In order to work out the direction you want to take your reward strategy, it’s essential to know where you are now, and so fully understanding your existing rewards situation is very important.

This checklist will help you to identify the key actions from phase one of the reward strategy toolkit.

**Understanding organisational and employee needs and drivers**
- Establish a project team – the team could assist in collecting and reviewing information, carrying out surveys and interviews. It should be representative of the workforce.
- Identify your organisation’s goals and objectives – consider what your strategic aim is and how reward could support this.
- Meet with senior leaders – review relevant business plans and meet with organisational leaders to understand your key performance goals.
- Review and consider your workforce strategy and reward policies – this will help to see what your core values are and to what extent rewards reinforce them.
- Seek feedback and understanding of staff awareness – how engaged are staff with the reward offer? Do they know about the range of benefits you offer? Which benefits would they value in the future? You could do a short survey or hold focus groups.

**Reviewing your current reward offering**
- Assess your current overall reward package - starting from your pay, pensions and flexible rewards package, plus any other additional benefits.
- Assess details of your intangible benefits - this could include the quality of work, work-life balance and opportunities for development.
- Determine the take-up rates and costs of benefits – are staff accessing the benefits available to them? Look at the costs associated with benefits.

**Reviewing the external market context**
- Compare your reward offer with the external market - what practices and changes are evident among your labour market competitors? What are other NHS employers doing? How much flexibility within the national agreements is being deployed?
- Keep up to date with the political and legal context – these may affect your rewards and employment package.

**Identifying your reward principles and goals**
- Identify clear aims and objectives – information collected on your organisation, employee’s needs and drivers and understanding of your current reward will help you to identify your reward objectives.

**Understanding of your current reward effectiveness**
- Define the standards against which your current rewards should be measured – rate your goals in terms of importance and put in place measures to assess how effectively your principles are being practiced.
- Establish how far your current offer is from your goals – this will help you to identify how much change you want to introduce and where improvements can be implemented.

**Developing your business case**
- Identify what to include in a business case – use the key information you have collected during this phase to build your business case.
- Presenting a business case specific to your organisation – detailing all the work you have carried out will help you gain buy in from your board and other key stakeholders. This will help them to understand and support the strategy and its contents. This could be in the form of a document or presentation.

Use the resources available within our reward strategy toolkit to help you through phase one. Tell us what you think about our products and resources, email reward@nhsemployers.org

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