Advanced RPO

2027 TA Planning Toolkit

A strategic resource for talent acquisition leaders preparing for next year's workforce needs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Effective workforce planning doesn’t start with headcount—it starts with business strategy. The most impactful TA leaders are those who understand where the organization is going and proactively align hiring, capacity, and capability planning to support those goals.

This toolkit is designed to help you do just that. Whether you're preparing for expansion, navigating change, or trying to do more with less, this resource will guide you through key areas of planning: from reflecting on past performance to prioritizing where you need to invest next.

This isn’t about filling out forms. It’s about building clarity, alignment, and momentum—so that talent acquisition is seen not as a support function, but as a strategic lever for growth.

“Talent strategy isn't just about roles—it's about readiness.”

01 Grounding Your Strategy in Reality

Before you can align your TA strategy to future business goals, you need a clear understanding of where things stand today. The following questions are designed to help you assess your current state—identifying what worked, what didn't, and where your team delivered (or struggled to deliver) business value. These prompts aren't just for reflection—they're for action. Take time to document your answers. Writing them down not only surfaces insights but also creates a baseline you can refer back to as you build and evolve your 2027 strategy.

- Where did your team have the greatest hiring impact—and how did that affect the business?

- Which roles or functions were hardest to fill—and why?

- Does your organization have a method to calculate the real cost of a vacancy? If yes, what was that cost in 2025?

- What percent of hires in 2025 were made on time? For those that weren't, what was the cost to the organization?

01 Grounding Your Strategy in Reality

- Where in the funnel did candidates fall out most often—and what caused that?

- Are you able to track all the sources that drive applicants? If so, what sourcing methods or channels were most effective? What methods or channels were the least effective?

- Do you solicit feedback from hiring managers or business leaders? If so, what feedback did you receive? What changes need to be made based on the feedback?

If you're missing the data or insight to answer these questions confidently, we can help. From cost-of-vacancy modeling to sourcing performance reviews, our team helps TA leaders build clarity around what's working—and what needs to change. Schedule a workforce performance consult.

02 Forecasting Talent Needs

Planning for 2027 isn't just about estimating headcount—it's about anticipating the talent, skills, and structure your organization will need to achieve its goals. The following prompts are designed to help you look beyond roles and numbers and think strategically about capability gaps, business shifts, and internal dynamics that may affect hiring needs.

Use this space to document what you know, where you have questions, and what you may need to confirm with HR, finance, or business unit leaders.

- What skills or capabilities will your organization need that are new or evolving?

- Are you expecting organizational shifts (restructuring, leadership changes, M&A) that could increase turnover or internal movement?

- What new departments, geographies, or business models are on the horizon?

02 Forecasting Talent Needs

- Do you have visibility into internal mobility or succession planning needs?

- When do you expect peak hiring volume—and what's driving it?

Need help translating business plans into talent strategy? We can support your workforce planning conversations with tools, data, and market insights. Contact us today.

03 Resourcing Your Strategy for Maximum Impact

In a fast-changing business environment, agility is everything. The strongest talent strategies aren't just built for today—they're built to flex with whatever comes next. This section helps you assess whether your team, budget, tools, and data are set up to support current needs and future shifts. It's not just about what you have—it's about whether those resources can scale, adapt, and deliver results as plans inevitably evolve.

Use the space below to reflect and capture where you're strong, where you're stretched, and where there may be hidden opportunities to improve how talent acquisition supports the business.

People & Structure

- Is your team structured flexibly to accommodate changes to the hiring plan? If volume doubles or timelines compress, can your team keep up without sacrificing quality or experience?

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- Does your current team have the skills to support what the business will need next year—or are there capability gaps that could hold you back (e.g., lack of sourcing expertise for niche roles or no dedicated data/analytics resource)?

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- Are roles and responsibilities within your TA team clearly defined and aligned to business outcomes—or do you need to rethink structure?

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03 Resourcing Your Strategy for Maximum Impact

Budget & Spend

- Do you know the true cost of your recruiting efforts—including contract recruiters, agencies, technology, advertising spend, and cost of vacancy?

- Is your budget flexible? Could you reallocate spend across business units or functions to be more effective?

- Are there untapped areas of investment that could drive efficiency or quality?

Process & Technology

- What systems/tools comprise your recruitment tech stack?

- Is your recruiting tech stack actively enabling better candidate and hiring manager experiences—or just adding complexity? Do you survey candidates and hiring managers to validate your assumptions?

03 Resourcing Your Strategy for Maximum Impact

- Where in your process are delays most common—and do you understand the root cause (tech, people, policy, or capacity)?

- What story does your data tell—and what story should it be able to tell that it currently can't?

Curious how your budget or team structure compares to other TA leaders? We can help you assess your capacity, uncover hidden spend, and explore smarter ways to invest in results. Schedule a conversation.

04 Assessing Risk Through a Strategic Lens

Hiring gaps don't just slow down HR—they stall business growth. This section helps you uncover where misalignment, lack of insight, or resource constraints may be putting your organization at risk.

Use the checklist below to surface hidden vulnerabilities, and consider: what would it cost the business if these risks persist?

Statement	Yes/No	Notes
We have active pipelines built for our most critical or recurring roles.		
Our employer brand clearly communicates what makes us different and resonates with right-fit candidates.		
Hiring managers are generally satisfied with the speed and quality of our hiring process.		
Our internal processes (e.g., req approval, interview scheduling) do not create major delays.		
We can consistently fill niche or high-impact roles within expected timeframes.		
Our recruiting tech stack enables automation, collaboration, and efficiency.		
We have the team capacity or recruiting partners in place to meet projected hiring needs.		
We understand the external talent market and can anticipate availability by geography and role type.		

Scoring interpretation:

- 0–2 "No" responses: Low overall risk. You're well-positioned but may benefit from refining specific areas.
- 3–5 "No" responses: Moderate risk. Prioritize action plans to improve weak points.
- 6+ "No" responses: High risk. This may be the right time to model the business case for change—whether it's a new partner, process upgrade, or team restructure. Schedule a strategic risk consultation.

05 Prioritizing for Impact

After evaluating your hiring needs, resources, and risk areas, it's time to identify where to focus. Not everything can be addressed at once—so which actions will drive the greatest business value in 2027?

Use the reflection questions below to clarify what's urgent, what's strategic, and where you may need internal or external support. Then, document your top priorities in the matrix that follows to bring focus and structure to your TA plan.

- What's most urgent vs. most strategic?
- Where do you need internal alignment—and where might you need external support?
- Are your current delivery models scalable for what's ahead?
- Is your employer brand aligned to your current and future talent needs?
- What can you tackle now—and what requires longer-term planning?

Strategic Priority	Urgency	Internal Capability	External Support Needed?	Notes
Ex: Evaluate & optimize recruiting tech stack	*Low*	*No dedicated TA operations resource*	*Yes – need advisory support to assess and guide*	*Several tools in place, but unclear ROI or integration effectiveness*

Want to pressure-test your priorities with a neutral partner? We can help you model ROI, compare delivery options, and build alignment across TA and the business. Schedule a strategic priority review.

Wrapping Up: From Plan to Action

You've taken an important step that many TA leaders skip—stepping back to assess, forecast, and align talent acquisition with business priorities. This type of intentional planning is what transforms TA from a reactive function into a strategic advantage.

Through this process, you've identified strengths to build on, gaps that need attention, and priorities that deserve investment. More importantly, you've created a foundation for better conversations with HR, Finance, and business leaders—conversations that tie talent to outcomes like growth, efficiency, innovation, and profitability.

By completing the sections in this toolkit, you have:

✅ Identified risk areas
✅ Outlined hiring goals
✅ Evaluated internal resources
✅ Prioritized for 2027

But building a forward-looking plan is just the beginning. Executing it—especially in the face of changing priorities, shifting markets, or constrained budgets—requires a team, an infrastructure, and often a partner who can help you adapt while staying aligned to your goals.

If you want a sounding board, a second opinion, or a strategy session to refine your next steps, we're here to help.

Schedule your 2027 TA Readiness Review. Let's turn your plan into progress.

About Advanced RPO

Advanced RPO helps companies achieve their business goals by delivering results-driven recruitment solutions. Our experienced, consultative team partners with mid-market and enterprise organizations to attract and hire the right talent, enabling long-term success. With a high-touch, technology-enabled approach, we streamline the hiring process, enhance candidate quality, and improve hiring outcomes. For more information, visit www.advancedrpo.com.

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