AGEING WORKFORCE: REPORTING METRICS

Using "people metrics" as a decision-making support tool is commonplace in well-developed HR practice. The collection and use of meaningful ageing workforce related data is an effective way to guide strategic planning, create buy-in and make informed decisions.

One way to effectively represent and report the data is through a dashboard. Dashboards provide a concise and intuitive display of key indicators and metrics. Depending on the underlying data collection methods, it can be possible to introduce a level of automation in managing the dashboard.

A dashboard should be updated at regular intervals (e.g., monthly or quarterly) and reviewed by senior leaders as part of the organisational governance and strategic planning.

DESIGNING THE DASHBOARD

The specific data included in a dashboard will vary between organisations but should ideally include data that is meaningful, actionable and available. Remember, dashboards exist to transform raw data into usable information that is easy to digest and to understand. So, try not to include so much data that it becomes overwhelming.

Some common metrics include:

- Workforce demographics
- Employee leave & absenteeism
- Turnover
- Training uptake
- Work cover
- Employee perceptions

These metrics should be stratified by age to help determine issues impacting older workers. For instance, whether older workers are reporting poorer perceptions of engagement across the organisation.

Here are some useful questions to get you thinking about what you should include and the dashboard design:

- Why are you creating this dashboard? What questions is the organisation asking about older workers? Understanding this will help guide the choice of data.
- What's the purpose behind each metric included? Your dashboard should only include data that adds value and helps guide decision

making. It is important to avoid including too many metrics, which can make the dashboard overwhelming and difficult to understand.

- Who is going to be using it? At what meetings will the dashboard be presented? Think about meetings/channels where it will be used. Consider what formats work best in these situations and the preferences of the people reviewing the information.
- How often does the dashboard need to be updated? How 'up to date' does it need to be? This will depend largely on when and where the dashboard is presented (e.g., as a standing agenda item at a regular manager meeting).
- What is the best format for the dashboard? Many factors influence the dashboard format, such as whether there are ways to automate the data integration, where the data is displayed or presented, and what is user-friendly for the key audience.

CREATING THE DASHBOARD

Once you have considered the content and design of the dashboard, the next step is to build it.

There are several ways you can build the dashboard and preferences will vary according to what is accessible and familiar. Software like MSExcel and PowerPoint work well. There are also specific software platforms designed for building dashboards, but these are often paid services.

Every organisation will approach the "build" phase a little differently, but there are some common steps:

- **Make a template.** It is helpful to map out what you want the dashboard to look like and how the data will be presented. This can come before any of the actual data is incorporated. Building this 'blueprint' will make creating the final dashboard a lot easier.
- **Gather the data.** It may be the case that the data you need is already available, or it may be that you need to spend some time collecting it. Either way, ensure that you have a process to get the relevant data.
- **Write an introduction.** Be sure to include a brief cover page explaining the dashboard and its key features. Consider what someone looking at it for the first time would need to know.
- **Create an "update" plan.** Make sure you have a plan on when and how the dashboard will be updated. It is important that the data represented is current. Ensure clarity around who is responsible for updating the dashboard, as well as the mechanics and timing of updating the data.

DASHBOARD TEMPLATES

AWR Project has created two additional documents to assist organisations to create their own ageing workforce dashboard.

The first is the “Metrics Dictionary” that contains examples of the types of data which may be relevant in an ageing workforce dashboard. Commentary has been included to highlight the significance of the data and other relevant information like trends, industry benchmarks and things to look out for.

The second is a “Report Example” that illustrates how a dashboard could look once it has been designed and created according to the process outlined in this document.

Note that it can also be useful to look at change over time. While the Metrics Dictionary does not illustrate time comparisons, this can be built into the design of the dashboard (see “Report Example” document).