

2026 Workforce Planning Worksheet for HR Leaders



Plan boldly. Go beyond limits.

Overview

Welcome! This isn't just another planning worksheet — it's your roadmap to building a future-ready, agile, and inspired workforce for 2026. Use this guide to reflect, brainstorm, and plan boldly. Let's make your workforce strategy as dynamic and resilient as your goals.

SECTION 1

The 2026 Workforce Reality Check

Market and economic outlook

Begin with a clear view of your current landscape. The faster the world changes, the more important it is to understand the pressures shaping your plans and how ready you are to pivot.

Rank the following forces by level of impact (1 = highest impact):

___ Economic unpredictability

___ Flat or reduced headcount budgets

___ Compliance and regulatory complexity

___ Geopolitical instability

___ Other _____

Organizational impact assessment

How will these forces impact your workforce strategy?

Critical regions, functions, or roles to monitor:

Contingency plans you'll need:

The people who need to be involved in approving the plans:

Are you confident in your ability to adjust your workforce plans mid-year if necessary?

Have you considered the following worker types? How do they fit into your workforce strategy for 2026? What are the pros and cons? What are appropriate regions or roles for this worker type?

Independent contractors

Pros: _____

Cons: _____

Region/roles: _____

Employer of record (EOR) workers

Pros: _____

Cons: _____

Region/roles: _____

Temporary workers (staff leasing)

Pros: _____

Cons: _____

Region/roles: _____

Direct, FTE employees

Pros: _____

Cons: _____

Region/roles: _____

SECTION 2

The Skills We Need to Win in 2026

You can't plan for tomorrow's success with yesterday's skillsets. Let's pinpoint the capabilities that will drive your growth in 2026 and beyond.

Future skill priorities

What emerging skills will set your teams apart?

CRITICAL CAPABILITIES	CURRENT INTERNAL SUPPLY	EXTERNAL TALENT AVAILABILITY	PRIORITY LEVEL (H/M/L)
<i>Compliance and employment law expertise in specific countries</i>	<i>Current HR team stretched thin across jurisdictions</i>	<i>Hard to find multi-country compliance experts</i>	<i>High - Creates compliance risk as we look to move more workers to new countries</i>

Internal skills gaps

What are your top five talent gaps? Why?

AI — new skills and need to upskill key teams

Where and how do you anticipate redeploying or re-skilling talent in 2026?

How frequently does your organization refresh its skills taxonomy or job architecture?

Annually Biannually Not defined

Talent acquisition strategy

What percentage of your future skill needs could be filled through internal mobility vs. external hiring?

Select your talent acquisition strategies to address skills gaps:

Upskilling existing employees

Strategic hiring through global markets

Leveraging EOR for specialized roles

Automating non-critical work

Other: _____

SECTION 3

Hidden Operational Landmines

Even the best strategy can stumble over everyday pitfalls. Let's find and defuse them before they slow you down.

Onboarding and contract risks

Identify operational and compliance risks that could delay your workforce goals.

Is onboarding consistent across regions?

Yes No

If no, where does inconsistency show up? _____

Payroll and benefits complexity

Do you have multiple payroll systems in play across regions and worker types?

Yes No

What could go wrong (and how will you fix it)? _____

Compliance blind spots

Do you track global labor law changes proactively?

Yes No

Where do your compliance risks exist today? _____

Have you conducted a compliance audit or payroll health check in the last 12 months?

Yes No

Which of these areas could delay your 2026 organizational goals? _____

SECTION 4

Your Strategic Framework for 2026

Here's where it all comes together in a strategic plan centered on visibility, alignment, and agility.

Evaluate your readiness in visibility, agility, and cross-functional alignment

Rate each area 1-4 (1 being the highest) for maturity:

___ Visibility and data readiness

___ Compliance integration

___ Cross-functional alignment

___ Workforce agility

Visibility and data readiness

Can you see your global workforce data in one view?

Yes No

If no, what's hiding in silos? _____

Cross-functional alignment

Are your HR, finance, operations, and functional areas rowing in the same direction?

Yes Partially No

Where does collaboration need a boost? _____

Workforce model mix

Diversity drives agility. What is your ideal mix? _____

Workforce mix for 2026:

ROLE TYPE	CURRENT %	TARGET %	CHANGE NEEDED
Full-time/direct employees			
Independent contractors			
EOR/global talent			
Project-based temporary staff			

SECTION 5

Turning Compliance into Competitive Advantage

Let's flip compliance from a burden to a superpower. Assess how compliance supports or slows your growth plans.

Compliance enablement checklist:

Centralized compliance monitoring across regions

Country-specific employment templates

Labor law intelligence integrated into planning

Compliance reviewed quarterly with legal

Other: _____

Of the markets you plan to enter, which ones present the highest compliance risk? _____

Does your organization track labor law changes by country or region in a centralized system?

Yes No In progress

How often do compliance insights influence your talent placement decisions?

Always Sometimes Rarely Never

Where can proactive compliance accelerate your expansion? _____

SECTION 6

Your CHRO Action Plan for 2026

Now it's time to turn insight into action. Here's how you'll lead boldly into 2026.

Translate insights into actionable next steps for your 2026 strategy

Role reset: As an HR leader, I must act as a:

- Market analyst
- Risk manager
- Strategic operator
- Employer brand ambassador

Who else in your C-suite needs to be aligned on your 2026 workforce plan?

90-day power moves:

STRATEGIC PILLAR	ACTION ITEM	OWNER	DUE DATE
Strategic alignment			
Visibility and data			
Compliance			
Agility and workforce mix			
Cross-functional alignment			

Measuring momentum

Success metrics (KPIs): _____

Your Workforce Readiness Snapshot

STRATEGIC AREA CONFIDENCE (1-5) NOTES

STRATEGIC AREA	CONFIDENCE (1-5)	NOTES
Talent and skills readiness		
Compliance management		
Data visibility		
Workforce agility		
Cross-functional alignment		

Final reflection: Plan boldly

What does workforce planning mean for your organization in 2026? _____

You're all set! Remember, workforce planning isn't just about filling roles. It's about designing the future of your organization. Plan boldly, stay agile, and make 2026 your most strategic year yet!

Want help re-imagining your workforce and leveraging global talent without the risk?

Talk to one of our global solutions advisors today.

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