

Strategic Workforce Planning in Healthcare

by **Liliane COLASSE**



The Strategic Workforce Planning intends to develop an inventory of skills available in the establishment, identify skills needed for the short, medium and possibly long term, compare them to collected data and eventually reduce detected discrepancies through vocational training.

Amid new expectations from customers and staff, leapfrogging technologies, and challenges related to demographic trends, the Strategic Workforce Planning steps in the rapidly changing health sector. It helps improve professionalization and access to quality care.

Because, the context is also changing: new governance, requirement of budgetary balance, etc.

Based on the establishment's project, the Strategic Workforce Planning also reconciles individual and collective interests by promoting the development of skills, similarly to vocational training, which becomes one of its main tools.

The Strategic Workforce Planning process

impacts three major types of actors. First, strategic actors responsible for project management; second, managers and frontline employees in charge of implementation and finally, practitioners who benefit from the system to build their careers.

Strategic actors are responsible for project management. They include general management, healthcare services directorates and division leaders. With the policy-making authorities in the establishment, they set the course and define the establishment's project.

Most often, senior managers decide to modernize human resources management through Strategic Workforce Planning, to achieve the objectives included in the establishment's project.

The human resources department and senior management are generally responsible for steering this project.

They determine necessary skills based on the establishment's project and develop an inventory of available skills, in every division, profession and position. To achieve this, they identify the priority segments, services and professions and define a methodology.

On the operational level, middle management forwards the necessary information for the preparation of the inventory of available and needed skills to meet the objectives of the department/division.

Once installed in the management routine of the establishment, the Strategic Workforce Planning equips human resources managers with the tools to help anticipate needed skills. For employees, the Planning highlights career opportunities in the establishment.

The Strategic Workforce Planning promotes individual skills, identifies potential bridges between positions, professions and relevant specialties. Based on the establishment's project and human resources policies, it is a source of motivation and recognition for professionals.

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