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## WITHOUT WORKFORCE PLANNING, YOUR ORGANIZATION COULD BECOME EXTINCT

Workforce planning is a key workforce management step for long-term survival in a situation where workers are aging or leaving, and business environments are constantly changing.

You need to replace over aged workers and workers who leave. You also need to adapt to new business environments by getting people with needed skills.

### Workforce Planning Goals

Existing workload determines current workforce levels. So the first step of workforce planning is to assess this workload, its skills set composition and location requirements. To assess this requirement, you answer the following questions:

What kinds of skilled workers do you need to achieve your organizational purpose?  
How many persons with each kind of skill are needed to achieve targeted performance levels?  
Where would these persons be needed - geographically and departmentally?

Answering the above questions is only the starting point of workforce planning. A complete plan would also identify the strategies needed to get the people required to man your workforce, and to keep the people with you.

For the longer-term, you need to estimate:

The number of workers who would retire or leave and have to be replaced  
Additional numbers of differently skilled persons who would have to be added to meet expansion needs  
Likely developments affecting your business and the likely changes in the number and composition of your workforce under the new environments

Workforce planning is a continuous process that needs to be updated as the requirements and forecasts change.

### Implementing the Workforce Planning Process

The key requirement for successful workforce planning is to get your managers to understand the significance and key importance of workforce planning. Without their active involvement, you cannot expect to develop realistic plans that are affected by diverse factors.

Create a workforce planning team consisting of employees from different departments, with required knowledge and interests. Define the team's role and responsibilities.

Use modern software tools and planning systems to speed up the processes of data collection, analysis and generating preliminary plans. These can then be human-reviewed for fine-tuning.

Start carefully with a smaller scope, review the processes, get feedback and improve the effectiveness of workforce planning exercise.

In the case of large enterprises with geographically spread operations, the workforce planning exercise should be decentralized and the unit plans should be consolidated.

### Workforce Recruitment and Development Strategies

Workforce planning is not just an exercise with numbers, though numbers are important. You have to look at the labor market and competitive conditions, and develop strategies to attract and retain the kind of workforce you need.

Think through the policies and practices you need to attract and retain talented people. Build your brand as a good place to work in. Create working conditions and a managerial culture that would make your people want to remain with you.

Spell these out and include them in your workforce plan.

### Conclusion

For organizations to survive in the long term, they must be able to attract the right kind of talented persons and to keep them. Workforce planning helps you to assess your people needs, in both skill sets and numbers, and start developing and implementing strategies and policies to attract, develop and keep the kind of workforce you need.