Business Workforce Planning for your next Harvest

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Workforce Planning and HR strategies for your next harvest

# 

It was once famously said that if you fail to plan, you are planning to fail. All businesses desire to succeed and achieve the individual propose it was established for. The business planning process provides a business with a structured approach to developing a useful plan. A useful plan should honestly consider its current situation and then have clear goals for what the business is trying to achieve, outlining how it will go about for achieving these goals. The ‘how’ is a vital aspect of any business plan, as it establishes timeframes for when tasks should be completed, what things should be achieved and offers some accountability for individuals play their part in achieving the business goals.

**Strategic HR Planning**

Strategic human resource planning focuses on the key element of any grower based business – People. Although not the sole focus of the business, every grower requires the resource of people to achieve their businesses goals, and these people range from individual business owners, family members and possibly employees or labourers. The strategic HR planning process helps define and plans for the human resources needed within a business around three key elements:

* Attracting people
* Retaining people
* Developing people

All three areas need to be considered and continually worked on to ensure the overall goals of business can be achieved.

The exercise of writing a plan will:

• Help growers work through various ideas and options available to meet the HR needs of the business.  
• Allow growers to look at their ideas from different angles.  
• Develop a clear focus on key tasks associated with HR planning and minimise distractions.  
• Create a record of and actions and goals and allow the grower to measure their progress and check their assumptions.

**How to use this planning booklet**

This HR planning booklet provides a series of questions that grower businesses need to consider as part of their plan. Each section focuses on the vital elements of attracting, retaining and developing staff. By answering a series of questions and activities, growers will be able to consider the areas where they can improve the HR aspect of their business. As a result, you will develop a formal HR plan and set of actions implement in the business.

This booklet will be used in coordination with one on one support from an independent consultant who will ensure your plan is addressing the key areas it needs and will assist in ensuring all relevant areas have been considered.

In order to get the most out of this process, it is recommended growers follow these steps.

1. Answer honestly all the questions for sections one to six.
2. Reflect on the information you’ve gathered in sections one through to six and start to answer the questions in section seven. This SWOT Analysis starts to summarise and helps consider what are the positives and potential witnesses the opportunities and threats available to your business.
3. Arrange a time to meet with a consultant to go through the content related to your business. Do this through the registration portal on Ag Vic’s website here: <https://forms.office.com/r/S1ajNegkFi>  
   Meet with a consultant to support the planning of relevant goals and the creation of an action plan.
4. Put the action plan in place and use the consultant to develop relevant documents or practices to support your business.
5. Use a consultant to keep you accountable or refine reflect on activities that are working or things that need to change into the future.

# ****Section One: Business Background and HR Overview****

**1.1 Business Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Business Name |  |
| Owner(s) |  |
| Location |  |
| Area Farmed/ Tree Numbers |  |
| Crop type |  |

**1.2. What is the purpose of your business? (Why are you in business?)**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**1.3 What would you like staff to say about working as part of your business? (i.e. good environment, fun place to be, comfortable, team focused, good management structure, etc)**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**1.4** What would you like staff to say about their experience working with you as a manager/leader? **(Great farmer, good leader, catered to staff needs, respectful of people, etc)**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Business Values**

**What are the values that are important for your business and also relate to how you interact with people in the business?** (Having trouble? Look back the previous three questions. What are the key words used that best describe your business and what you wish to achieve)

**1.**

**2.**

**3.**

# 

# ****Section Two: HR Skills Audit****

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **HR skill** | **Rank the businesses ability in each area**  **1 2 3 4 5**  **Not competent OK, but could improve Highly competent** |
| **Workforce Planning** |  |
| Determining labour requirements |  |
| Defining structure of employment |  |
| Understanding industrial Relations Requirements |  |
| Creating/ Maintaining Relationships with contractors/LHC |  |
|  |  |
| **Attracting People** |  |
| Defining position descriptions |  |
| Writing advertisements |  |
| Using social media |  |
| Responding to applicants |  |
| Interviewing |  |
| Reference Checking |  |
| Creating employment documents |  |
|  |  |
| **Induction** |  |
| Inducting employees to business |  |
| Providing Training |  |
| Workplace Health and Safety |  |
| Standard Operating Procedures |  |
|  |  |
| **Performance** |  |
| Personal Communication |  |
| Leadership Skills |  |
| Building an effective team |  |
| Managing individual performance |  |
| Managing Conflict |  |
| Problem Solving |  |
| Rewarding performance |  |
| **Other** |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Scoring**

1 – 3 These are areas to consider working on to improve your HR skills capabilities.

4 – 5 These are areas where you do not need to place immediate emphasis, but to ensure you keep practicing or upskilling as requirements change

# ****Section Three: Workforce Planning****

**Instructions**

Consider the labour requirements for each area of the business operations. For each month of the year, write down how many Full Time Equivalent (FTEs) workers do you need for each area of operations. It may be zero, or significant numbers on different months. Include the amount of workers (including causals, contractors, full time staff and yourself). Consider also that it may be one full time person works across multiple areas of business operations, so if someone splits their time between a packing house and a sales role, put 0.5 in each area. Add across the table to put a number of people needed by the business for each month.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | | | | | | | | |  |
| **Month** | **Farm Management**  **(Business Management,**  **Production, orchard management, etc)** | **Planting** | Pruning | Thinning & Trimming | Harvest | Post-Harvest | Packing | **Office (inc admin, HR, sales, logistics, etc)** | **Other (Mechanics, etc)** | **TOTAL (FTE/mth)** |
| July |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| August |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| September |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| October |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| November |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| December |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| January |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| February |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| March |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| April |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| May |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| June |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**3.1 Which months are the pressure points of your staff requirements?**

**3.2 Which months are the pressure points of your staff requirements?**

**3.3 What roles are vital to maintain all year round?**

**3.4 Do you have capability for them in the business permanently? Yes/No  
If no, which roles need a permanent capacity?**

**3.5 Does every area of operation have at least one person who can manage, lead or guide other staff? Yes/No**

**Reflection Points:**

What are the key points you’ve noted in this section?

1.

2.

3.

# ****Section Four: Key Partnerships****

List the key partnerships with the people who work with you. This includes permanent staff, the casuals you will know and use, Labour Hire Companies and/or Contractors the business has access to.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Permanent staff | Key strengths, skills or expertise they bring to the business | Work undertaken | Could they take on more responsibility within the business? |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Regular casual staff | Key strengths, skills or expertise they bring to the business | Work undertaken | Could they become a more utilised resource within the business? |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Labour Hire Companies | Will use/ Will not use | Work undertaken | Lead in time required/ Contact regularity |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Contractors | Will use/ Will not use | Work undertaken | Lead in time required/ Contact regularity |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**Reflection Points:**

What are the key points you’ve noted in this section?

1.

2.

3.

# ****Section Five: Attracting staff****

**Getting Applications**

**5.1 Key Promotional Attributes**

What are the key things about your business, farm and location that will generate interest and attract workforce?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**5.2 Reaching the right Candidates**

Where does your preferred worker look for work opportunities? (Some ideas are included)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of worker | Media/Networks/Other | Currently using? Yes/No |
| Grey Nomad | Community Notice Boards/Facebook/Local Newspaper |  |
| CALD communities | Local community group representatives |  |
| School leavers | School career advisors, social media |  |
| Uni students | Social media |  |
| Back Packers | Social media |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**5.3 HR Documentation**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Do you have:** | **NO** | **YES** | **If Yes, when were they created or last reviewed?** |
| Position Descriptions |  |  |  |
| Person Specifications |  |  |  |
| Draft Advertisements |  |  |  |
| Interview Questions |  |  |  |
| Reference Check Questions |  |  |  |
| Induction Checklist |  |  |  |
| Employment Agreement |  |  |  |
| Workplace Health & Safety Manual or training documents |  |  |  |
| Written agreement or Contract with Labour Hire Companies |  |  |  |
| Written agreement or Service Contract with Contractors |  |  |  |

**Reflection Points:**

What are the key points you’ve noted in this section?

1.

2.

3.

# ****Section Six: Retaining Staff****

**6 The Working Environment**

Based on feedback received from staff, or your working knowledge of the farm:

**6.1 What are the Strengths/Positives of the working conditions and physical environment while working on my farm? (i.e. shaded areas, modern equipment, raised platforms and leaf blowers, cultural considerations, flexibility in hours , accommodation, transport etc)**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**6.2 What are the potential weaknesses of the working conditions and physical environment while working on my farm? (i.e. lack of shaded areas, older or lack of equipment, limited accommodation and transport options, etc) Note, you may not be able to address these weaknesses, but acknowledging them is useful.**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**6.3 What opportunities are there to improve the working conditions and physical environment while working on my farm? (i.e. shaded areas, modern equipment, technological advancements, etc)**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**6.4 What aspects of the conditions and physical working environment do other businesses in the region have on offer to employees that may prove to be a threat to my ability to either attract or retain staff on my farm? (i.e. access to town, modern equipment, accommodation, etc)**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**6.5 Answer yes or no for the following questions relating to activities undertaken to retain staff.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Do you** | **NO** | **YES** |
| Provide incentives to your workers? |  |  |
| Reward your workers with extra money or benefits if they exceed expectations? |  |  |
| Ask workers for feedback on how the business can improve the working environment? |  |  |
| Ask workers for feedback on how the business can improve the working experience? |  |  |
| Provide training to workers to improve their skills? |  |  |
| Offer good workers the opportunity to take on roles with more responsibility (a promotion)? |  |  |
| Offer good casual workers permanent work? |  |  |

**6.6 Key Retention Strategies**

What are the top five things employees, contractors or labour hire companies mention about what makes your business good to work in?

**1.**

**2.**

**3.**

**4.**

**5.**

**Reflection Points:**

What are the key points you’ve noted in this section?

1.

2.

3.

# ****Section Seven: Human Resources SWOT Analysis****

Look back over the previous pages of this workbook. Consider all areas of the business, the farm, your approach to management, key permanent or casual staff, partnerships with Labour Hire Companies and contractors, capability or access to employment related documents, etc. In addition consider the reflection points throughout each section. You will have a series of areas that will be either strengths or weaknesses. List the key strengths and weaknesses below.

**7.1 Strengths**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**7.2 Potential strategies to build on the strengths**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**7.3 Weaknesses**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**7.4 Potential strategies to address or reduce the effects of weaknesses**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Looking back over the previous pages of this workbook. List all areas where there might be opportunities to explore, develop or invest in further that would improve the ability to attract or retain staff or new potential new types of people you might target. This may include effort towards utilising and exploring new or established networks, new tools to consider and new approaches to managing staff.

**7.5 Opportunities**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**7.6 Potential strategies to take advantage of opportunities available**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Looking back over the previous pages of this workbook. Create a list of things that may impact or limit the ability for the business to attract or retain staff. What things are holding the business back from attracting or retaining staff?

**7.7 Threats**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**7.8 Potential strategies to reduce or minimise the effects of threats**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# ****Section Eight: Goal Setting****

Using the key outcomes listed in sections 7.1, 7.3, 7.5, and 7.7; define goals that will address each key strategy. Use the potential strategies you’ve listed in sections 7.2, 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8.

Ensure each goal is SMART:

S Specific (Can you articulate it clearly so it makes sense to somebody reading it for the first time?)

M Measurable (Does it have a number, quantifiable measure or clear outcome so you can you measure whether it has actually been achieved?)

A Achievable (Is the goal actually achievable, realistic, and ultimately within reach?)

R Relevant (Is achieving the goal going to make an impact on a key area you want to address?)

T Time Bound (Does it have a timeframe that it needs to be achieved by?)

List up to FIVE goals

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Goals to improve the Human Resources of the business** |
| **1** |  |
| **2** |  |
| **3** |  |
| **4** |  |
| **5** |  |

## ****Action Plan****

Turn your goals into an action plan, by understanding the key activities required in order to achieve the goals. For example:

Goal = Win World War II

Activity 1: First defeat Germany

Activity 2: Then defeat Japan

Activity 3: Establish order in defeated countries

Activity 4: Bring the troops home.

# ****Section Nine: Action Plan Template****

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Goal** | **Action** | **Who** | **When** | **Completed? (Y/N)** |
| Goal One |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Goal Two |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Goal Three |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Goal Four |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Goal Five |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

# ****Section Ten: For the Future****

The following questions will enable you to take advanced steps in managing the HR aspect of your business.

**10.1 What HR related tools or templates could be useful for the successful implementation of your plan? i.e. Advertisement templates, induction checklist, etc.**

**10.2 What skills do you need to develop personally in order to manage and retain staff? i.e. communication skills, understanding different learning styles, cultural awareness, etc**

**10. 3 What partnerships will be important for you to sustain efforts to attract, retain and develop staff into the future? i.e. Contacting schools or universities, getting external HR support, local training orgs, etc**