Perspectives on Strategic Workforce Planning in the Federal Government

National Academy of Sciences

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January 29, 2019

Overview – Perspectives and Insights

Goals of Strategic Workforce Planning (SWP)

Components of SWP

- Personnel Policy Analysis (Faces)
- Workload Measures (Spaces)

Three Examples

- Quick analysis with major results – U.S. Air Force Application
- The workforce planners dream – Internal Revenue Service Application
- Developing a common framework – U.S. Intelligence Community (briefly)

The Big Challenge in SWP

Summary and Questions

Components of Strategic Workforce Planning (SWP)

- Supply – Understanding the workforce you have
  - Mix – Career, Contingent, Seasonal, Blue Collar/White Collar, Hybrid
  - Occupational structure – Mission critical, Support or key enablers
  - Dynamics – How does it change overtime?
  - Analytical models of change or observed changes (Forecasting Attrition)

- Demand – Understanding the workforce you need
  - Strategic business environment
  - Changing business processes, technology, legislative demands
  - Workload measures
  - Occupational shifts or capability changes within occupations
  - Budgetary constraints

Example 1 – Air Force

- Air Force in early 1990s
  - Defense drawdown
  - Across-the-board reductions directed to Commands for civilian pay
  - Two large civilian dominated commands would be forced to reduce (RIF)
  - A number of combat oriented commands used civilian pay dollars as a "piggy bank" since most of the funding was in Operations and Maintenance (fungible)

- Sol^n
  - Spreadsheet model
  - "Aging" the workforce over two years at a topline level
  - Factoring in or out functional transfers
  - Determining minimum funding to avoid forced layoffs

Example 2 – Internal Revenue Service

- RRA 1998 – IRS Restructuring and Reform Act
  - Required transition from regional structure to business lines
  - Focused on roughly two-thirds of IRS workforce (65,000)
  - Deputy Commissioner's office was building the new footprint (Design Teams)
  - My office was building a transition model and influencing both the footprint and personnel transition plan (surplus, shortfalls)
- Sol^n
  - Linear programming network optimization with subroutines (X_{ijkl})
  - Iterative with bi-weekly results briefed to Charles Rossoti the IRS Commissioner (strong leadership and analytical roots)

Example 3 – Intelligence Community

- High level approach trying to impose common structure on 17 different intelligence organizations covering 6 different cabinet level agencies and a number of independent organizations
  - Large variations in approaches
  - Varying commitment to SWP
- Focused on
  - Contingent workforce
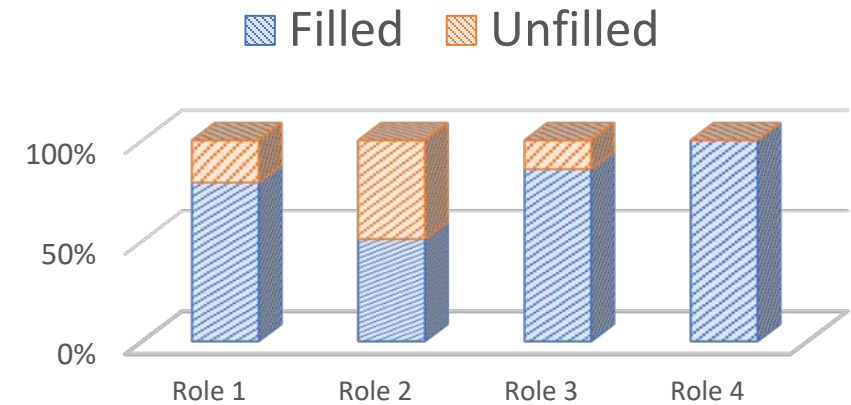 - Budget/human capital integration

Helpful Concepts of Data Visualizations
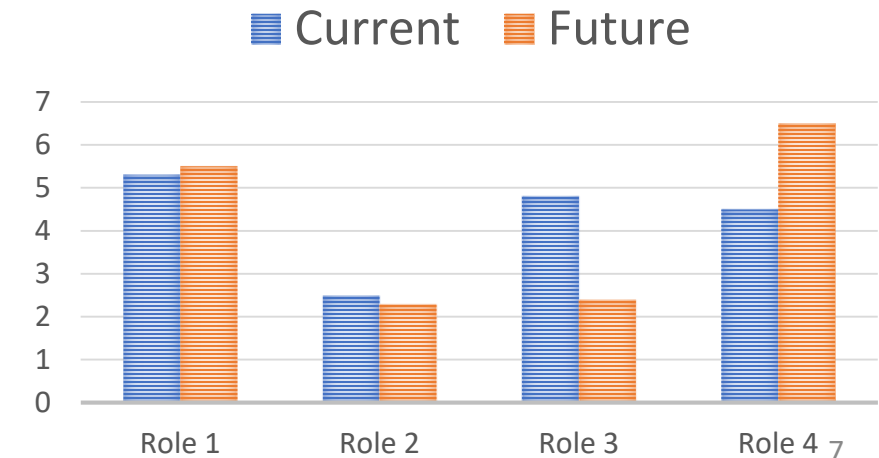
- One of my favorite things

Years of Service Profile
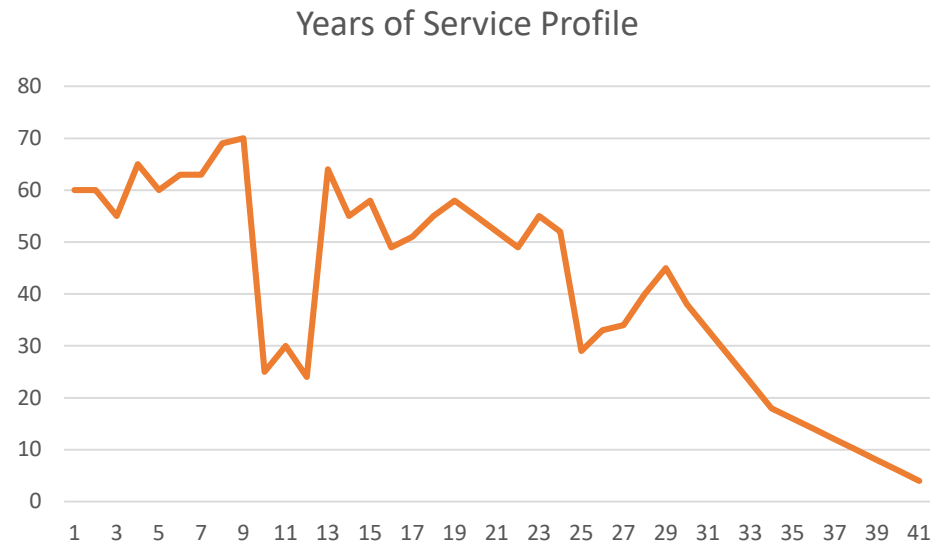
- Time to retirement eligibility by occupation is even better

OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE

Filled   Unfilled

REQUIREMENTS CHANGES

Current   Future

Big Challenge … Future Workforce Demand

- Requirements of future staffing needs should be based on sound planning

- Workload Measures are one component

- Forecasts of changing needs are another component

- Subdivide/Simplify the Problem
    - Focus on "mission critical occupations"
    - Address support positions based on overhead rates

- An effective SWP should be linked to the resource allocation process

- Develop cost models to ensure that future budgetary needs are feasible and "resourced"

Questions
Discussion