

Foreword Nick Kemsley

I HAVE SPENT THE PAST THIRTEEN YEARS or so involved in one way or another with 'strategic workforce planning' or 'SWP'. I have been functionally responsible for it in my senior HR career, researched it in my business school career, sold it in my consulting career, and supported organisations in developing and implementing it through my own business. Over this time, and through my work with around 40 major organisations around the world, my passion and belief that this SWP represents one of the greatest opportunities for organisations of all types has grown along with my experience and learning on the subject.

So after all this time immersed in SWP, what are my reflections? I can boil them all down to three key observations.

Firstly, the majority of organisations have had at least one go at implementing SWP and failed to make it work. This has been due to a combination of misunderstanding, mis-positioning and lack of capability in execution. Most frequently, it is confused with the more granular, shorter term and headcount-oriented Operational Workforce Planning.

Secondly, and linked to the point above, SWP challenges both organisations and individuals. It requires high capability in consultative approaches, tolerance of ambiguity, intuition, judgement and system thinking.

Lastly, the SWP brand is severely wounded and desperately in need of re-invention. Years of positioning as an onerous bottom-up headcount planning process run for HR by HR has created cynicism and resistance in the wider business.

A thought leader in workforce planning, Nick has been consulting around SWP, Organisational Capability, Talent & HR Effectiveness for over a decade, with previous careers as a senior HR leader, Co-Director & Visiting Professor at Henley Business



School's Centre for HR Excellence & a Senior Partner in Korn Ferry Hay Group's People Advisory Practice.

These reasons are why I didn't hesitate to throw myself into the IMAGINE initiative's SWP workstream from its earliest days. IMAGINE is allowing a group of like-minded organisations to collaborate on calling out the strengths and weaknesses of previous approaches to SWP, with the dual aims of sharing what has worked as current best practice (SWP 1.0) and developing a completely new blueprint for the way we approach it (SWP 2.0). Through doing this, we can address the issues and magnify the benefits of this vital business tool.

With an effective approach in place, organisations can begin to reap the benefits of strategy and risk-focused organisational capability development, more effective and aligned strategic execution, and more cost-effective and prioritised talent acquisition, development and management. Furthermore, in SWP, lies HR's golden ticket to achieving the credibility and strategic partnership that it both craves and deserves.

What is contained in this document is the first deliverable from this collaborative, an anthology of best current practice: SWP 1.0, organised in a way that allows the reader to see how the elements fit together, but most importantly, to explore real examples of best practice supplied by those directly involved in its design and delivery.

Happy reading!

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Introduction

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PHILIPS QINETIQ



IN FEBRUARY 2019 A WORKING Group led by Viv Meredith, Global Talent Business Leader GSK and Martin Thomas. Head of Total Workforce Management Philips, came together to co-create a new approach to Strategic Workforce Planning covering an end-to-end strategy, process, methodology and toolkit applicable to all elements of the workforce of the future, to be captured in a SWP 2.0 Guidebook.

Working Group members consisted of leaders drawn from across 15 organisations supported by Nick Kemsley, an expert practitioner in SWP, and Henley Business school. The ambition was to use open collaboration across business, research and academia to deliver a robust commercial outcome

that could also be published and take academic understanding forward.

The first step in building the SWP 2.0 Guidebook has been to start with a 'stock-take' of current best practice across member organisations to create a SWP 1.0 (+) Guidebook. Members then met to identify the gaps in current practice which have been shaped into four Clusters (*Positioning*, *Operating* Model, Application and Workforce of the Future) to enable sub-groups within the Working Group to co-create new practices and collaborate on experiments to test, learn and make scalable for Community members and beyond. The findings and outputs from these Cluster groups will be incorporated into this document at a later date to create a SWP 2.0 best practice Guidebook.

What is SWP 2.0?

- An outside-in, future-focused planning approach to building organisational capability based on robust data, emerging trends, new technologies & total workforce options & opportunities
- An integral part of business planning owned by the CEO & business leaders & supported by cross-functional expertise (HR, Finance, Procurement etc) whose role is to inform, enable & challenge capability investment choices
- A move away from 'traditional' approaches to SWP which focused on headcount, roles & budgets to become a responsive & dynamic set of leader behaviours focused on answering the question 'how should the work get done?'

Why?

- Ensures the organisation has the optimum capability architecture to deliver its strategic plan, now & at defined future horizons (3, 5, 10 years etc)
- Ensures that the organisation can adapt & respond at pace to a rapidly changing business context, evolving talent landscape, new technologies & individuals' changing demands in their interactions with work & organisations
- Ensures that workforce/capability investment choices & decisions at all levels are informed by foresight & knowledge to maximise value creation, optimise cost & minimise risk

SWP Guidebook

WHILST CURRENT SWP PRACTICES across Collaborative Community member organisations are showing 'green shoots' in incorporating some of the characteristics described above, SWP 2.0 is still a future vision for most.

This Guidebook therefore is intended as a staging post on the journey towards SWP 2.0, bringing together the contributions from members which represent current best practice in terms of processes, tools and frameworks.

The Guidebook has been organised under key headings based around the HCM Strategic Workforce Planning Model and its core components create a practical and usable guide that takes us from macro trends and strategic

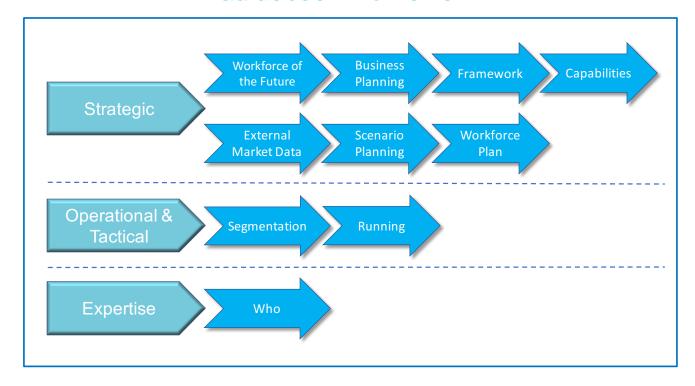
capabilities through to operational and tactical planning and the crossfunctional expertise required to deliver it.

The following overview sets out the salient points and common themes of the submissions provided under each of the swim lane sections:

- 1. STRATEGIC
- 2. OPERATIONAL & TACTICAL
- 3. EXPERTISE

Embedded within the text of the Guidebook are references in bold brackets which are *hyperlinks* to the source materials provided by the participating organisations.

Guidebook Framework



Workforce of the Future

ORGANISATIONS ARE INCREASINGLY adopting an outside-In, futurefocused planning approach to capability/workforce planning to get ahead of the curve and understand the impact of new technologies and emerging workforce trends on their business priorities. Historically, there has been a disconnect between the future capability/workforce needs of organisations and shorter-term operational capability/workforce needs. This has resulted in a lack of 'conscious decision making' (build, buy, bind etc) in the approaches to resourcing against these needs, creating cost-inefficiencies, lack of focus and a lower than desired 'hit rate' between what we say we are going to do and when, and what we end up delivering.

Translating Business Strategy into Capability

Experientially, this challenge seems to stem from a number of sources historical positioning of workforce strategy below that of wider business capability discussions, more tactical HR mindsets and a lack of confidence among wider business leaders in understanding how to translate business strategy to the world of people. This latter, higher level system-thinking capability, is not uncommon in the world of leadership capability. Thinking frameworks and skillsets often exist in terms of translating from, for example, consumer needs to product and service opportunities and market risks; but in the world of workforce capability such tools have tended to focus more on headcount solutions

rather than a broader and scenariobased deduction of what the right questions might be.

One example of how something can be done to help navigate and translate in this more ambiguous space is that employed by Aviva, who are using the predictive analytics platform FAETHM to create investable insights into the impact of Al and Automation on existing and future roles within its organisation. FAETHM's pivot data provides opportunities for role augmentation, mobility and re-skilling as well as a tool for managers and individuals to explore career opportunities and the specific learning pathways required (FAETHM, 1). Such innovative approaches provide some context and structure for organisations to make sorties into the world of strategic workforce planning at the right level.

Full Spectrum

Another trend is a move away from a predominantly employee model to one featuring a range of workforce options (shared workers, contingent, gig etc). With clear trends being established around more flexible means of connecting those with a need for skills with those in possession of them; there should really have been a corresponding shift in the assumptions underpinning career thinking and skills procurement. Yet frequently, our approaches to talent acquisition and management still have their roots in career and work models which are increasingly having less currency.

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Workforce of the Future contd..

A permanent employee in a structured role will likely only be one of many potential workforce solutions in the near future.

More forward-thinking organisations are beginning to reflect this thinking in their approaches to workforce planning. For example, GSK's approach is to build in the fundamental questions of 'what is the work that needs to be done?' and 'what is the best way of getting the work done?' into the very early stages of its approach to future workforce mapping (GSK, 2). The impact of this is to open the mind to non-employee models including automation, technologically-assisted, contingent/complementary worker, partnerships and shared employees in addition to permanent workforce options. The inclusion of such a provocation allows far greater innovation in workforce thinking and can break cycles of 'recruiting for capability'.

New Engagement Models

'Total workforce' thinking such as this also raises questions around different engagement models. With the growth of the gig economy and the increasing intermediation of the talent space by platforms such as LinkedIn, there are whole new vistas of both opportunity and risk to be explored. One example of this type of re-basing of the conversation is that of a well-known retail business which resulted in the involvement and advocacy of the Chief Procurement Officer in workforce planning work by virtue of the

insight that an increasingly significant proportion of the future workforce might realistically be 'procured and contracted with' over technology platforms.

Another great example of innovative thinking around total workforce is that of Philips, which has moved away from a focus on internal headcount to 'Total Cost' as a way of opening up possibilities for exploring other workforce options as part of a Total Workforce approach (PHILIPS, 3). By placing the focus on an outcome rather than any one particular resourcing solution, Philips has helped to drive broad and innovative thinking around how 'workforce' can have a broad and dynamic meaning.

Organisations are also looking to introduce flexibility into their approaches to workforce planning in order to better respond to unpredictable change. Dyson is using dynamic, real time planning in areas of their business that need to be constantly evolving. This enables them to be continually assessing and reassessing the optimum workforce mix going forwards.

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ONE AREA WHERE ORGANISATIONS have seen more traction and buy-in to workforce planning approaches is the positioning of such opportunities alongside existing business planning capability and processes. Arguably, the 'traditional' positioning of SWP as an HR-owned process or initiative, has created some confusion as to where and why it fits, resulting in HR having to 'sell' SWP and difficulties in both articulating its value and avoiding the perception of it being effort-intensive and being applied once the horse has bolted. The key question is 'why should people/workforce planning be separate to other elements of business planning?' HR of course brings its own particular expertise to the party, as with consumer demand or supply chain planning, but should these not just be different streams of a single integrated planning approach?

A Total Business Approach

Accordingly, SWP processes in some member organisations are featuring a collaboration between different business and support functions in a total business approach. At Dyson and Babcock integrated business planning processes are owned by the business and informed/enabled by the functions - HR, Finance, etc (BABCOCK, 4). We are also seeing a move to more medium and long term approaches to workforce planning to enable the businesses to make more strategic workforce investments. This begins to draw together the world of people capability and the world of financial forecasting (capital and opex), helping to give greater prominence to workforce planning in the eyes of the leaders of the organisation. At Barts NHS this approach has been critical in

Business Planning

directing investment into areas such as D&I and education/re-skilling (**BARTS**, **5**)

Another example from the transportation sector is seeing Finance, Strategy, Capital Planning and HR working together to develop an integrated view of capability needs which pulls together all the different demand drivers over a 20 year 'pipeline' view – allowing much more alignment around long, medium and short term workforce activities.

The 3rd Leg of Business Strategy

Nick Kemsley's Strategic Workforce Planning approach ensures the genuine integration of workforce planning into business planning. It is based on the philosophy that people and organisational capability planning (or enablement) is simply the '3rd leg of business strategy', alongside demandside consumer-driven planning and supply-side fulfilment-driven strategy. The outcome of this is two-fold. Not only is the business strategy itself enhanced through a richer and more 3-dimensional discussion, but critical opportunities and risks around organisational execution (the most common derailer of strategy) are identified at the same time and alongside similar insights. This allows both the development of pre-emptive strategies to address gaps or surpluses in capability, but also creates far greater alignment and focus to execution activity across the business, saving money, time and effort (eg the identification and focus on critical talent segments). Critically this aligns people/capability strategy to business strategy, promotes meaningful ownership by the business, more cost-effective and impactful people plans and better financial forecasting and decision making (KEMSLEY, 6).

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Framework

exploring new approaches to visualise or 'frame' their organisations of the future based on the anticipated impact of future workforce trends and new technologies. What works here is to provide enough of a framework to spark the right kind of debate, without creating an industrial or over-granular approach. One of the key factors in the failure of previous attempts to drive value through SWP has been the level of time and effort involved and a focus on a level of precision that simply isn't available at the level where the value needs to be created. Good frameworks therefore encourage people to think about the right questions and guide them on a path to developing and applying the insights developed along the way.

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS ARE

Future Back

Aviva has developed a robust multi-discipline approach to re-modelling current capability systems (and/or building new) based on the anticipated impact of future workforce trends and emerging alternative capability options to visualise what the optimum capability system would look like ('future-back' 7 -10 years) (AVIVA, 7). Such a framework helps to "decode" the relationship between current and future and provide a bridge between the two that can be navigated relatively easily.

At GSK, Leaders are supported by tools and methodologies to enable them to frame the work to be done, the capability required to do it, how to identify and fill the gaps and build the investment case (GSK, 8) & (GSK, 10). Again here, the emphasis is not on templates asking for answers, but on simple questions and approaches

geared around helping business leaders ask the right questions in the right order with *facilitation* from their HR colleagues rather than the process being *owned* in HR and *done to* the wider business.

Asking the Right Questions

A key part of the framing process in planning is translating strategy into a series of questions that must be answered by the business both in terms of evaluating opportunities and anticipating and mitigating risk (KEMSLEY, 6). Key to this approach is the use of a framework which forces business leaders to think at organisational system level (structure, skills, process, system, behaviours etc) rather than a more onedimensional approach such as organisational structure alone. By asking questions that encourage leaders to consider all the various dimensions of organisation, critical needs or inter-dependencies can be identified that might otherwise be passed by, and more integrated strategies (much more likely to succeed) to address them developed from the start. The important thing is not so much which framework is used, in fact choosing one which suits the culture or existing currency of the organisation is key, but that one is used.

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AMONGST MEMBER ORGANISATIONS there is a noticeable shift of focus from jobs/roles to skills/capabilities as the unit of measurement for predictive workforce planning models. The starting point for many has been to identify the critical/strategic capabilities that will enable the organisation to meet their strategic priorities. This is key, because by thinking in this narrower way, we are inadvertently building in the assumptions and practices of the past in attempting to deal with the challenges of the future. This is the equivalent of bringing a knife to a gun fight! A focus on capability, and a clear definition of what we mean (and don't mean) by this, allows us to focus on the what and why before jumping to how.

Outcomes-Based Capability

There exists an organisational 'habit' of making the leap that capability means simply skills. Skills will be a part for sure, but what is the outcome we are trying to drive for the business and our customers, how does this translate to business capability, then to people and organisational capability...and then finally to individual capability? Moving straight to 'capability = skills' can result in the short-sighted view that training or recruitment is always the answer. A great example of this is the translation of 'customer-centricity' to organisation. This business-level capability will have dimensions relating to products and services, supply chain, customer service and other specific needs. At organisational level, there will likely be structural implications (for example a key account management structure),

Capabilities

process implications (Account Management), system implications (CRM), behavioural implications (including reward) and yes, skills implications (insight selling, relationship management etc). Focusing only on one element is unlikely to drive the outcome required.

Look Before You Leap

GSK has provided their business leaders with methodologies for clarifying those capabilities critical to delivering the business strategy over defined future time horizons (GSK, 9) & (GSK, 11). This approach helps provide focus and clarity as to the outcomes we are trying to drive through workforce and organisation before jumping to action.

At O2 the operating Board has defined those capabilities that drive differentiation and customer value. EY's end-to-end value chain enables definitions of capabilities (as opposed to capacity and cost) required to get work done (EY, 12) This exemplifies another key success factor – that of a focus on the capabilities that make the most difference. Differentiating capabilities should be those which:

- (a) Have greatest impact on desired outcomes
- (b) Are difficult or time-consuming to develop
- (c) Are not in common supply

Through these lenses we can drive true competitive advantage and define and reinforce our *Unique Competing Space* (*TOVSTIGA*, *13*).

EY





External Market Data

A KEY COMPONENT OF THE outside-in approach to building future capability is how organisations can better understand the eco-system of capability surrounding their business, how it is changing and its impact on future workforce choices and models.

Many businesses have a self-admitted internal focus, which can be selflimiting and result in a perpetuation of, or lack of consideration of, inherent capability gaps. This is often somewhat in conflict with the way in which they engage with the consumers of the products and services via the Marketing function, which is driven by a relentless and data insight-driven approach to understanding the external world. Yet in the world of people capability, our most common approach is to seek insight from those already in our organisation relating to their current satisfaction. This is clearly unlikely to build a comprehensive and balanced view of future capability needs.

Contextual Awareness

At Arm external market data such as the availability and readiness of particular Talent pools has been used to inform mission-critical projects (ARM, 14). Such contextual data gathering can help to uncover critical issues – for example, the recognition of the pressure on talent supply for national infrastructure projects such as HS2, Hinkley Point, Crossrail and so on is a key data input to resourcing strategies for other infrastructure projects which may need to draw on similar talent pools at similar times.

Philips has invested in a dedicated inhouse Talent Intelligence team that constantly mines data from multiple data sources to enable it to build talent pools, pipeline for critical roles and meet talent acquisition requirements (PHILIPS, 15) & (PHILIPS, 16). Such approaches can sometimes open up innovative approaches such as the targeting of specific organisations who may be predicted to be releasing certain skills back onto the market due to redundancy or merger and acquisition.

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arm PHILIPS

PROPER SWP IS NOT ABOUT PRECISE quantitative answers, but about the consideration of macro level trends and data to inform where best to place bets which will only fully be deemed successful with the passage of time. This means deliberately entering an environment of ambiguity and volatility (VUCA). As such, many of the Community members are adopting dynamic planning models and tools such as scenario modelling to help them to harness this ambiguity and provide some structure to inform these judgement-based calls.

Alternative Futures

Both Aviva and Arm use dynamic modelling of future workforce/capability composition scenarios to enable business leaders to explore opportunities and assess risks. This is also supported by cross-functional teams to provide multiple perspectives and expertise (AVIVA, 7) & (ARM, 17) & (ARM, 18). Philips' scenario modelling approach enables leaders to make the right strategic capability choices,

Scenario Planning

baselining current vs future workforce demand modelling scenarios (composition, location, cost etc) (PHILIPS, 19).

Sometimes this is based on simple in-house tools derived from Excel or other existing platforms, but there are an increasing number of more dedicated and user-friendly 3rd party software solutions beginning to populate this space, such as *Orgvue*, *Workday* and *Saviom*. Many are still too operational planning based, but a growing minority are allowing flexibility for organisations to explore different scenarios at the press of a button and assess the top-level impact of changing variables.

However, these tools do not replace the requirement to first understand the questions that you wish to explore. But once you have a sense of these, scenario planning can provide a quick and effective means of narrowing the field in terms of where the organisation needs to focus and the impact of various strategies over time as well as the impact of doing nothing.

Workforce Plan

an enterprise approach built around awareness of workforce options and choices which has the additional benefit of driving reskilling, resource allocation and flexibility of resources (BABCOCK, 4) & (GSK, 20). In certain organisations exhibiting strong union or works council representation, having a proactive view of how workforce demand is changing relative to workforce supply can lead to improved dialogue around future change and employment protection. This in turn can lead to a more constructive partnership between employers and employee bodies.



AMONGST MEMBERS THERE IS A NOTICABLE mindset shift from seeing 'Talent' as a scarce commodity to one of abundance, capable of being accessed through multiple sources and combined in any number of ways to provide unlimited capability options.

One manifestation of this is talent pooling with the ability to allocate people to the right activity at the right time, and then recycle them to another need for which they have suitable skills. This removes the constraint of contribution being defined by job title.

Some organisations are focusing their workforce plan on identifying and investing in Strategic Roles. Others are taking



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2. Operational & Tactical

Segmentation

'SWP ALLOWS US TO IDENTIFY THE CAPABILITY SEGMENTS WHICH HAVE THE GREATEST RELATIONSHIP TO SUCCESS OR FAILURE'

THERE IS A SHIFT IN THE WAY MANY members of the Community are thinking about Talent - moving away from seeing talent as a way of defining a sub-set of a permanent employee base to a collective term for any capability that creates economic value for the organisation (right place, right time and at the right cost)

Capability is then segmented to reflect the different ways in which it adds value to the organisation and therefore decisions about the different ways that capability might be accessed or built. At Babcock this has resulted in 7 B's model (BABCOCK, 4).

At QinetiQ their approach is linked to whether specific roles create value or retain value for the organisation and at Dyson its simplification strategy is impacting work design, workflows and structure for real productivity gains.

Prioritisation

The practical benefit of segmentation is focus. In an environment where there is a necessity to do the most you can with what you've got, and to increasingly do more for less going forwards, there is a pivotal need for prioritisation of time, money and resources on the things which make the most difference. Yet organisations have really struggled with doing this. Many people plans remain highly generic in their nature, without a hard-wired connection to business risk. SWP allows us to identify the capability segments which have the greatest relationship to success or failure and, as such, offer the feed-stock for a prioritisation which has a built-in business case. If this is done well, then the wider business no longer needs to be 'sold' on people priorities, but instead is asking the question 'what do you need to do this?'.



Running

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC workforce plan is not a one-time activity. There may be a peak of work needed to produce the first iteration, but this then becomes a live entity which is reviewed and refined at intervals in line with the business strategy that it supports. Community members are investing in ways to track and monitor business needs in real-time to better support increased volatility and change and link to capability requirements.

QinetiQ's Tactical Dashboards provide the business with a 'bird's eye' monitoring of the organisation's needs that allows for resource allocation, re-skilling and flexibility of resources.

At Kier Group, Workforce risks to business plans are tracked using an internal risk tool. It is a sad fact that people risks often fail to appear on an organisation's risk register, and people metrics not reviewed with a thirst around the Board table. So being able to link organisational and people capability needs with risk is an important means of unifying and embedding these needs into business as usual management.





3. Expertise

Who: A Total Business Approach

THE MOVE TOWARDS A 'TOTAL Workforce' is requiring a total business approach to workforce/ capability planning. Member organisations are building new operating models to support the planning process involving a collaboration amongst leaders from across different business and support functions, including P&L leaders, Finance, Procurement, Business Planning, Legal and HR. For BAT one of the key enablers to this new model has been clarity around role and purpose for each stakeholder (BAT, 21).

A Four Pronged Approach

In many cases stakeholders need upskilling. This has a dimension around understanding the requirement and value of SWP, and another around the capability of those involved in supporting it. Nick Kemsley has managed to achieve considerable traction by employing a four-pronged approach to embedding SWP expertise. The four inter-related elements are:

1. Positioning – 75% of the success of implementing a successful SWP approach is won or lost in the first 10% of the time. SWP may have a poor historic brand in the organisation, or require re-positioning

2. Business planning process integration

- building capability around process integration and cross-business collaboration
- **3. Piloting** driving early value creation and business leader understanding through doing
- **4. Self-sufficiency** through capability development identifying groups of practitioners and subject matter experts who are going to facilitate the approach, develop and refine it over time and train others

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In relation to point 4) Nick has developed a well-proven programme to upskill HR or other practitioners in SWP (*KEMSLEY, 6*) and also developed this into a means of internally accrediting both practitioners and SMEs within the organisation.

Barts NHS supports a cross-functional approach by using 'triangulation' of data and insight to create a 3-D view of the organisation's current and future capability (BARTS, 22).

In the Civil Service stakeholders from across the whole of the Civil Service meet regularly to build an understanding of each others' needs and share insight and knowledge.









