?
- What are the key differences in the current and future workforce competencies?

Activity 2: Identifying future competencies

Having identified future work that needs to be done, the next activity is to identify what competencies employees will need to carry out the work.

Competencies can be defined organisationally or on an individual basis. Identifying competencies on an organisation basis provides a means of pinpointing the most critical for organisational success. As previously highlighted importance should be placed on critical roles in the first instance.

Using the *Queensland Government ICT Skills Framework* and the *Queensland Government ICT Assessment Methodology* will give a consistent capability framework and method for aligning and documenting competencies that are identified as critical to future work.

The set of competencies that describes the ideal workforce of the future are then captured. This set of competencies provides management and staff with a common understanding of the skills and behaviours that are important to the organisation. They become a critical piece of information underpinning human resource workforce management strategies like recruitment, employee development and performance management.

Key questions to explore when identifying future competencies include:

- What new skills are needed for future business and work requirements?
- What are the critical core organisational competencies that will be required to support the organisation's future vision and culture?
- What new knowledge, skills and abilities do specific positions/job groups/work areas need to perform in the future?
- What are the key differences in the current and future workforce competencies?

Activity 3: Developing forecasting models

Forecasting models can be used to assist with identifying future workforce needs. The decision to use forecasting models within a workforce planning exercise depends on the level of complexity, accuracy and scope required.

Forecasting models use mathematical and statistical techniques to simulate different organisational scenarios. The models allow the exploration of the relationship between different human resource issues and how variations in one component will have an effect on the workforce under review.

Forecasting model	Description
Equilibrium modelling	Looks at actual numbers and assumes that over time no change will occur within the system. The benefit of this approach is that it provides baseline data from which changes can be assessed.
Network flows mapping	Attempts to predict employment outcomes such as retirement, lateral movement, promotion etc. based upon their links with other employee characteristics such as salary, skill, age, sex etc. These movements are expressed as probabilities and enable a 'what if' type of analysis to be undertaken.
Change forecasting	Attempts to forecast employee flows by looking at past practices. This information is used to project the future availability of employees whilst making allowances for potential organisational change. The statistical methods employed are predominantly probability and regression analysis.
Optimisation Models	Attempt to identify an 'ideal' position or set of future goals using complex statistical techniques such as linear and goal programming. They rely heavily on the integration of workforce planning with strategic or corporate planning.

Activity 4: Developing forecasting assumptions and scenario building

In order to make forecasting more realistic, a range of assumptions concerning the future can be developed and incorporated into different scenarios. Each scenario depicts a different future state and helps the organisation predict and envision future changes and what impact they will have on the workforce.

Depending upon the size and complexity of the scenario, they can be used to propose possible intervention strategies such as policy changes or increases/decreases in staffing levels and finances.

Key questions to consider when developing scenarios include:

- What are the most critical assumptions to use for developing scenarios (in terms of the organisation's business directions and risks)?
- What are the different potential pictures of what the organisation could look like?
- Which scenarios should be used (in terms of realism, relevance, challenging the status quo and risk management of the agency)?