



## **Workforce Planning**

A guide and tool kit for non-government organisations to plan future workforce needs

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# Workforce Planning Guide for Non-government organisations

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## Introduction

Having the right people in the right place at the right time, all of the time, is a difficult task in any organisation, especially in the community and disability services sector. Scarce resources and stiff competition to attract and retain quality staff is of huge concern to non-government organisations (NGOs).

This document is designed to help your organisation plan for the workforce you need and identify how to attract workers to the jobs available, whether they are located in a city or rural and remote location.

This Workforce Planning Tool kit will assist you in developing workforce planning knowledge and skills so you can better support your organisation's workforce development, regardless of its size.

## So, what is workforce planning?

Workforce planning aims to have 'the right people in the right place at the right time, all the time'. It is:

- a continuous activity
- interested in current and future goals
- an important activity for planning, and
- an aid to understanding what you need to do to get your organisation from where it is now to where you want it to be in the future.

## Why is workforce planning so important?

Queensland's community and disability services sector currently faces challenges, including:

- geographic distribution
- an ageing population
- ageing carers
- population growth and a projected rise in service demand
- an historical under-investment in infrastructure in Queensland
- institutional reform, and
- the current industrial relations landscape and retaining experienced, skilled staff within the sector.

Trends in practice and changes to service delivery approaches are focussing attention on different skill requirements. Workforce planning can assist you to anticipate your

organisation's staff and skill requirements to support your work environment and client needs.

## **Key elements of workforce planning**

When preparing a workforce plan, it helps to:

- focus on key issues (often driven by funding of a new initiative or program), and
- use others' expertise to build an understanding of skill and staffing needs.

## **Workforce planning benefits**

Workforce planning can result in the following benefits:

- staff required to meet future needs can be identified
- a plan to recruit within appropriate time frames can be generated
- skill shortages within your organisation or target area can be identified
- a plan to close skill gaps can be prepared
- specific recruitment or training initiatives can help plan for new jobs
- staffing costs can be reduced through determining appropriate staffing levels
- staff development needs can be better identified
- ways to reduce skill shortages can be implemented
- employees whose skills are unlikely to meet future needs can be retrained, and
- staff can be placed in roles where they best meet your organisation's needs.

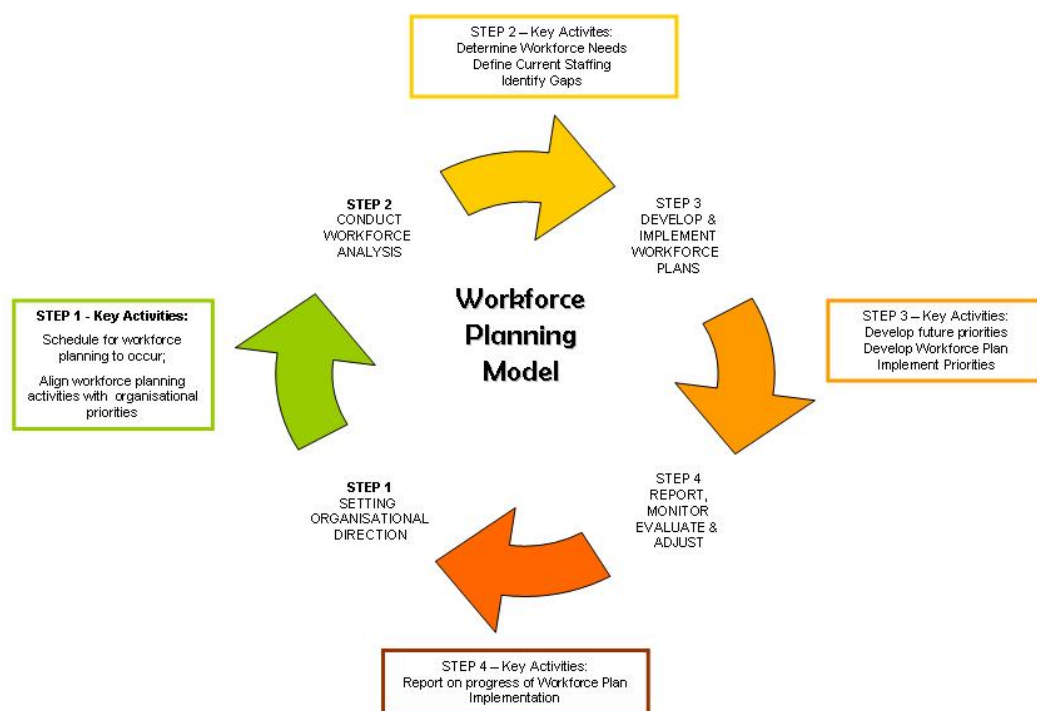
## **Outcomes of poor workforce planning**

Possible outcomes of poor or non-existent workforce planning practices include:

- goals not achieved because of an essential skills shortage within the time required
- poor morale that may affect service provision due career path uncertainty
- limited understanding of employee skills available, and
- a waste of budget, time and resources.

## Workforce planning process

The figure below illustrates the workforce planning process and cycle. Key components include:



## Using this tool kit to your advantage

This document has been developed to:

- inform you about how workforce planning can help to achieve your service goals, and
- provide some tools, techniques and templates to assist you undertake workforce planning.

## How to use this tool kit

This document takes you through the workforce planning process, so it is important that you work through the steps in the sequence presented and thereby generate a workforce plan for your organisation.

## Structure of the guide

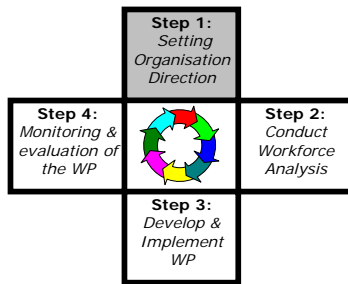
Each section relates to a single step in the workforce planning process. In each section, you will be introduced to an overview of what will be covered in that section, the goals of that step and what you will achieve at the end of that section.

The document will guide you through the processes and tasks you will need to complete for that step. So assess whether the template and step meet your current needs and only complete those tasks that will add value for your organisation.

At the end of the step you will be advised what template to use to record your workforce planning information. You may wish to use the templates provided, develop one for your organisation or use the online workforce planning tool.

### **Online tool**

An online version of the *Workforce Planning Guide* is being developed. It is based on the same information presented in this guide, but provides an opportunity to capture your information in a secure database so that you may return to your workforce plan to refine and print it at any time. The secure database also provides for the creation and maintenance of historical records, so you can create and keep your workforce plans



## 1 Setting organisational direction

This step is about gaining a clear understanding for yourself and those who will read your workforce plan of where you see the organisation now and in the future. The future can be any where from one to five years, depending on how far in advance you would like to plan and are able to plan.

### 1.1 Develop your workforce planning schedule

The best time to schedule the completion of your organisation's workforce plan is to coincide with your organisation's usual planning meetings. However, if your organisation plans in a more ad-hoc manner, the workforce plan can be completed anytime.

#### 1.1.1 Why should I complete this step?

To:

- develop the workforce planning schedule in line with organisational planning processes
- define the resources and information required to undertake workforce planning, and
- determine the actions to be undertaken in the development of the workforce plan.

#### 1.1.2 What will be the result of this step?

You will generate a documented workforce planning schedule detailing who will be doing what, how and when.

The action plan will detail:

- clear action items
- the people responsible
- the planning time frame, and
- the time frame for action completion.

#### 1.1.3 How to complete this step

Prior to the planning process, it is a good idea for those involved to:

- understand the purpose of the process,
- be aware of goals to be achieved, and
- receive a copy of this document and accompanying templates.

**Use template 1: workforce planning schedule**

## 1.2 Assess the environment (environmental scanning)

Undertake research and collect data on the external and internal organisational environment. Identify any changes, developments or potential impacts on people such as:

### External influences:

- economic issues, e.g. government policy and legislation
- social issues, e.g. community expectations and client needs
- environmental issues
- technological trends and developments, and
- demographics and workforce characteristics.

### Internal influences:

- organisational planning management committee:
  - vision, mission
  - values, behaviours and
  - goals
  - organisational priorities
  - performance measures and
  - budget impacts.
- programs your organisation delivers
- types of workers you currently have available.

### 1.2.1 Why should I complete this step?

You will identify external and internal influences that will affect the business area during the planning period.

### 1.2.2 What will be the result of this step?

You will assess the key issues (internal and external to the organisation) that may affect the organisation during the planning period.

Three possible scenarios of the future business environment are identified:

1. best case
2. most-likely case, and
3. worst case.

### 1.2.3 How to complete this step

Conduct a strengths/weaknesses/opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis of your organisation's workforce requirements for the planning period.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation? Some questions you may want to consider include:

- Do we possess any unique skills and resources that ensure we will continue to deliver a high-quality service?
- Is our organisational culture flexible or inflexible?
- Do staff and volunteers understand our organisation's style and approach?
- In what areas are we proactive and reactive?
- Do we encourage new ideas in a positive way?
- What are the barriers to creating an environment of change and adaptability?
- What are our workers' demographics, skills and motivation?
- What is the status and effect of staff absenteeism (e.g. recreation, long service, sick leave)?

- What is your organisation's profile? For example, a substantial number of people at retirement age within the next five years.

What opportunities can your organisation create or exploit? What threats does your organisation face? Some questions you may want to consider are:

- What is the nature of labour supply in locations where future programs are scheduled?
- How will technology change the way work is done?
- How intense will competition be for upcoming jobs (e.g. is there likely to be a shortage or oversupply of labour?)
- What are the funding and budget trends (e.g. increasing or decreasing)?
- How does the public perceive the services provided and service quality?

Develop three organisation scenarios (best case, worst case and most-likely case) by:

- considering the key issues, effects, risk and likelihood of occurrence, and
- create statements that describe the environment:
  - at its best over the planning period — what would it look like? What are the effects?
  - At its worst over the planning period — what would it look like? What are the effects?
  - How it is most likely to be as well as effects.

## **Use template 2: SWOT analysis**

Template 1: workforce planning schedule

**Workforce Planning Schedule 20\_\_ / 20\_\_**

Actions	Who	When	Complete
<p><b>Step 1:</b> Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Management team or committee schedule time to conduct the workforce planning activity, and</li> <li>▪ access a copy of relevant documents such as the organisation plan to assist with workforce analysis.</li> </ul> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ gather information required with regard to service demand</li> <li>▪ gather existing information about demand and supply/staff demographics, and</li> <li>▪ gather identified learning and development information with regard to existing and future requirements.</li> </ul> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Management team or committee meets to assess and determine workforce gaps, and assess how to write the workforce plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Management team or committee meets to review and, if necessary, modify workforce plan.</li> </ul>			

SWOT Analysis 20__ / 20__	
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Threats</b>

## **1.3 Align workforce planning activities with organisational planning priorities**

Identify the priorities and initiatives that will have the greatest effect on workforce requirements.

### **1.3.1 Why should I complete this step?**

You will assess and prioritise potential effects and risks of your organisation's human resource requirements.

### **1.3.2 What will be the result of completing this step?**

You will assess the key workforce issues that will affect the organisational environment during the planning period in the form of a risk analysis.

### **1.3.3 How to complete this step**

- Using the risk matrix (Table 1), identify what potential impact or risk to your workforce could occur as a result of a particular issue.
- Identify the likelihood of the risk occurring.
- Rate the risk consequence to the organisation if a particular scenario occurred. (The information in the following template will help you identify areas that require action.)

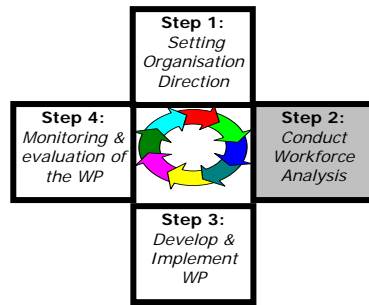
## **Use template 3: risk analysis**

### **At the end of step 1 you should have completed:**

- ✓ a schedule for workforce planning within your organisation
- ✓ SWOT issues and effects
- ✓ organisation scenarios
- ✓ identified key workforce planning risks for your organisation



## 2 Conduct workforce analysis



This step is about determining the most-likely future staff demand and supply issues. The information collected through the analysis of supply and demand will help identify gaps and issues.

### 2.1 What staff do you need?

This step is about determining who will be needed to carry out the plans.

#### 2.1.1 Why should I complete this step?

This step helps you identify how many and what sort of employees are required to deliver the program and associated services.

#### 2.1.2 What will be the result of completing this step?

You will generate a profile of required workforce number, skills needed, and the locality for the planning period.

#### 2.1.3 How to complete this step

Use the workforce analysis sheet (staffing needs), to capture your organisation's information.

1. The priorities (e.g. programs, services, activities) which are most likely to occur during the workforce planning period.
2. The job functions needed for each program/service/activity along with approximate times for each program/service/activity. To help with your analysis, refer to your organisation's strategic plan, annual report or similar documents. Also consider:
  - local population demographics
  - community expectations (e.g. local community groups, business groups, professional organisations)
  - legal constraints and/or requirements
  - workforce trends
  - effects of technology, and
  - effects of future government policy.
3. Determine how these programs, services and activities will be delivered:
  - What is the time frame for each of them?
  - Where will services be delivered?
  - What will the budget be?

Other issues to consider:

- What positions are required?
- What skills and capabilities are required in each function?
- What capability levels and experience is required for each position?
- When will this workforce be required (e.g. whole/part program)?
- What additional skills are required to support organisational goals?
- Demographics required for the future, e.g:
  - age demographics
  - diversity representation
  - staff mobility
  - number of possible traineeships/graduates
  - promotion/transfer/turnover
  - employment status (permanent/part-time/temporary/casual)
  - leave issues (e.g. long service, recreation, sick), and
  - professional/personal development.

**Use Template 4A or 4B: workforce analysis sheet (future staffing)**

**Template 4A is for one to five years (long term)**

**Template 4B is for a one-year period (short term)**



Template 4B: future staffing requirements (short term)

Workforce analysis sheet — short term															
Future staffing requirements															
Program	Position Type	Salary Level	# of Full staff (FTE)	Qualifications /skills required	Time frame	Location	Budget / forecast revenue	Months							
								July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February

## **2.2 Who are the existing workers (current staff)?**

### **2.2.1 Why should I complete this step?**

You will identify the existing human resource supply in terms of numbers, skills mix, location, employment status and workforce characteristics.

### **2.2.2 What will be the result of completing this step?**

You will generate a profile of the existing human resource numbers, skills, locations, employment status, trends and demographics.

### **2.2.3 How to complete this step**

Using the workforce analysis sheet (current staffing), complete the following sections:

1. Identify existing workers by using your area's workforce reports or systems, for information such as:
  - job function
  - employment status
  - classification, and
  - qualifications and skills possessed.

***Use template 5: workforce analysis sheet — current staffing***



## **2.3 Do we have gaps between workers we have and need (gap analysis)**

The purpose of this step is to highlight the gaps in workforce needs and determine what could and should be done about them.

### **2.3.1 Why should I complete this step?**

You will identify key areas of difference that will affect your organisation's performance between the existing workforce and the required workforce for the forecast planning period.

### **2.3.2 What will be the result of completing this step?**

A list of the key difference areas that require planned intervention activities.

### **2.3.3 How to complete this step**

Analyse and compare the workforce future staffing needs and existing supply sections of the workforce analysis sheet templates. Identify the key areas of difference. Look for issues such as:

- differences in available capacity to required needs
- at-risk occupations due to limited work availability, skill deficiency or insufficient labour supply
- numbers of staff eligible for long-service leave or retirement (i.e. examine risk),
- locate where shortages and surpluses exist
- movements in workforce trends and demographics
- organization-specific issues (e.g. ageing experienced workforce — limited opportunity to pass on skills), and
- demographic differences.

1. Using the workforce gap analysis template, list the gaps identified in the workforce analysis sheet.
2. What are the effects of the gap identified should they occur?
3. Broadly identify activities that could be undertaken to address these gaps and issues.
4. Rate each activity in terms of its potential effectiveness in reducing the difference or gap.

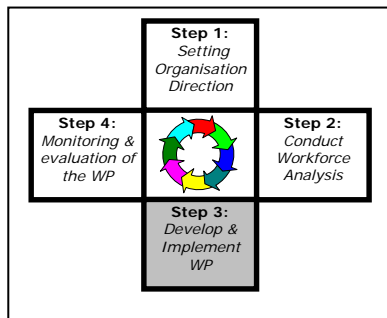
## **Use template 6: workforce analysis sheet (workforce gap analysis)**

### **At the end of step 2 you should have:**

- ✓ Identified your future staffing requirements and compared them with your existing staff profile
- ✓ identified key workforce gaps and issues to successfully achieve your organisational commitments, and
- ✓ Identified the workforce planning and management activities necessary to address the identified gaps/issues.



### 3 Develop and implement workforce plans



Once the gaps and issues have been determined, the next step is to develop a range of activities that can be implemented to reduce the gaps between workforce supply and workforce demand.

#### 3.1 How will the organisation address future workforce needs?

This step is used to identify options and find the best alternative to solve issues regarding future workforce needs.

##### 3.1.1 Why should I complete this step?

You will develop an approach to reduce the identified workforce gaps and develop action plans to manage workforce gaps for the forecast period.

##### 3.1.2 What will be the result of completing this step?

You will generate a documented action plan of prioritised activities.

##### 3.1.3 How to complete this step

1. Develop activities that can be implemented to eliminate or reduce each of the differences and gaps identified.
2. Approaches may involve a range of the following, or others that have not been included in this list:
  - mobility/rotation/relieving in higher duties
  - targeted development for job roles/skills required/needs analysis
  - mentoring/shadowing/'buddy system'
  - modifying work practices (e.g. job redesign)
  - greater use/purchase of technology/equipment
  - recruiting staff — targeted recruitment, recruitment of trainees/graduates/under-represented diversity group members
  - family-friendly/work-life balance strategies
  - reskilling and re-training
  - professional development
  - management training
  - leadership training
  - flexible work arrangements
  - staffing mix to meet needs of clients, stakeholders and work-life balance requirements, and
  - building and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment.

## **3.2 Develop the workforce plan**

Once options have been identified, it is now time to create a plan on how to achieve the desired result. This is the major purpose of this step in the workforce planning process.

### **3.2.1 How to complete this step**

1. Choose the most-appropriate approaches to be adopted. Define your organisational goals, workforce requirements, the effect of implementing or not implementing an approach, and performance measures.
2. Develop an action plan to implement the approaches detailing who is responsible for doing what and when.
3. Rate each approach in terms of its potential effectiveness in reducing the difference.
4. Choose the most-appropriate approaches to be adopted. Define the expected outcomes, workforce requirements, effect of implementing / not implementing, and performance measures.

### **3.2.2 Why should I complete this step?**

You will assess approaches to reduce the identified workforce gaps and develop action plans to manage workforce gaps for the forecast period.

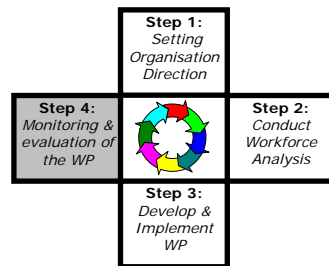
### **3.2.3 What will be the result of completing this step?**

You will generate an action plan to implement the approaches, detailing who is responsible for doing what and when.

***Use template 7: workforce plan***



## 4 Reporting, monitoring, evaluating, and adjusting workforce plans



Workforce planning is an interactive process and reporting progress is critical to the success of this workforce planning approach.

### 4.1 Reporting progress

#### 4.1.1 Why should I complete this step?

Create a mechanism for reporting on implementation progress of approaches.

#### 4.1.2 What will be the result of completing this step?

Regular reporting provides a way to determine what activities have been completed and those still to be implemented to achieve desired organisational goals.

1. To ensure sufficient information is available for reporting, consider the following:

- the number and types of employees needed to address the challenges of the next period
- an analysis to assess gaps between current and future workforce requirements. It should also include workforce size, demographics, occupations and geographical locations
- approaches to address the gaps between the projected supply and demand
- action plans to execute the approaches are clearly defined, including accountability, due dates and workers needed, and
- regular reporting processes are in place.

2. Time frames:

- It is recommended that reports occur on a three-monthly basis.
- Reports should be completed no later than six months after commencement of workforce planning implementation.

***Use template 8: reporting***



## **4.2 Monitoring, evaluating and adjusting workforce plans**

The purpose of monitoring, evaluating and adjusting workforce plans is to ensure information remains current and is reviewed in light of any developments that may affect staffing issues in the organisation.

### **4.2.1 Why should I complete this step?**

You will identify a process for ongoing monitoring and review of the approaches outlined in the workforce plan.

### **4.2.2 What will be the result of completing this step?**

You will define a method for incorporating regular ongoing review of the workforce planning approach.

1. As part of the ongoing review, workforce planning activities that could be considered include:
  - developing and using meaningful performance indicators
  - regularly analysing workforce characteristics, including trends over time
  - undertaking policy and program reviews, and
  - benchmarking.
  
2. Success factors:
  - The workforce plan is generally based on your organisation's overall plan and considers the mission, vision, core values and goals.
  - The plan has been communicated to employees and stakeholders.
  - The workforce plan and approaches are to be continually monitored and refined to ensure their ongoing effectiveness and continuous improvement, taking into account resource changes and other conditions affecting the organisation.

**Table 1: measures of potential impact**

Description	Definition
<b>Insignificant</b>	No effect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no financial loss</li> <li>• no significant adverse comment in media, resolved by day-to-day management, or</li> <li>• insignificant loss of capability to continue a program/s, very little disruption to core business.</li> </ul>
<b>Minor</b>	No slowing of business, only a small distraction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low financial loss</li> <li>• adverse comment in local media only, limited damage to reputation, or</li> <li>• minor loss of capability to continue a program/s, minor disruption to core business.</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate</b>	Will require action but business/project is still largely on track: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high financial loss</li> <li>• an adverse article reported in the daily media, questions in Parliament, embarrassment for departmental management, or</li> <li>• some loss of capability to continue a program/s, moderate disruption to core business.</li> </ul>
<b>Major</b>	Will cause disruption and will either require more resources, more time or reduce quality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• major financial loss</li> <li>• adverse articles reported in media on successive days, embarrassment to Director-General and Minister</li> <li>• issue raised in Parliament, with Minister involved in public damage control, or</li> <li>• loss of capability to continue a program/s, major disruption to core business.</li> </ul>
<b>Catastrophic</b>	Will stop project/activity/business. Will not achieve objectives and requires immediate attention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• huge financial loss</li> <li>• public scandal in the press leading to extensive damage to reputation — potential Parliamentary inquiry, or</li> <li>• severe loss of capability to continue a program/s, severe disruption to core business.</li> </ul>

**Table 2: measures of likelihood**

Description	Definition
<b>Almost certain</b>	The event is expected to occur in most circumstances.
<b>Likely</b>	The event will probably occur in most circumstances.
<b>Possible</b>	The event might occur at some time.
<b>Unlikely</b>	The event could occur at some time.
<b>Rare</b>	The event may occur only in exceptional circumstances.

**Table 3: risk rating**

Likelihood	Effect				
	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
<b>Almost Certain</b>	low	moderate	high	extreme	extreme
<b>Likely</b>	low	moderate	high	extreme	extreme
<b>Possible</b>	low	low	moderate	high	extreme
<b>Unlikely</b>	low	low	moderate	high	high
<b>Rare</b>	low	low	moderate	moderate	moderate

## Risk consequence

Extreme: Requires immediate action, as the potential could be devastating to the organisation.  
 High: Requires action, as it has the potential to be damaging to the organisation.  
 Moderate: Allocate specific responsibility and implement monitoring or response procedures.  
 Low: Treat with routine procedures.

## Glossary

### FTE — full-time equivalent

The full-time equivalent allows for the calculation of a position based on the equivalent in full-time terms. Where a position is half the number of full-time hours and referred to as part time, it may be represented as 0.5 FTE. Some calculations are not so simple, but all are based on the ratio of hours using the full-time hours as the denominator. For example, 40 hours per week = 0.5 is a 20-hour-per-week role and so on.