

Agile Workforce Planning

Agile Workforce Planning

*How to align people with organizational strategy
for improved performance*

Adam Gibson



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For Katy and Thomas

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adam Gibson is a global leader in workforce planning, creator of the Agile Workforce Planning methodology and a popular keynote speaker. Having successfully implemented and transformed workforce planning and analytics in businesses across both the public and private sectors, he advises company executives on how to create a sustainable workforce that increases productivity and reduces cost. He has held senior roles in workforce planning, workforce analytics and talent management in PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Metropolitan Police and Capita. Prior to his current career in business, he served in the British Army as a commissioned officer in the infantry; he deployed on multiple operational tours, serving on the front lines of Afghanistan and Iraq, and received the Joint Commander's Commendation in the 2007 Operational Honours and Awards.

Adam is Founder and Director of Agile Workforce Planning Ltd and leader of the Strategic Workforce Planning Faculty of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree (with Honours) in Politics from the University of Sheffield and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership from Stratford Business School. He is a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (Chartered FCIPD) and a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute (FCMI).

FOREWORD

TO COME

PREFACE

Throughout my younger years I was fascinated by history. Perhaps it was the study, on three separate occasions (such was British education in the 1990s), of German history between the two world wars that drove my interest in political history. I was interested in the romantic and utopian notions of an ideal state of politics and of duty, espoused by Plato and Aristotle, concepts that would lead me into military service. Equally, I had an interest in *realpolitik*, the way things are, characterized by the likes of Thomas Hobbes and Niccolò Machiavelli. My career in the army was similarly demarcated: enemies were fought, and hearts and minds won, through *realpolitik*; however, conduct of the army was based on duty. I recall being on parade, early in my service, and we were addressed by a senior officer: do *what you ought, not what you want*. It was a phrase that stuck with me as all of us were directed through the use of terms such as *should*, *will* and *must*. They were phrases that worked; the military acted on those terms and were punished when they failed.

When I left the military, I found that much of the civilian world used the same phraseology: managers said that *people should*, processes said that *people will*, and leaders said that *people must*. Except, often people could not, would not and did not; and that is usually why plans take longer than expected, run over budget, or fail. The same has been true with workforce planning: either plans are based on organizations assuming people *should*, or plans themselves rely on an expectation that people *will*. As I have practised workforce planning, I have done so on a mantra I continue to preach: **people can or they cannot, they will or they will not, they have or they have not: plan on that basis**. The agile workforce planning approach has evolved out of a necessity of *realpolitik*, an approach that works rather than existing as an academic exercise.

I have written this book with the same things in mind: to be able to take those with an interest in businesses and the people within them, those with experience in workforce planning and those who may have never heard of it, and those from both junior and senior levels within organizations, and help us all create the workforce we need.

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