

Mature Age

Workforce Resource 2015



A framework of recommendations for the management and retention of mature talent in local government

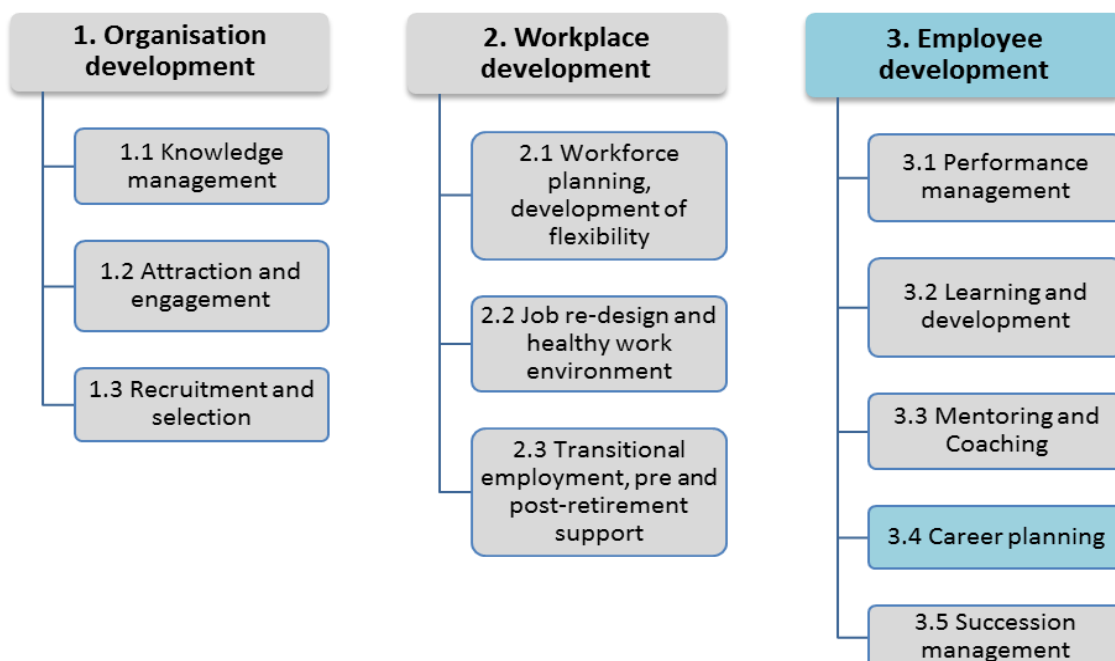
FOCUS AREA 3.4 CAREER PLANNING

The Toolkit is designed to be used by the Human Resources or Organisation Development (HR/OD) and leadership teams as they enhance their organisation's culture.

Suggested actions and strategies to help the mature age workforce may apply to the broader workforce as well and could contribute to fairer and more equitable work conditions and opportunities for all staff. Each organisation will already have in place human resource management policies and activities. It is not the intention of this toolkit to conflict with existing policies or actions. Rather, it can add value to the operations of the organisation by being used as stand-alone or integrated actions and initiatives.

Development initiatives are presented in a very broad way, with a set of actions identified as recommendations. Templates are not used in the Toolkit so that HR/OD practitioners can interpret recommendations in the most appropriate way that is aligned to existing initiatives.

There are many intended linkages and connections between the Focus Areas, which is an important factor as an aligned HR/OD strategy is developed and applied. The intention of the Toolkit is that work will be adapted and modified within each council organisation. Recommendations are not in any way intended to be prescriptive.



This Focus Area 3.4 of **Career Planning** provides practical tips to consider when establishing a career planning strategy, by ensuring that linkages and connections with other cultural development initiatives are incorporated.

1. OVERVIEW – the need for change

This Focus Area outlines the key strategies and actions for the development of a career path and career development opportunities that supports mature age workers to advance their career options.

The approach presented for career planning and development focuses on increasing flexibility around the roles and tasks available to mature age employees as a means of expanding their skills and experience base to support their long-term employability. Career planning and development processes will support the strategic objectives of the organisation and will be integrated into the transitional employment arrangements for mature age workers. It is recognised that equal and fair opportunity should be provided to all staff.

This Focus Area addresses how these strategies will be used to encourage mature age employees to be flexible about their careers in an effort to increase their employability and maximise transitional employment opportunities.

This Focus Area has application to all mature age workers aged 45 years and over, and other employees as well.

2. DEFINITIONS

Career development	The lifelong process of managing progress in learning and work
Career management	Support mechanisms the organisation can put in place to support an employee’s career plan and development objectives, including alignment with the strategic objectives of council
Career plan	Documentation of the desired ambition, including the key steps to achieving the goal, the skills, the knowledge and the experience needed to progress career goals
Career planning	The process of setting goals and objectives, and developing activities to achieve them
Coaching	A task-orientated, performance driven process that focuses on the development of existing skills or the acquisition of new skills
Job cross-training	The formal process that allows employees to develop skills outside their current job requirement so they can broaden their options for transitional employment

Job enrichment	The process used to increase an employee's responsibility and control over their job by expanding the responsibilities or changing the job role to develop new competencies without leaving the current position
Job re-design	The process of analysing the requirements of the job and where appropriate, re-focusing the duties to provide for reduced responsibilities, improved productivity and career flexibility
Job rotation	The systematic movement of employees from job to job within council, with the intention of training and enhancing career development
Job sharing	Where a full-time job is split between two or more employees who share the duties, responsibilities, salary and benefits of the job
Mentoring	A relationship-orientated process that is based on a professional relationship in which an experienced employee (mentor) assists a less experienced employee (mentee) in developing skills and knowledge for professional and personal growth
Succession planning	The process of identifying and developing internal employees who have the potential to take over a position in the future

3. HOW WILL THIS FOCUS AREA HELP WITH CULTURAL CHANGE?

The organisation can display commitment to supporting all mature age employees' intention to extend their working life through making available a range of career path opportunities designed to equip them with the skills, knowledge and experience beyond their current job roles. Career path planning and development are intrinsically linked with broader training and development objectives and the cultivation of a skilled and motivated workforce.

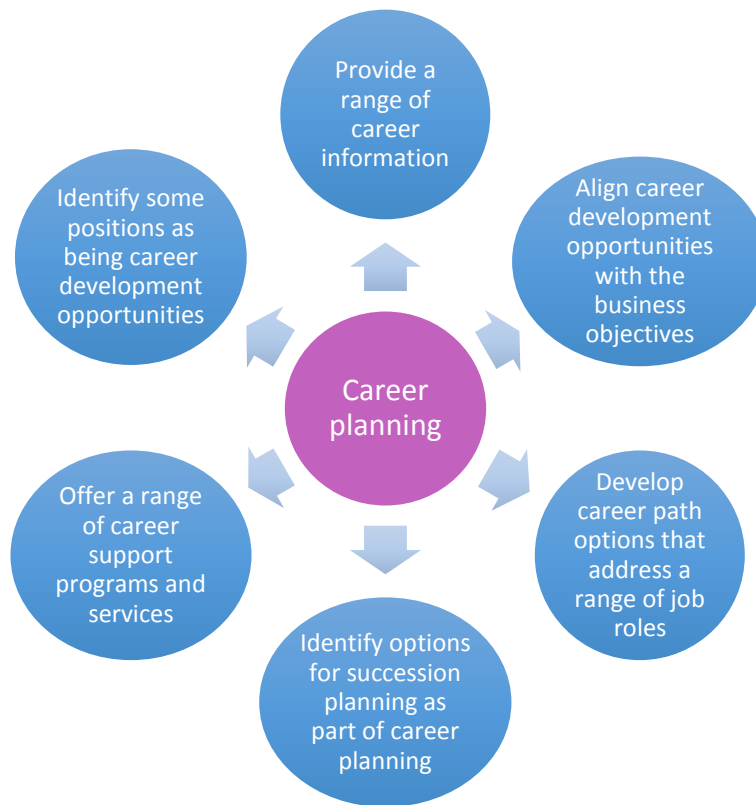
Opportunities for career development are not limited by the notion of upward progression leading to management positions, and employees are encouraged to value sideways movement, roles with reduced responsibility, or new job role options as a means of prolonging their working life and contributing productively to council's objectives. Career development opportunities may include:

- Mentoring and coaching;
- Succession planning;
- Job rotation;
- Job cross-training;
- Job sharing;
- Job enrichment;
- Job promotion;
- Job re-design.

The organisation can demonstrate that it is committed to supporting the career path and development needs of mature age workers and can ensure that individuals:

- Receive appropriate support in managing their career plan and development needs;
- Have access to high quality information on the opportunities available to them;
- Receive individual support in developing options and developing a personal action plan;
- Career plan goals to be linked to and supported by individuals’ training and development plans.

4. ACTIONS to address in this Focus Area include:



Provide a range of career information – to support a broader understanding of availability and flexibility of transitional employment

- Provide career information on current and future career opportunities, occupations and their characteristics and requirements for learning and development and the type of experience that would be required
- Ensure employees have an accurate understanding of the dimensions of any individual career path decisions being considered

Align career development opportunities with the business objectives

- Align career path options that support the strategic objectives of council by addressing the key roles and skill gaps necessary to strengthen the organisation’s workforce capability

<p>Develop career path options that address a range of job roles – as well as levels of responsibility to create increased opportunity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Career planning and development opportunities will provide for upward promotion, sideways movement, project based work, new job roles and mentoring opportunities to offer flexible career choice and access to a wider variety of skill, knowledge and experiences
<p>Identify options for succession planning as part of the career planning model</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify opportunities for effective succession planning in an effort to address the risk associated with skill gaps in core areas of operation and to further the opportunities for career development
<p>Offer a range of career support programs and services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop or access a range of career support programs and services to support mature age employees to explore various opportunities with regard to career planning and development
<p>Identify some positions as being career development opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete an individual assessment of an employee’s abilities, interests, career needs and goals (career plan) ▪ Employee should participate in career counselling to ensure they are ware of all aspects pertaining to their goals, and that the goals are realistic and attainable ▪ Managers should assess employees’ ability and potential to undertake the desired career choice, particularly in relation to transitional employment arrangements ▪ Confirm that the career goal is practicable and aligns with council’s forecasted supply and demand requirements ▪ Complete an application for career development including acknowledgement of any financial penalties that may exist as a result of their career choice

5. WHO CAN CONTRIBUTE TO CHANGING THE CULTURE?

Career planning and development is an option the organisation will make available to support mature age employees as part of transitional employment arrangements. However, this support can only be offered where the desired career goal supports workforce requirements and where the employee’s skills, knowledge and experience exist or can be developed to a productive and mutually beneficial end. Career planning and development processes are a shared responsibility as outlined below:

Managers

- Ensuring staff members are aware of the current and future career development opportunities available within council;
- Making realistic appraisals of the opportunities that exist for the mature age employee;

- Analysing information from past performance and employee development reviews to enable informed discussion regarding career path options;
- Being empathetic toward the employee's interest in career development;
- Ensuring career path discussions occur within the context of transitional employment agreements and training and development plans;
- Developing a shared understanding of and commitment to the preferred career planning and development approach to meet organisational business needs;
- Providing the means, information and support for employees to make informed career decision choices;
- Providing opportunities for mentoring and coaching arrangements where appropriate, to support the employee;
- Developing a climate and culture conducive to encouraging participation in career development.

Employees

- Undertaking a self-assessment of their skills, knowledge and characteristics relevant to their career goals to assist in developing a realistic career goal;
- Assessing all options available by accessing relevant information in the particular areas of interest;
- Discussing and developing a career plan in conjunction with the manager of their work area;
- Being prepared to participate in developmental activities required to achieve the skills, knowledge and experience relevant to their career choice;
- Accepting that not all career goals can be supported by council due to business needs, financial implications and workforce priorities;
- Participating in coaching or mentoring activities to support personal growth and development, where appropriate.