

# DRAFT Strategic Workforce Planning Toolkit

2025





## About this toolkit

Strategic Workforce Planning (SWP) is often defined as ‘getting the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time’. It is also important to distinguish between short-term tactics (resourcing and recruitment) and long-term strategies (workforce planning).

The SWP toolkit is designed to equip the business with the necessary methodologies and guidance to develop comprehensive workforce strategies, ensuring the right mix of talent to meet current and future organisational goals, while fostering capability building across the business

Business areas across TfL are at varying levels of maturity, so they may apply the tools and guidance differently.

In this toolkit we will cover:

- The 5-step methodology and guidance**  
There is a 5-step method to SWP, which will help you to identify areas of focus, alongside the relevant question and decision guidance.

- A range of tools and guidance**  
A range of tools and guidance to support HR and business needs in developing Strategic Workforce Plans across the organisation.



Use the side bar to move through stages



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# SWP 5-step methodology

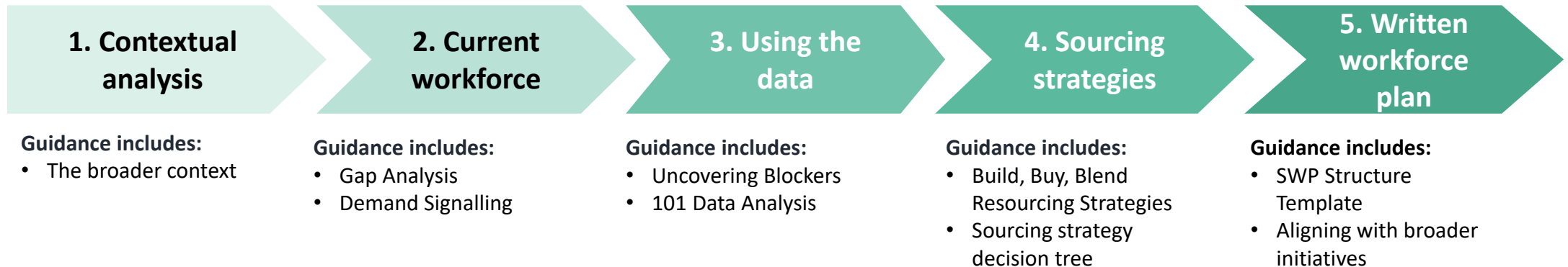


## SWP 5-step methodology

A five-step methodology has been developed by the SWP team to support HRBPs as they guide strategic workforce planning throughout the organisation.

The 5 key elements will help you to identify areas of focus and appropriate question guidance to enable the development of Strategic Workforce Plans. The approach is not necessarily linear; depending on the maturity of each business area, certain tools or guidance may not be applicable.

Data should serve as a fundamental component throughout each phase of the process.



Working draft

# Contextual analysis

Continue to section 



# Overview: Contextual analysis

Contextual analysis involves understanding the external and internal factors affecting the organisation's workforce needs and supporting your development of strategic drivers.

## External Market Analysis

- Labor Market Trends: Explore trends such as talent shortages, demographic shifts, and economic conditions.
- Industry Trends: Identify specific trends within your industry that impact workforce requirements.
- Competitor Analysis: Assess the workforce strategies of competitors and how they might affect your talent acquisition.

## Internal Market Analysis

- Organisational Strategy: Align workforce planning with the organisation's strategic goals.
- Company Culture: Consider how company culture influences workforce needs and talent attraction.
- Technology and AI Impact: Evaluate how emerging technologies and the use of AI might impact current and future workforce needs.

## Data considerations:

- Include real-time data on labour market trends, competitor workforce strategies, and economic indicators.
- Internal data could include organisational performance metrics, employee survey results, and company culture assessments.

## Decision Points:

- What are the critical external factors affecting our workforce?
- How do internal factors align with or contradict our strategic goals?
- Do we have a clear understanding of the market dynamics?

## Guidance on:

❖ [The Broader Context](#)



Click on each tool to discover what it is



# The broader context



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Click on each question for more information...

**How do political and regulatory environments impact the workforce, including labour laws, employment regulations, and government policies?**

Consider the effects of changing regulations, compliance requirements, and government initiatives on workforce planning.

**What technological advancements are emerging, and how could they affect workforce roles and skill requirements?**

Evaluate how automation, AI, digital transformation, and other technologies might change job functions or create new roles.

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Explore how the organisation's commitment to sustainability or environmental challenges might affect roles, skills, and workforce practices.

## The Broader Context

Political and regulatory

Technological advancements

Social and political

Environmental factors

Workforce structure

Future technology

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**What are the current industry trends, and how they may shape the workforce?**

Understanding industry trends, such as those seen in large-scale projects like HS2.

**What are the organisation's current and future technological needs, and how will these impact workforce requirements?**

Considering the impact of technology helps in planning for new skill requirements and potential automation.

**How does the organisation's current workforce structure and capabilities support or hinder its strategic objectives?**

Assessing existing capabilities helps identify gaps and areas for development in the workforce plan.

Next stage



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How do political and regulatory environments impact the workforce, including labour laws, employment policies? Consider the role of government

## Political and regulatory

**Labour Laws and Employment Regulations:** Government mandates on working hours, wages, and workplace safety directly impact workforce management, requiring organisations to stay compliant while balancing operational needs.

**Union Relations:** Strong unions like RMT influence workforce dynamics through negotiations, strikes, and collective bargaining, affecting staffing, pay, and working conditions in transport organisations.

**Regulatory Bodies:** Compliance with safety and operational standards set by bodies like the ORR and DfT demands ongoing staff training and adherence to regulations, impacting workforce strategy.

**Public-Sector Funding:** Budgetary constraints, especially for public entities like TfL, drive cost-saving measures, including hiring freezes and redundancies, affecting long-term workforce planning.

**Brexit and Immigration Policies:** Post-Brexit limits on EU workers create skill shortages, requiring a focus on developing domestic talent or recruiting from new international sources.

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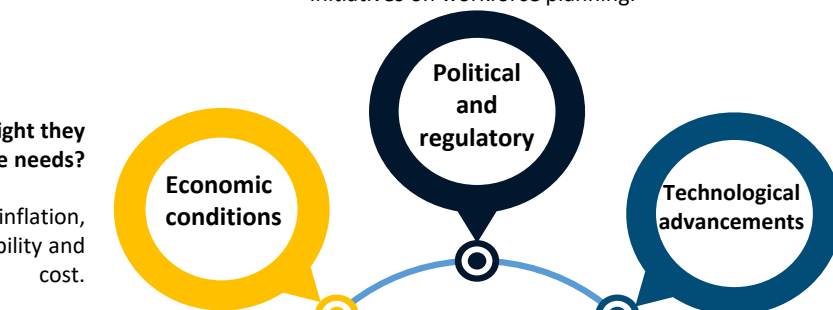
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## Technological advancements

Technological advancements are reshaping the transport workforce:

**Automation & AI:** Reducing operational roles but increasing demand for AI, system maintenance, and data specialists.

**Digital Twin Technology:** Virtual models of transport systems require skills in data integration and predictive analytics.

**IoT:** Increased use of sensors in fleet management calls for expertise in real-time data analysis and system integration.

**Electrification:** Growing need for skills in electric vehicle tech, charging infrastructure, and smart grids.

**Big Data:** The rise of data in operations will require skills in data science, analytics, and cybersecurity.

Upskilling in digital literacy and engineering is crucial.

To see how TfL are progressing with our data strategy follow

[this link.](#)

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- Changing Demographics:** Aging population and urbanisation demand more accessible, reliable transport.
- Public Expectations:** Increased focus on safety, convenience, and affordability puts pressure on service standards.
- Regulation & Policy:** Government policies on decarbonisation and sustainability are shaping infrastructure projects and investment in green transport.
- Labour Laws:** Stricter employment laws and union activities in the UK transport sector affect workforce planning and management.

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Technological advancements

Social and political

Environmental factors

Workforce structure

Future technology

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## Workforce structure

Assessing existing capabilities helps identify gaps and areas for development in the workforce plan.

1. Are the right skills in the right places?
2. Is the workforce adaptable to change?
3. Are we prepared to upskill or reskill where necessary?
4. Are current roles and responsibilities aligned with strategic priorities?
5. Do we have the capabilities to support strategic execution, and do they have the capabilities to drive transformational change?
6. Is our workforce size optimal for future growth?

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When considering the impact of technology, it directly helps organisations plan for new skill requirements and potential automation in several ways:

- Skill Shifts:** As technology evolves, workers will need new skills, such as data analytics, AI, and digital maintenance, to manage automated systems and digital platforms.
- Automation of Routine Tasks:** Routine or repetitive jobs, like ticketing and scheduling, are prime candidates for automation. This frees up employees for more complex, strategic roles, but requires re-skilling.
- Cross-Disciplinary Expertise:** New technologies often demand multi-skilled employees who can bridge traditional roles (e.g., engineers who understand software development).
- Adaptability & Training:** Workforce planning must include provisions for continuous learning and development so employees can adapt to rapid technological changes.

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## Industry trends

**Infrastructure Investment:** Large projects like HS2 and Crossrail are increasing demand for specialised skills, making upskilling and reskilling essential for future workforce needs.

**Sustainability Push:** There is a growing emphasis on electrification and green transport initiatives, with organisations focusing on reducing carbon emissions and investing in renewable energy technologies.

**Skills Shortage:** There is a current shortage of critical skills, especially in engineering and digital, intensifying competition among transport companies for top talent.

**Changing Regulations:** New safety and environmental regulations are impacting operational standards, requiring companies to adjust their workforce strategies and compliance training.

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What are the current industry trends, and how do they impact the workforce?

Understanding industry trends, such as those seen in large-scale infrastructure projects like HS2 and Crossrail, helps anticipate future skill requirements.

What are the organisation's current and future technological needs, and how will these impact workforce requirements?

Considering the impact of technology helps in planning for future skill requirements and potential automation.





# The broader context



When preparing to develop a strategic workforce plan, it's essential for you to consider the broader context of your organisation and the environment in which it operates. Here are 10 key contextual analysis questions to guide thinking. **These are not exhaustive of what you can look at.**

Click on each question for more information...

**How do political and regulatory environments impact the workforce, including labour laws, employment regulations, and government policies?**

Consider the effects of changing regulations, compliance requirements, and government initiatives on workforce planning.

**What technological advancements are emerging, and how could they affect workforce roles and skill requirements?**

Evaluate how automation, AI, digital transformation, and other technologies might change job functions or create new roles.

**What social and cultural trends, such as shifting workforce expectations, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and work-life balance priorities, should be considered?**

Analyse how changing societal norms and values might influence workforce dynamics and expectations.

**How do environmental factors, including sustainability goals and climate change, impact workforce planning?**

Explore how the organisation's commitment to sustainability or environmental challenges might affect roles, skills, and workforce practices.

## The Broader Context

Political and regulatory

Technological advancements

Social and political

Environmental factors

Workforce structure

Future technology

Industry trends

Economic conditions

**What are the current economic conditions, and how might they influence the organisation's workforce needs?**

Assess the impact of economic trends, such as inflation, unemployment rates, and economic growth, on talent availability and cost.

**What are the current industry trends, and how they may shape the workforce?**

Understanding industry trends, such as those seen in large-scale projects like HS2.

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Considering the impact of technology helps in planning for new skill requirements and potential automation.

**How does the organisation's current workforce structure and capabilities support or hinder its strategic objectives?**

Assessing existing capabilities helps identify gaps and areas for development in the workforce plan.

Next stage



Contextual analysis

Current workforce

Using the data

Sourcing strategies

Written workforce plan



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- Current workforce
- Using the data
- Sourcing strategies
- Written workforce plan

Click on each question for more information...



How do political and regulatory environments influence the workforce, including labour laws, employment policies?  
Consider the impact of government and government

## Economic conditions

When considering the current economic conditions and their influence on the transport industry's workforce needs, a few key factors stand out:

**Inflation and Rising Costs:** With rising inflation and operating costs, transport organisations may face budget constraints. This could lead to cost-cutting measures such as hiring freezes or reduced investment in skills development.

**Labour Market Shortages:** The transport sector is facing shortages in critical roles like drivers, engineers, and technical staff. Economic uncertainty could exacerbate these shortages.

**Post-Pandemic Recovery & Demand Fluctuations:** Unpredictable passenger numbers and freight demands can lead to fluctuating workforce needs.

**Government Spending & Infrastructure Investment:** Economic conditions can influence government spending on transport infrastructure. Reduced investment in large-scale projects could affect long-term hiring and the demand for specialised skills.

What are the current economic conditions, and how do they influence the organisation's workforce needs?

Assess the impact of economic trends, such as inflation, unemployment rates, and economic growth, on talent acquisition and retention.

How do technological advancements are emerging, and how could they affect workforce roles and skill requirements?

Consider how automation, AI, digital transformation, and other technologies might change job functions or create new roles.

What social and cultural trends, such as shifting workforce expectations, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and work-life balance priorities, should be considered?

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What are the current industry trends, and how they may influence the workforce?

Understanding industry trends, such as those seen in large-scale infrastructure projects like high-speed rail or autonomous vehicles, can help anticipate future workforce needs.

What are the organisation's current and future technological capabilities, and how will these impact workforce requirements?

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How does the organisation's current capabilities support or hinder its strategic objectives?

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**The Broader Context**

Contextual analysis

Current workforce

Using the data

Sourcing strategies

Written workforce plan

Next stage





# Current Workforce Assessment







## Overview: Current Workforce Assessment

Workforce Assessment focuses on understanding the current workforce, identifying skill gaps, and analysing future needs. The SWOT grid below is a good way to summarise the workforce assessment of TfL:

<b>Strengths</b>  <b>Workforce dashboard:</b> a detailed workforce dashboard exists, including age, tenure, and diversity, with ability to create data visualisations.  <b>Strong recruitment:</b> a positive employer brand, attracting a large pool of candidates.  <b>L&amp;D programmes:</b> helps retain employees and foster continuous growth within the organisation.	<b>Weaknesses</b>  <b>No skills taxonomy:</b> skills are currently recorded sporadically across the business.  <b>Data analysis:</b> whilst a workforce dashboard exists, the ability to analyse and take data insights can be improved.  <b>Enhanced succession planning:</b> increased succession planning needed to ensure future leadership and critical roles are filled.
<b>Opportunities</b>  <b>Catalogue the skills:</b> create some loose job families, grouping by grade or reporting line.  <b>Data integration:</b> Integrate the workforce dashboard and recruitment dashboard.	<b>Threats</b>  <b>Competition for skills and experience:</b> intense competition from the transport sector and adjacent industries.  <b>Shift in employee expectations:</b> remote working and flexibility are now more important to people than ever.

### Gap Analysis

**Current vs. Future Needs:** Compare existing skills with what will be needed in the future, where training or development can bridge skill gaps or external hiring is necessary.

### Demand Signalling

**Proactive Resource Allocation:** Demand signalling helps identify future workforce needs by forecasting changes in demand for skills and roles

### Guidance on:

❖ [Gap Analysis](#)

❖ [Demand Signalling](#)



Click on each tool to discover what it is





# Gap Analysis

Conducting a gap analysis allowed you to understand where you may have challenges to key skills or roles within the organisation. There are several ways you can support teams to do this.

## 1 Interviews

You can use interviews to get a more personal understanding of current skill or workforce gaps in particular professions. **This should be supplemented with data.**

See example questions that you could help guide people with:

1. What are the greatest immediate concerns that you have for your workforce?
2. What are your top key critical roles that are required to operate effectively? Are you expecting these to change in the next 2-3 years?
3. Implications for sourcing: How do you deal with shortages in the skills you have in your workforce?
4. Are there high-risk roles that you have that are either a single point of failure, one deep or a niche skill that is particularly difficult to recruit? What are the implications on succession planning?
5. What opportunities do you have for keeping up with changes in workforce trends in the work that you do?
6. What is the impact of the financial boundaries placed on you?

## 2 Analysing the data

You can analyse the Workforce data available across various sources. This will help:

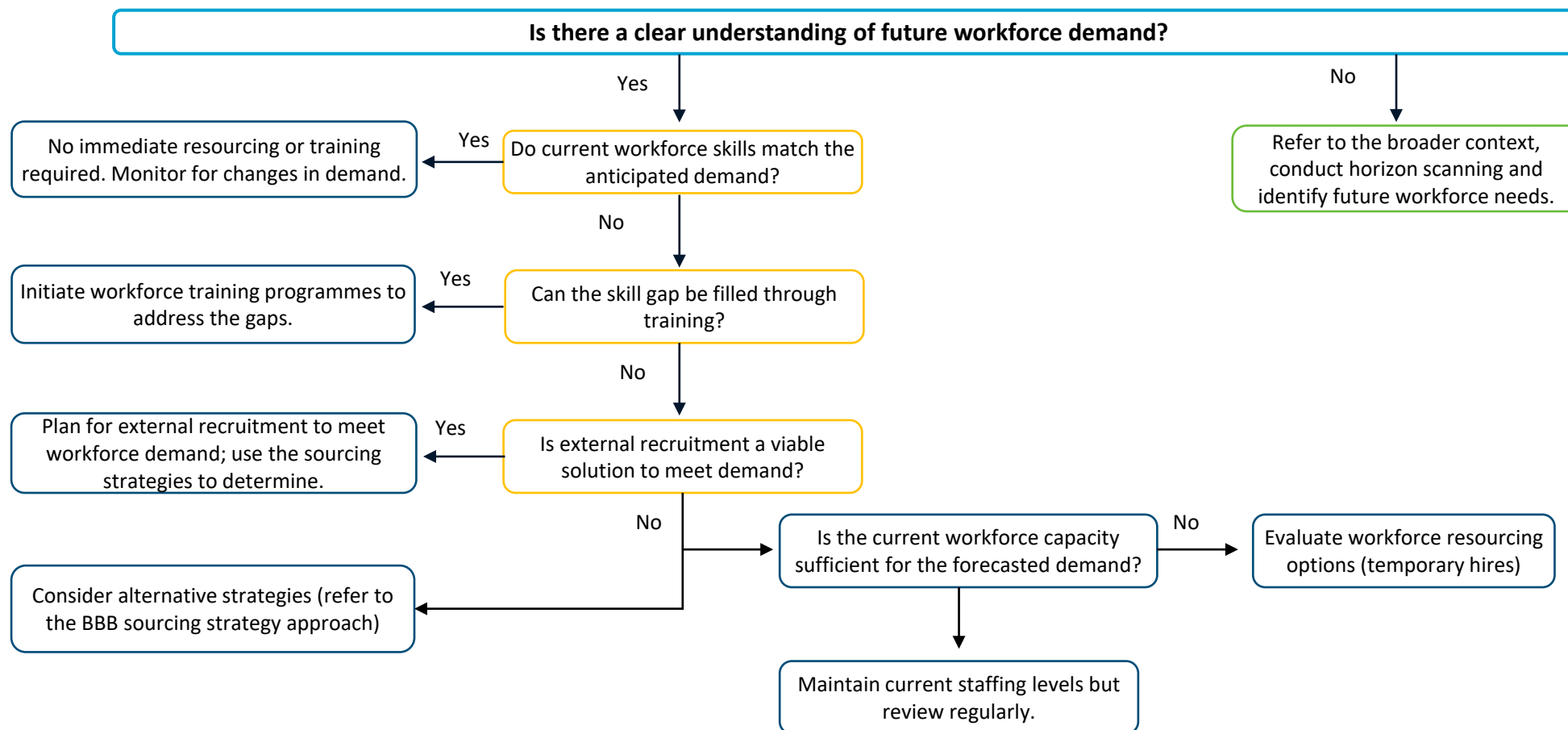
- i) Identify the skills gap and vulnerabilities
- ii) Assess where the recruitment pipeline or gaps in roles are

**See 'Using the data' for a more detailed guide to analysing data.**





# Demand Signalling



# Using the data





## Overview: Using the data

Analysing workforce data, including identifying and analysing knowledge, skills, abilities and talent profiles, as well as turnover rates and other factors such as employees' views on job security, satisfaction and intention to leave, gender split; age profile; skills audit; grade distribution; succession plans, is fundamental to creating data driven strategic workforce plans and decisions.

### Decision Points:

- Based on the data, determine where there are significant gaps between the current skill set of the workforce and the skills needed to meet future business objectives.
- Decide if you need to adjust staffing levels, redistribute tasks, or implement efficiency improvements to align workforce capacity with business needs.
- Use data on employee satisfaction, turnover rates, and succession plans to evaluate the risk of losing key talent. Decide on targeted retention strategies, such as enhanced career development opportunities or adjustments to compensation packages, to mitigate these risks.

### Guidance on:

- ❖ [101 Data Analysis](#)
- ❖ [Uncovering blockers](#)
- ❖ [Data Exploration](#)



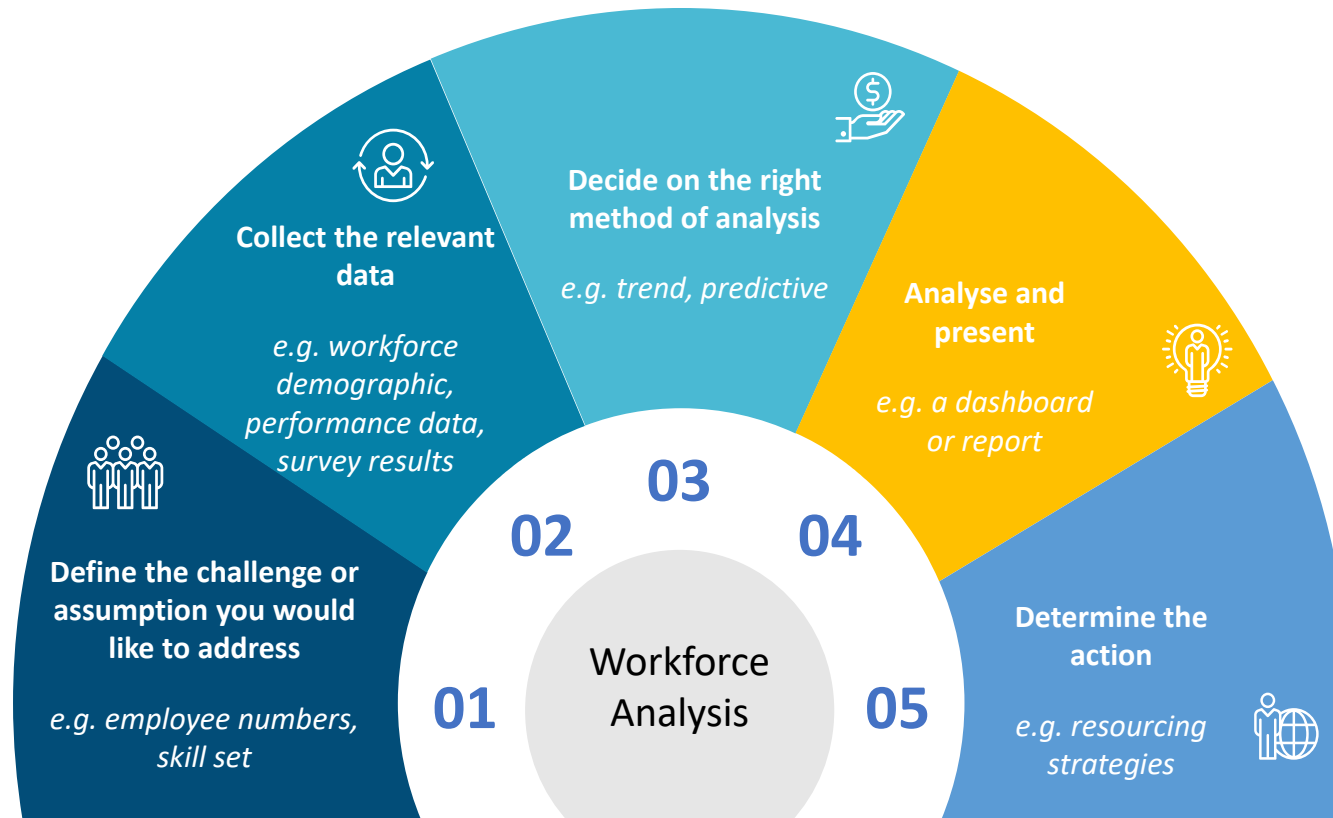
Click on each tool to discover what it is





# 101 Data Analysis

Conducting data analysis is crucial to understanding your current workforce, and where resource strategies will be required. The steps below outline five-distinct steps to follow when looking at the workforce data.



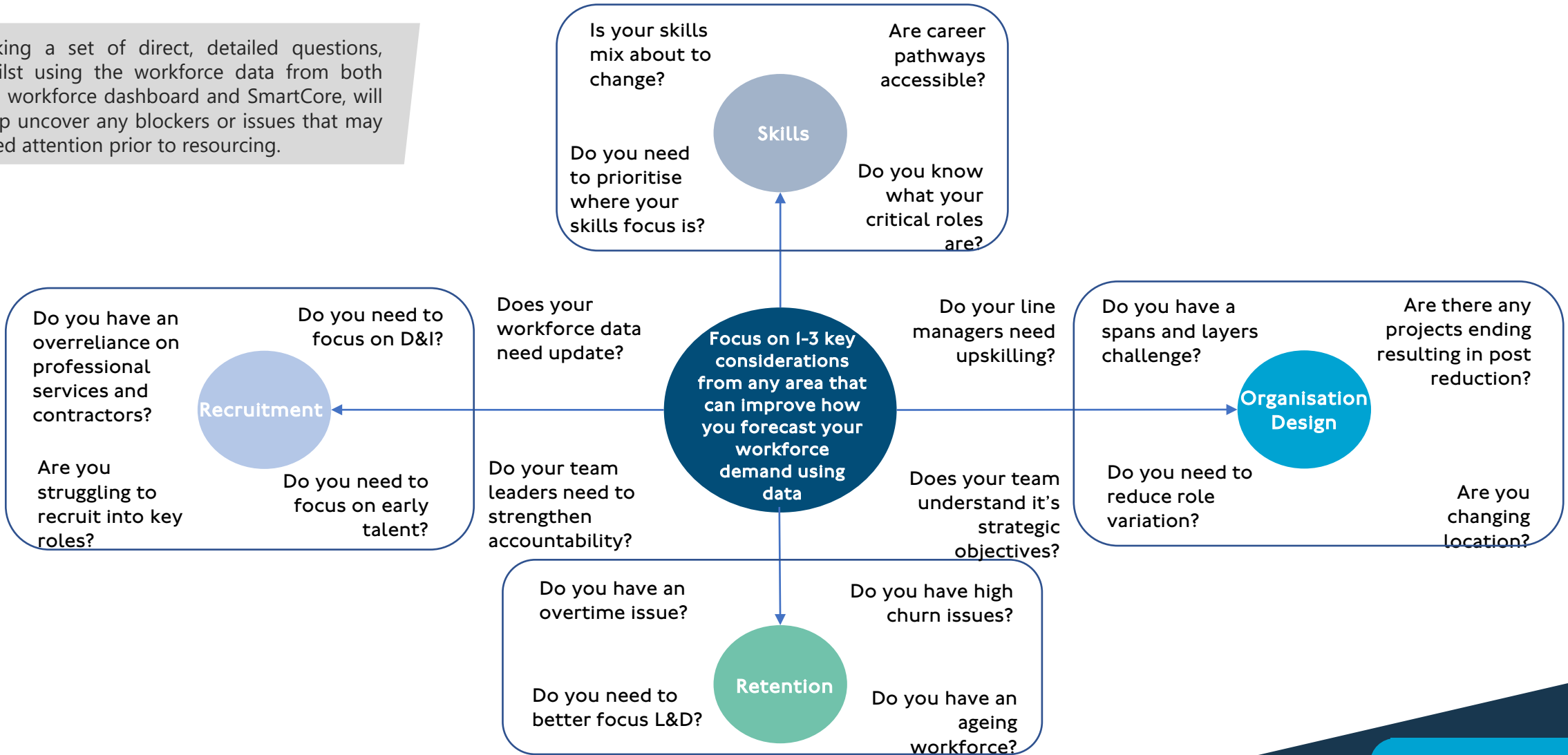
## Why is using data so important?

- Improved decision-making
- Enhanced employee experience
- More cost-effective business practices
- Greater understanding of future workforce needs
- Better alignment between HR and company goals



## Uncovering blockers

Asking a set of direct, detailed questions, whilst using the workforce data from both the workforce dashboard and SmartCore, will help uncover any blockers or issues that may need attention prior to resourcing.





# Data Exploration

These questions prompt thinking around critical aspects of the workforce. By aligning workforce capabilities, identified through the data, with business needs, they support more informed decision-making in SWP.

Questions	Data
<b>Current and Future Business Demands</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What are the current and future business demands?</li><li>How do our workforce capabilities align with future demands?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Projected revenue growth (%) over the next 5 years.</li><li>Expected increase/decrease in workforce size (headcount %)</li><li>New project/work pipeline</li></ul>
<b>Skills and Abilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What essential skills are required for success?</li><li>Are there new skills needed due to industry changes?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Percentage of workforce with critical technical skills (%)</li><li>Skill gap percentage in high-demand areas (e.g., AI, data analytics)</li><li>Training hours per employee per year</li></ul>
<b>Talent Profiles and Succession Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What is the current talent profile for key positions?</li><li>Do we understand our top talent's strengths and development needs?</li><li>What are the risks of key personnel departures?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>% of roles with ready successors</li><li>Internal promotion rate (%)</li><li>Average time to fill critical leadership roles (months)</li></ul>
<b>Workforce Demographics and Diversity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What is the gender and age profile of our workforce?</li><li>How does the grade distribution align with organisational needs?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Age distribution: % of workforce over 55 (retirement risk)</li><li>Gender and ethnic diversity ratio (% in leadership positions)</li><li>Turnover rate (%) by demographic group.</li></ul>
<b>Workforce Stability and Risk Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>How secure do employees feel in their roles?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Overall employee turnover rate (%).</li><li>Percentage of key positions with identified risks (e.g., single points of failure)</li><li>Average employee tenure (years)</li></ul>
<b>Strategic Alignment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Is the workforce aligned with strategic goals?</li><li>Are workforce initiatives adaptable to changing business needs?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Percentage of workforce aligned with future strategic priorities (via surveys)</li><li>Resource allocation to strategic initiatives (% of workforce in key areas)</li><li>KPI achievement rate (%) for key strategic goals.</li></ul>

This is not an exhaustive list of data points, but good examples of where to look across the Workforce Dashboard and SmartCore.



# Sourcing Strategies





# Overview: Delivering Sourcing Strategies

There are many options to fulfil TfL's short- and long-term resourcing challenges. Our approach is grounded in the '*Build, Buy, Borrow*' (BBB) framework.

## Build, Buy, Borrow Resourcing Strategies

By using the BBB framework, we can identify the most effective resourcing strategy for specific resourcing challenges across the organisation, ensuring we make informed decisions on whether to develop internal talent, hire externally, or bring in temporary expertise.

The optimum mix of employed and contingent labour allows companies to better align the interests of their talent with the interests of their company, maximize the talent market in all its forms for the right roles and improve their ability to expand and contract their workforce with changing market and economic trends.

## Decision Points:

- Determine whether to invest in long-term training and development programmes to build the necessary skills internally.
- Assess whether future business demands require acquiring specialized skills or leadership capabilities that cannot be developed internally in the needed timeframe.
- Evaluate the potential need for temporary and contract workers to address fluctuating demands or rapidly changing skill requirements over the next 10+ years.

## Guidance on:

❖ [Build, Buy, Blend Resourcing Strategies](#)

❖ [Sourcing Strategy Tree](#)



Click on each tool to discover what it is



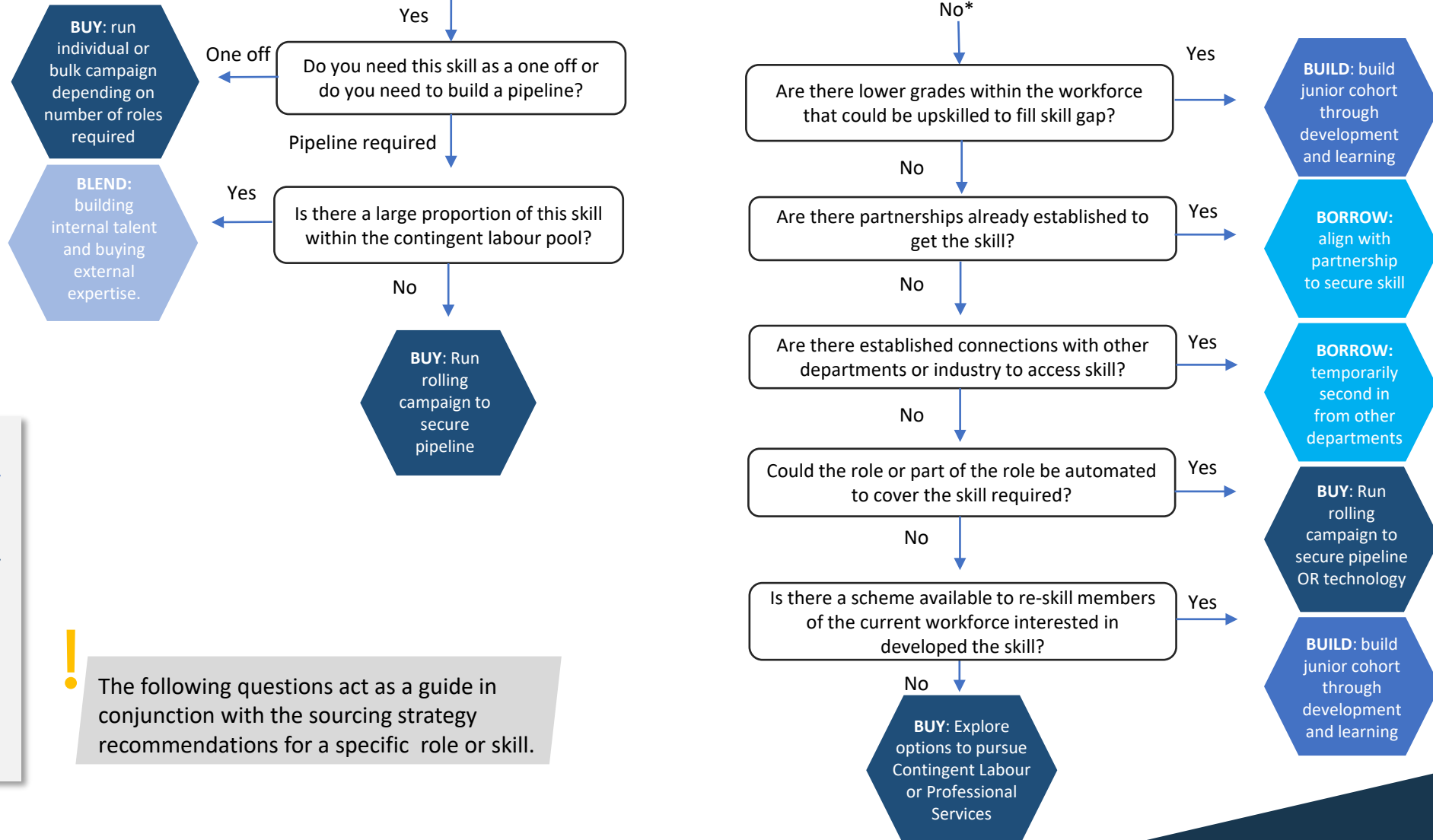


## Template: Build, Buy, Blend Resourcing Strategies

Sourcing Strategy	Description	Why would this be appropriate?
<b>BUILD</b>	Focus on developing and upskilling the existing workforce to meet capability requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where the resource currently exists and focus needs to be on the development of this workforce through training and knowledge transfer so that they can meet the needs of the future</li><li>• A build strategy assumes that the resource currently has the foundation capability (entry level requirements) and it is a case of developing them further within role and along a development pathway</li></ul>
<b>BUY</b>	Permanent recruitment for long term skill and talent requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where demand outweighs supply and there is the need to fill the gap with FTE resource</li><li>• Where the specific skillset is available externally for critical capabilities</li></ul>
<b>BORROW</b>	Leveraging contingent or contract talent for urgent or temporary needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where expertise exists elsewhere which can support knowledge transfer</li><li>• Where expertise exists elsewhere and could plug a gap in immediate term whilst right skillset is recruited internally</li><li>• Likely to be transport or industry specific external consultancies</li><li>• Consider the benefits to the other organisation secondment relationships</li></ul>
<b>BLEND</b>	A hybrid approach that combines both building internal talent and buying external expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If there are critical roles that require immediate expertise from outside while also developing internal talent for future needs.</li><li>• When maintaining a strong internal culture is important, but external innovation and fresh ideas are also needed.</li><li>• To manage risks by not over-relying on either internal development or external hiring.</li></ul>



It has been identified this skill is required over the long-term- Has recruitment in the last year been successful for this skill?



Key:



The following questions act as a guide in conjunction with the sourcing strategy recommendations for a specific role or skill.

\* Evidence shows recruitment has been attempted within the last two years and was unsuccessful

Next stage

Working draft

# Written Workforce Plan

Continue to section





## Overview: Written Workforce Plan

A Written Workforce Plan serves to translate strategic insights and workforce analysis into concrete, actionable steps. This phase involves the detailed formulation of specific initiatives and interventions to address identified workforce gaps, align talent supply with future organisational needs, and ensure a resilient and capable workforce. It is essential to align with other programmes and processes, to ensure the strategic goals of TfL are met in cohesion.

### Decision Points:

- Determine the primary objectives for the SWP. Who is the plan aimed at? What are the strategic and financial goals?
- Identify who you will need input from to carry out the action plan and recommendations cited in the SWP. This may include the finance team, resourcing, or other business areas.
- Metrics and monitoring are essential for the successful long-term implementation of working force planning capability. Key performance indicators (KPIs) might include employee turnover rates, time-to-fill positions, and employee satisfaction scores.

### Guidance on:

- ❖ [SWP Structure Template](#)
- ❖ [Aligning with broader initiatives](#)



Click on each tool to discover what it is





# SWP Structure Template

A full SWP Structure Template can be found here:



The SWP Template can be edited to fit the specific requirements of the business area's needs.

The template includes the below structure, including prompts:

1. Executive Summary
2. Stakeholders Involved
3. Contextual Analysis and Strategic Drivers
4. Current Workforce (Supply, Gap and Demand Analysis)
5. Using the Data
6. Delivering Sourcing Strategies
7. Monitoring and Evaluation

3. Contextual Analysis and Strategic Drivers	
Short and long-term organizational goals	
Specific workforce challenges the organization is expected to face in the short and long-term	
Challenges in emerging market, economic, and political environment	
Upcoming legislative, policy, or regulatory changes that may affect organization	

Gap Analysis	
Describe the gaps between your workforce supply and workload demand	
Identify what gaps are most critical considering the strategic goals	
Prioritize the gaps in terms of what to address first, second, third, etc.	
Identify which gaps are most difficult and	



# Aligning with broader initiatives

Aligning Strategic Workforce Planning with broader business objectives ensures that the workforce is positioned to support long-term goals. It helps anticipate future talent needs, optimise resource allocation, and ensure that staffing decisions are directly linked to achieving business outcomes. This alignment enhances agility, fosters proactive planning, improves talent retention, and maximises operational efficiency, ensuring the organisation can respond effectively to changes in market demand or strategic direction.

## Broader initiatives

### Graduate, Apprentice and Internships:

These schemes can fulfil a long-term pipeline of talent, careful consideration should be given to the type of skillset you will need over the next 3-5 years.

[Graduate and undergraduate schemes \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)

### Employability Programmes

Our programmes offer access to skills, training and experience to support individuals with their education and entrance or re-entrance into the workforce. They are offering an opportunity for us to diversify our workforce and help individuals who face barriers into employment.

[Employability Outreach \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)

### Succession Planning and Knowledge Transfer

With retirement as a key organisational risk ensuring we have a pipeline and a plan for retaining the knowledge and skills we have are key.

[Succession Management \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)

