

Sustainable Workforce Assessment

Improve productivity by making your working environment more sustainable for skilled employees without increasing costs.

What is it?

The Sustainable Workforce Assessment uses a tiered approach, with a workshop, survey, benchmarking and quantitative assessment. It seeks to identify employee welfare hotspots, provide a business case for change, and identify potential workforce solutions.

The Assessment aims to improve productivity by making working environments and practices more sustainable for skilled employees. It shows how you can help ensure higher availability and higher levels of experience from a more dependable workforce without increasing costs. As the approach is modular, it can start with as little as a one day executive workshop.



Why do you need it?

In the current economic climate, it makes sense to maximise return on the assets you have invested in, and this includes people. People are expensive to recruit, to train and to bring to full effectiveness. Inefficiency caused by absence, people leaving or the reduced motivation and commitment inherent in a difficult working environment will impact your bottom line.

Responsible organisations are recognising their role in society and the benefits that come from operating in a sustainable and responsible way. It's easy to focus on the economic and environmental elements of sustainability, but employee inclusion and well-being is a central element of corporate social responsibility.

Ensuring organisational practices meet the needs of your people will deliver a working environment that increases efficiency. At BT, we have 11,000 home-based workers who find that the flexibility of working from home enables them to balance work and home commitments more easily. The motivation and commitment this creates contributes to productivity averaging 20 per cent higher than their office-based colleagues.

Regulatory pressure to recognise people's lives outside work is increasing. For example, allowing more parents to request flexible working hours. It is tempting to see this as a drain on productivity, but helping people balance their work with other aspects of their life can be a financial win for the organisation. This can also help ensure that each person feels valued when an organisation is forced to make difficult decisions.

This is particularly important because research shows that voluntary churn increases after a company has made layoffs.

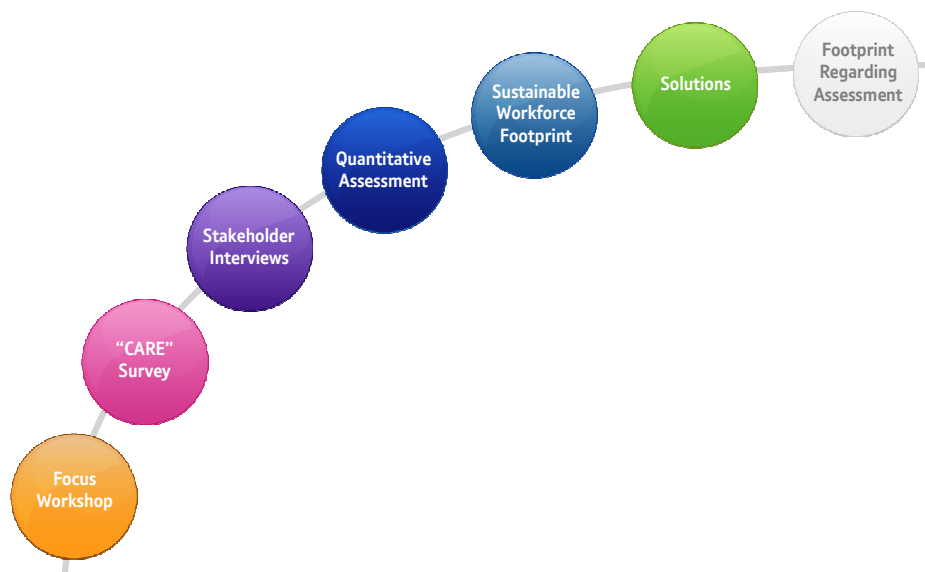
Good people are hard to find and hard to keep. As organisations reduce or limit headcount, it becomes increasingly important that we have a committed person with the right skills in each job, and that they are operating fully effectively.

The benefits from BT's perspective

- The flexibility of working from home contributes to the productivity of homeworkers averaging 20 per cent higher than their office-based colleagues.
- BT saves £60m per year through flexible working.
- 97 per cent of our new mothers return to work, saving an estimated €7.4M a year in recruitment and induction costs.
- In 2002, sickness absence in BT was 3.6 per cent; in 2008 it is down to 2.4 per cent (20 per cent below average).
- 1,450 BT employees in the UK have opted to continue in work past the age of 60, saving a total of €21M in recruitment and induction costs, as well as contributing invaluable experience.

An organisation of 30,000 people could achieve benefits of £33M p.a.





Our approach

BT's Sustainable Workforce Assessment can help you to identify and address the key areas where you can make the most difference to workforce efficiency and sustainability. We focus on seven areas that have the greatest potential impact on workforce efficiency but are often seen as intractable: the soft areas that are hard to fix.

These focus areas are about recruiting and keeping the people you rely on by tackling managers' expectations and preconceptions, including cultural background, age and disability. These are key areas that have to be managed actively within the working environment, but we can also add into the study other practice areas that focus on creating a working environment that helps people perform at their best. We look at dignity at work, including bullying, how parents and carers are supported, stress and mental health, and work-life balance.

First, consider whether the BT Sustainable Workforce Assessment is right for you. Consider the following questions:

- Are there segments of your workforce suffering high turnover rates, perhaps because of stress or limited career development opportunities?
- Do you operate call centres, field forces and large administrative departments?
- Is your workforce as diverse you would wish?
- Do you have higher rates of absenteeism, long term sickness or early retirement than you wish?

If so, it may be worth talking to us about the BT Sustainable Workforce Assessment.

The first step of the Assessment is to understand where you are now and which practice areas you should focus on. You and your employees know your business best, so the BT Sustainable Workforce Assessment starts with an executive workshop to agree your priorities.

We will then conduct a survey, which will show you how your people see your performance in the seven practice areas. This creates your baseline welfare footprint.

The workshop and the survey taken together will allow you to identify your welfare 'hotspots,' from which we can agree which of the practice areas require deeper analysis. This could include reviews of policies, a training effectiveness review, confidential structured interviews and further quantitative analysis, depending on need.

From the resulting welfare report, our consultants can advise you in planning solutions that will improve the productivity and retention of your workforce. These may include changes to HR policy and practice, stress management mechanisms, and ways of helping your people work more flexibly, including conferencing, mobility and agile working. If you wish, we can also support the implementation of those solutions.

Where we have done it

As well as our own internal work, BT has been helping UK local governments to make the change. Transformation work led by BT for Liverpool City Council has seen a change in working culture. Employee absenteeism has been reduced from 16.5 days a year to 10 (below the national average).

“The new ways of working that we have put in place with the help of BT really do change the organisation’s culture dramatically, in a way that I don’t think you can bring about through any other method.”

Bridget Taylor
Suffolk County Council's Director of Strategy

Why BT

BT has been able to make significant progress in all seven areas of practice, and the members of BT Telconsult who will be advising you have had direct personally involvement in designing and deploying our successful initiatives.

- 73 per cent of employees saw an improvement in their work-life balance.
- 75 per cent of long-term absentees now return to work. The national average is 25 per cent.
- Work-related cases of ill-health, 40 per cent of which are due to stress and mental illness, have fallen by 64 per cent.

We are also experts in the many technologies you might choose to investigate to underpin some of these initiatives: agile working, contact centre management, field force automation and unified communications among others.

About BT Telconsult

BT Telconsult is a global telecommunications management and technology consulting business with 30 years experience in providing consultancy services to fixed and mobile telecoms operators in over 90 countries. We are part of BT Global Services and leverage BT's experience and expertise as a 21C Next-Generation Communication Provider to help our clients overcome the challenges they face. Our consultative practitioners have a deep understanding of how to address end-to-end business, technology and operational challenges using best practices and methodologies developed by BT to support your business transformation.

For more information please visit
<http://bt-telconsult.com>



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