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The CIO Report

Gartner answers top
CIO questions.

About this report

CIOs today are navigating an era defined by rapid technological advancement, constant disruption and escalating business demands. As organizations race to harness the power of emerging technologies like AI and edge computing, the pressure to architect a resilient, future-ready enterprise has never been greater. Still, many IT leaders find their operating models struggling to keep pace. In this environment, the ability to modernize enterprise platforms for agility and performance is paramount.

This report highlights the top questions CIOs are currently asking Gartner and provides actionable insights to help you lead through transformation.

Top 4 questions we're hearing from CIOs right now:



What emerging technologies should we prioritize to future-proof our enterprise architecture?



How can we make our IT operating model more resilient to economic, geopolitical or supply chain disruptions?



How do we modernize legacy systems without disrupting business operations?



How do we organize human-AI teams, build employee resilience and upskill our talent without disrupting operations?

What emerging technologies should we prioritize to future-proof our enterprise architecture?



Related questions we're answering from your CIO peers:

1. **How** do we assess which emerging technologies will deliver the most business value and competitive advantage?
2. **What** criteria should we use to evaluate enterprise maturity and readiness for new technology adoption?
3. **How** can we ensure seamless integration of emerging technologies with our existing IT infrastructure and applications?

“There are different ways of finding relevant information to formulate strategy. You need to listen to your customers [and] your own organization, but at the same time, you need external information. It’s really about finding information about IT trends in general, AI being one of the examples of that. This is where tools available from Gartner will help. Gartner IT Score is a good example — you can use it for understanding your capabilities.”

Pekka Kahkipuro, Chief Information Officer, Fimlab

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Future-proof your enterprise architecture with AI, cloud and edge computing

As business transformation accelerates, CIOs must ensure their enterprise architecture (EA) is agile enough to keep pace with rapid technological change. AI, cloud and edge computing enable CIOs to move beyond traditional, centralized models and deliver business value at speed and scale.

Distributed EA intelligence — a combination of architectural expertise and AI-powered insights — empowers teams to make faster, more informed decisions across increasingly federated and autonomous business units.

CEOs are prioritizing AI investments and expect technology to drive growth. CIOs must rewire EA functions for “AI speeds,” which requires a shift from human-mediated guidance to continuous, automated decision support. Architectural intent is enforced by tools, pipelines and AI. Cloud and edge computing further amplify the need for adaptive architectures as decision rights move closer to the edge and centralized control gives way to guardrail-based enablement.

Future-proofing EA is an exercise in measuring how quickly the organization adapts and delivers strategic outcomes. By embracing AI, cloud and edge computing — and redesigning EA operating models for speed, scale and adaptability — CIOs can position EA as a catalyst for innovation and ensure their teams remain indispensable in driving business transformation.

Simplify emerging technology evaluation efforts to accelerate business value



How Gartner works with CIOs to future-proof EA

Steps	Expected outcomes	Gartner-supported actions
1. Define enterprise strategy and ambition	A clarified understanding of your organization’s strategy and vision	• Executive Partner-facilitated alignment workshops • Set a clear direction for success with a Strategic Planning Toolkit • Benchmark your strategy relative to peer organizations
2. Determine future scenarios for EA	Identify what the organization needs from the EA discipline across multiple time horizons	• Accelerate decision making with Gartner Digital Execution Scorecard™ • Build Your Enterprise Architecture Discipline • Top 3 Priorities for Heads of Enterprise Architecture
3. Transform the EA operating model	Deliver value in faster and more innovative ways that are aligned to the chosen future role of EA	• Build AI literacy • Get started with an Accelerator • Use AskGartner to discover innovative transformation ideas
4. Modernize EA products and services	Real-time insights, decision tools and technical foundations that directly support the speed at which the business operates	• Build a cost roadmap with Strategic IT Cost Optimization • Review Emerging Technology Watch • Accelerate modernization by attending Gartner Application Innovation & Business Solutions Summit
5. Achieve EA success by enabling rapid business adaptation	Measurable EA success	• Use Gartner Score for CIOs to measure critical activities • Track progress with AI Maturity Assessment • Use AskGartner for on-demand KPIs

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Below is the full ecosystem of leaders and required actions to future-proof EA

Leadership group	Roles	Required actions	Gartner resources and tools
Executive leadership	CEO, COO, CFO	- Align technology strategy with business goals - Secure funding - Drive transformation	- Tool: IT Strategic Planning - Roadmap: AI Roadmap to Drive Value
Data and analytics	CDAO, head of analytics	- Define data governance - Enable AI/ML initiatives - Ensure data quality and compliance	- eBook: Turn Data, Analytics and AI Into Strategic Growth Drivers - eBook: Drive Successful Business Outcomes With Data, Analytics and AI - Webinar: Designing a Future-Ready Data and Analytics Organization for Scale and Consistency - Virtual Briefing: Prepare for the Future of Analytics
Security	Chief information security officer (CISO)	- Integrate security into architecture - Manage risks - Ensure regulatory compliance	- Roadmap: Strategic Roadmap for Cybersecurity Leadership - Webinar: Assess and Benchmark AI Cyber-Risk Readiness - Webinar: Drive Cybersecurity Investment in the AI Era With Outcome-Driven Metrics and Benchmarks
Application development	Head of software engineering	- Modernize applications - Adopt cloud-native and AI-driven development practices	- eBook: Future of Software Engineering 2030: The Impact of AI - eBook: Leadership Synergy: How Software and D&A Leaders Can Drive AI Innovation - Virtual Briefing: Effectively Leverage AI in the Software Development Life Cycle
Vendor management	Head of procurement, vendor manager	- Evaluate and select cloud and AI partners - Manage contracts and SLAs	- Tool: Proposal Review - Tool: Gartner BuySmart™

 CIO Question

How can we make our IT operating model more resilient against economic, geopolitical or supply chain disruptions?

**24%**

of CIOs report that they have been highly effective at establishing IT operating models that flex and change with business needs.

**70%**

of boards of directors see geopolitical instability and international conflicts as the largest external threats to their organizations.

**50%**

of enterprises by 2028 will fail to realize measurable business value from AI due to outdated IT operating models.

Related questions we're answering from your CIO peers:

1. **How** can we ensure business continuity during unexpected disruptions?
2. **What** steps can we take to diversify our technology supply chain and reduce dependency on a single vendor?
3. **How** do we build flexibility into our IT architecture to quickly adapt to changing business needs or external threats?

“Gartner has supported us to identify sustainable solutions and services, which operating models we should implement within our business and ensure we’ve got a high bang-for-buck from our technology and solution investments.”

Heinrich Kukuk, Group Executive, IT Aveng Group

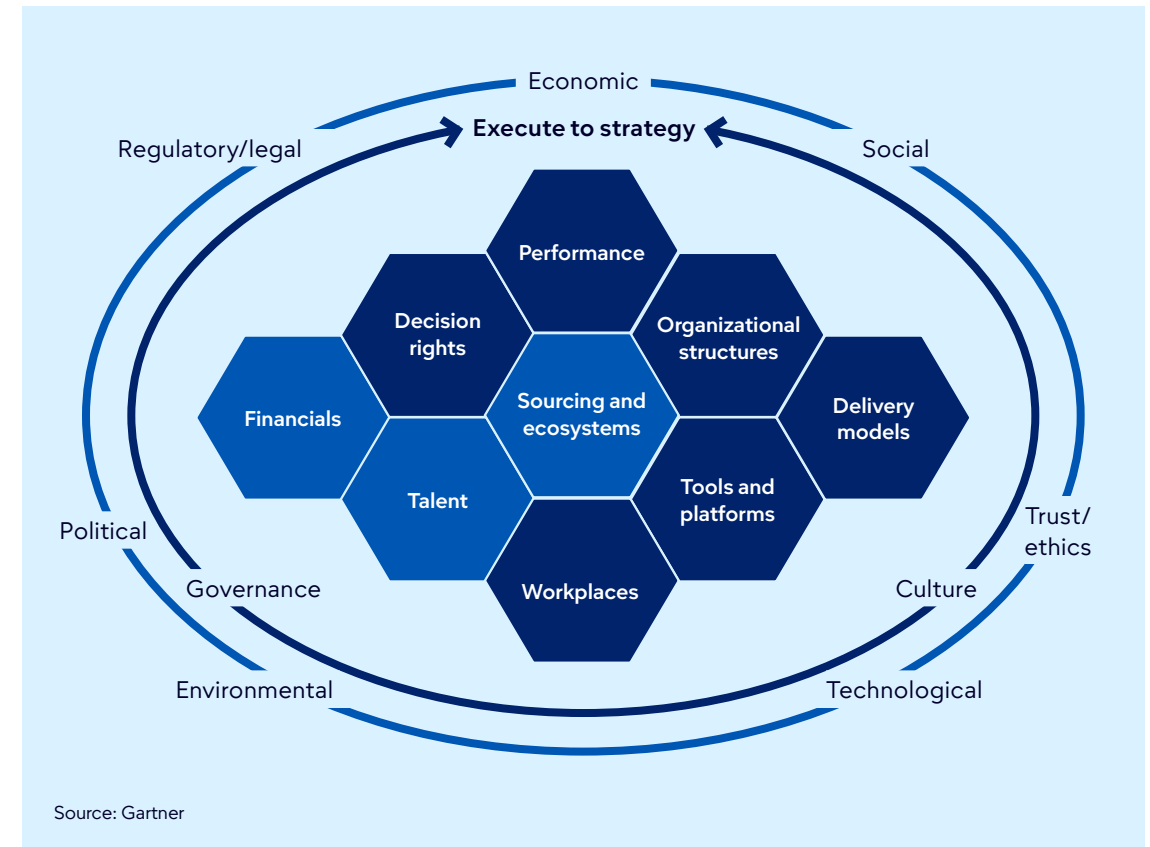
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Boost the resilience of your IT operating model

CIOs can build an IT operating model that's more resistant to disruption by diversifying vendors and adopting multicloud/hybrid cloud strategies that reduce reliance on any single provider or region. Flexible, modular architectures supported by automation and edge computing enable rapid adaptation and help maintain operations during disruptions.

Regularly updated disaster recovery plans, strong cybersecurity measures and close collaboration with business and risk leaders ensure critical systems stay protected and aligned with organizational priorities. Investing in workforce agility and remote capabilities further equips the IT team to respond to unexpected challenges.

Uncertainty drivers impacting the IT operating model



How Gartner works with CIOs to build a more resilient IT operating model

Steps	Expected outcomes	Gartner-supported actions
1. Align operating model vision to business value	IT architecture that flexes with change, bridges the gap between IT capabilities and business needs, and directly supports strategic business outcomes	- Align vision to value with the IT Budget & Efficiency Benchmark - Prioritize digital capabilities with the Digital Execution Scorecard - Build board-ready value stories by engaging an Executive Partner
2. Design operating model elements	A resilient foundation designed to withstand disruption and adapt to economic, geopolitical and supply chain volatility	- Discover resiliency elements with a webinar on the IT Operating Model Action Plan - Use AskGartner to rapidly explore peer risk-management approaches - Apply AI Use Case Insights to evaluate necessary AI capabilities
3. Implement operating model changes	Transition off outdated models that prevent the enterprise from capturing AI-driven business value	- Accelerate seamless transitions with Gartner roadmaps - Quickly integrate structured improvements with Gartner Accelerators - Stress-test your implementation plan with an Analyst Consultation
4. Implement rightsourcing and shared services	Optimize resources and vendor management to maintain continuity and flexibility during external disruptions	- Optimize vendors with the Accelerator for Driving Value With IT Sourcing - Identify cost-saving contract opportunities with a Proposal Review - Compare vendor pricing and strategies with Gartner® Peer Insights™
5. Manage and optimize operating model performance	An organization positioned for measurable business success and sustained adaptability against future external threats	- Benchmark operational performance with CIO Score - Measure outcomes for reinvestment with Gartner ROI value frameworks - Track new tech disruptions with the Gartner Hype Cycle™ tool

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 Essential Leadership Roles

Below is the full ecosystem of leaders and required actions for making the IT operating model more resilient

Leadership group	Roles	Required actions	Gartner resources and tools
Executive leadership	CEO, COO, CFO	- Align IT resilience with business strategy - Secure funding for resilience initiatives	- Webinar: Executive Endurance in 2026: A CIO Guide to Leading Through Volatility - Virtual Briefing: Art of the 1-Page Strategy: Effectively Communicate for Strategic Impact - Tool: IT Budget & Efficiency Benchmark
Security	CISO	- Strengthen cybersecurity posture - Monitor and respond to emerging threats	- Webinar: Top Trends in Cybersecurity for 2026 - Webinar: Assess and Benchmark AI Cyber Risk Readiness - Resource: Future-Proof Cybersecurity Leadership
Operations	Head of IT operations, infrastructure lead	- Ensure business continuity - Optimize infrastructure for redundancy and flexibility	- Webinar: 2026 Technology Adoption Roadmap for Infrastructure and Operations - Webinar: Modernizing Core Systems for AI: A CIO's 4-Stage Roadmap - eBook: Accelerate Strategic Cost Optimization for Sustainable Growth
Procurement and vendor management	Head of procurement, vendor manager	- Diversify suppliers - Manage contracts and monitor supply chain risks	- Webinar: The Future of Procurement: Accelerating Value Through AI, Talent and Operating Model Reinvention - Webinar: Steps for Procurement to Become AI-First - Virtual Briefing: Procurement Transformation: A CPO's Roadmap to AI Value - Tool: Gartner BuySmart
Data and analytics	Chief data officer, analytics lead	- Monitor operational data for early warning signs - Support data-driven decisions	- Webinar: The Future of D&A Governance - Webinar: Data and Analytics 2030: The Vision for an AI-Native Enterprise - Virtual Briefing: Prepare for the Future of Analytics - Roadmap: Turn Data, Analytics and AI Into Strategic Growth Drivers
HR and workforce	CHRO	- Develop workforce agility - Support remote work and cross-training	- Webinar: Strategic Roadmap: Redesigning HR for an AI-Infused Operating Model - Webinar: Why Workforce Readiness — Not Technology — Determines AI Success - Virtual Briefing: CHRO's Role in Leading Enterprise AI Transformation - Tool: AI Maturity Assessment

CIO Question

How do we modernize legacy systems without disrupting business operations?



30%
reduction in application modernization costs is expected by 2028, driven by GenAI.



90%
of software modernization projects will use AI-augmented tools by 2029, up from less than 20% in 2026.



48%
of organizations with well-defined transformation plans are already modernizing, and 73% are planning to increase modernization investments over the next two years.

Related questions we're answering from your CIO peers:

1. **What** are the critical business processes dependent on our legacy systems?
2. **How** can we ensure data integrity and security during the modernization process?
3. **How** do we prioritize which legacy systems to modernize?

“Gartner has been a strategic [collaborator] for us in shaping our digital workplace product roadmap and future-of-work strategy.”

Sidharth Mukherjee, General Manager, Wipro

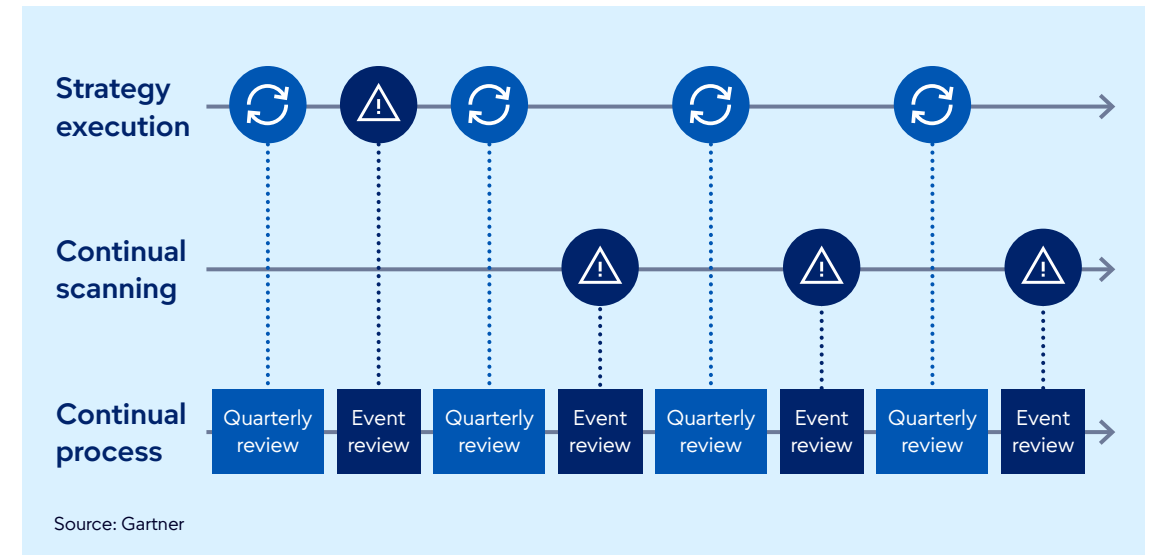
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Modernize legacy systems with a phased, incremental approach

Modernizing legacy systems without disrupting business operations often involves running new and legacy systems in parallel during migration, allowing for thorough testing and gradual cutover to minimize risk and downtime. Prioritizing modernization efforts based on business impact ensures the most critical processes remain stable and supported throughout the transition.

Automation and AI-driven tools can streamline data migration, testing and integration, which further reduces the potential for errors and delays. Close collaboration with business units and transparent communication helps manage expectations, address early concerns and ensure alignment between IT and operational goals. With careful planning and ongoing monitoring, CIOs can achieve modernization while maintaining business continuity.

Modernization is continual



Modernize enterprise platforms to enhance agility and performance

Steps	Expected outcomes	Gartner-supported actions
1. Define business-outcome-aligned platform strategy	Aligned modernization efforts and business goals with minimal operational downtime	• Prioritize investments with Digital Execution Scorecard • Align stakeholders by engaging an Executive Partner • Leverage IT Budget & Efficiency Benchmark
2. Architect for modular, composable platforms	A flexible foundation that reduces legacy debt and supports AI integration	• Get architectural guidance from Gartner for Technical Professionals • Monitor the Gartner Hype Cycle for emerging tech • Use AskGartner to explore peer approaches
3. Assess market and select vendor relationships	Optimized vendor partnerships that accelerate delivery and reduce modernization costs	• Save on contracts with a Proposal Review • Compare vendors with Gartner Peer Insights • Fast-track vendor selection with Gartner Accelerators
4. Implement enterprise platforms	Accelerated platform delivery with maintained business continuity	• Structure rollouts with Gartner roadmaps • Stress-test plans with an Analyst Consultation • Optimize AI tool deployment with AI Use Case Insights
5. Establish governance for continuous value realization	Sustained platform agility and continuous measurement of ROI	• Assess engineering maturity with Gartner IT Score • Measure ROI with Gartner ROI/value frameworks • Exchange best practices on Gartner Peer Community™

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Essential leaders and required actions for modernizing legacy systems

Leadership group	Roles	Required actions	Gartner resources and tools
Security	CISO	• Protect sensitive data • Manage risks during transition	• Webinar: Cybersecurity’s Top Projects for 2026: What CISOs Must Deliver Next • Webinar: Top Cybersecurity Technologies That Will Shape 2026 • Virtual Briefing: Enhancing Your Cybersecurity Program Through Strategic Benchmarking • Tool: AskGartner
Executive leadership	CEO, COO, CFO	• Align modernization with business goals • Secure funding and support	• Webinar: IT 2030: How CIOs Should Reinvent IT for the AI Age • Webinar: CIO Board Presentation Prep: Showcase IT’s Strategic Value • Virtual Briefing: IT 2030: How CIOs Should Reinvent IT for the AI Age • Tool: IT Strategic Planning
Application development	Head of software engineering, DevOps lead	• Plan phased migrations • Ensure thorough testing and validation	• Webinar: Modernizing Core Systems for AI: A CIO’s 4-Stage Roadmap • Webinar: Architecting Externalized Authorization for Modern Applications • Virtual Briefing: Effectively Leverage AI in the Software Development Life Cycle • eBook: Future of Software Engineering 2030: The Impact of AI
Investment and value oversight	CFO	• Govern cybersecurity investment • Evaluate ROI and ODMs • Secure funding for proactive controls	• Webinar: 2026 Top Finance Priorities & Trends: Balancing Cost Pressures With AI Ambitions • Webinar: Make Cost Optimization Strategic, Proactive and Programmatic • Virtual Briefing: AI in Finance and the Enterprise: How CFOs Can Lead, Govern & Grow
Change management	HR lead, change management lead	• Upskill staff • Manage communication and training for new systems	• Webinar: Value Is Trapped: Unlocking AI ROI Through Organizational Change • Webinar: How to Create a Workforce That Can Keep Up With AI • Virtual Briefing: CHRO’s Role in Leading Enterprise AI Transformation
Vendor management	Head of procurement, vendor manager	• Select modernization partners • Manage contracts and SLAs	• Webinar: How CPOs and CIOs Can Partner for Success • Webinar: Steps for Procurement to Become AI-First • Virtual Briefing: Procurement Transformation: A CPO’s Roadmap to AI Value • Tool: Proposal Review

 CIO Question

How do we organize human-AI teams, build employee resilience and upskill our talent without disrupting operations?

**51%**

of CIOs view the gap between evolving AI skill requirements and available talent as their primary challenge.

**56%**

of enterprises are focusing on augmenting, not replacing, employees.

**40%**

of enterprises have a strategy in place to prevent employee skills atrophy.

Related questions we're answering from your CIO peers:

1. **What** organizational changes and new roles are required in our future state?
2. **How** do we lead the organization through constant change when the end state is unknown?
3. **How** do we quantify the impact of the new human-AI workforce and redesign jobs?

“We found our partnership with Gartner to be transformative. Their expertise and insights empowered us to develop a comprehensive AI strategy aligned with our business goals, enhancing human-AI efficiency and fostering a culture of proactive change.”

Anna Sanchez, Chief Information Officer

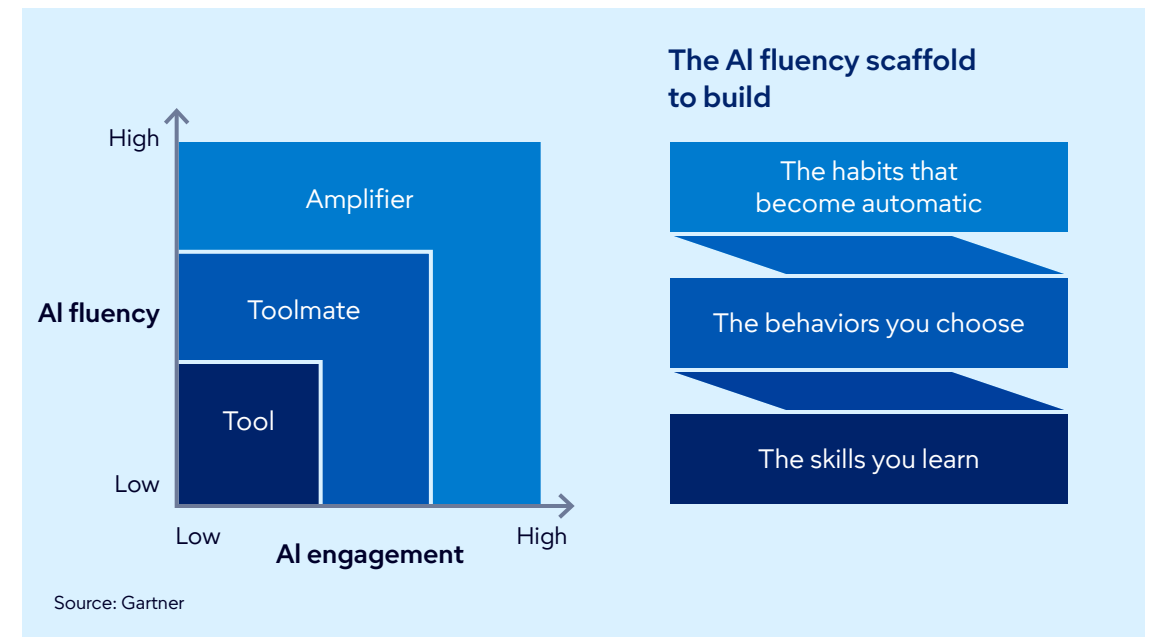
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Reorganize human-AI teams, build change reflexes and upgrade capabilities

CIOs must simultaneously tackle team organization, resilience and upskilling to ensure AI transformation succeeds. Begin by adopting a “centaur” collaboration model using cross-functional fusion teams. In this model, AI handles the speed and scale while humans provide context and judgment. To support these new workflows, leaders must develop foundational human capabilities, adaptive change reflexes and AI skills. Transparent communication is critical throughout this process as it prevents change fatigue and quiet resistance.

Businesses cannot pause operations to retrain staff. CIOs must also use a phased, iterative approach to upskilling. Organizations should identify critical skills early and deploy supportive “agent-assist” tools during initial pilots so employees can execute complex tasks and learn. By integrating AI-driven training simulations directly into the flow of work, leaders can continuously upgrade their workforce capabilities without experiencing a disruptive service cliff.

Guide the workforce evolution from AI tool to AI amplifier



How Gartner works with CIOs to organize teams, build employee resilience and upskill talent

Steps	Expected outcomes	Gartner-supported actions
1. Define an AI-driven talent strategy	Aligned AI ambitions and investments with a defined digital talent strategy that matches enterprise goals	• Build a resilient workforce plan with an Executive Partner • Align talent strategy to value with the Digital Execution Scorecard • Explore AI talent strategies using AskGartner
2. Assess future-readiness of the workforce	Clear visibility into current workforce capabilities, with identified skill gaps and transparent assessment processes	• Evaluate workforce readiness with the AI Maturity Assessment • Benchmark current talent capabilities with Gartner IT Score for CIOs • Learn from peer skills gaps using Gartner Peer Insights
3. Design organizational balance of tech and human resources	Reallocated workforce capacity and redesigned jobs that optimize value creation through human-AI collaboration	• Map AI-human workflows with Gartner Accelerators • Structure your blended workforce with an Analyst Consultation • Redesign technical roles with Gartner for Technical Professionals
4. Scale human readiness for AI	Strategically upskilled employees equipped with critical GenAI skills, along with managers prepared to lead an AI-driven workforce	• Prioritize investments with Digital Execution Scorecard • Align stakeholders by engaging with an Executive Partner • Identify funding priorities with IT Budget & Efficiency Benchmark
5. Evolve human-AI workforce agility	An updated employee value proposition (EVP) and continuous learning culture that builds resilience against AI-triggered changes	• Measure productivity gains with Gartner ROI/value frameworks • Track talent optimization with IT Budget & Efficiency Benchmark • Assess ongoing workforce trends with the CIO Agenda

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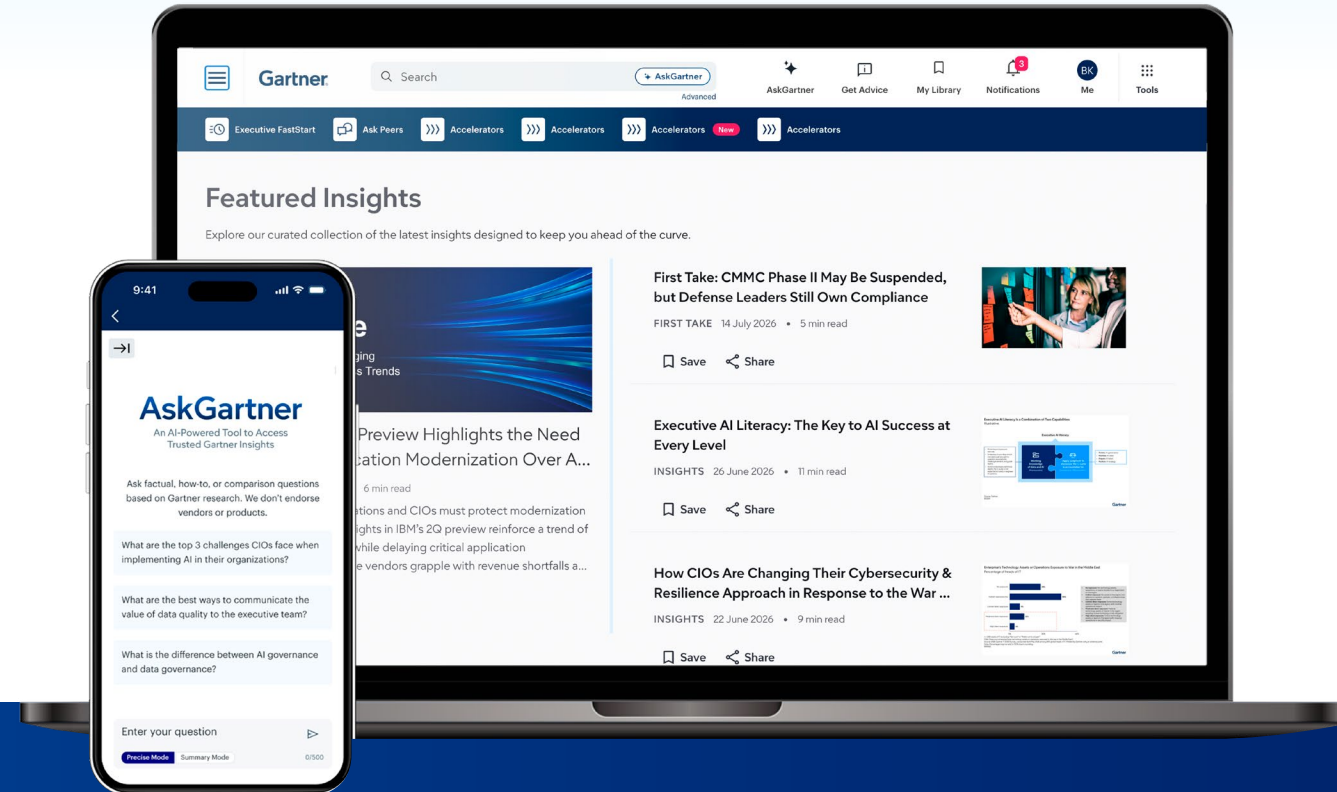
Essential leaders and required actions for organizing teams, building employee resilience and upskilling talent

Leadership group	Roles	Required actions	Gartner resources and tools
IT leadership	CIO, head of IT	Align AI ambition and investment by defining the tech and digital talent strategy	- Webinar: Why Workforce Readiness — Not Technology — Determines AI Success - Webinar: How to Create a Workforce That Can Keep Up With AI - Virtual Briefing: How AI and D&A Leaders Can Get Value From AI - Roadmap: AI Roadmap to Drive Value
Tech professionals	Head of software engineering	Master the four critical GenAI skills: case identification, tech fluency, effective prompting and output discernment	- Webinar: Modernizing Core Systems for AI: A CIO's 4-Stage Roadmap - Webinar: Architecting Externalized Authorization for Modern Applications - Virtual Briefing: Tech Professionals: Assess AI Agents, Use Cases, Platforms and Risks - eBook: Leadership Synergy: How Software and D&A Leaders Can Drive AI Innovation
IT management	Head of IT operations, infrastructure lead	- Lead the AI-driven workforce - Motivate tech employees and build their resilience around AI-triggered change	- Webinar: 2026 Technology Adoption Roadmap for Infrastructure and Operations - Webinar: Value Is Trapped: Unlocking AI ROI Through Organizational Change - Virtual Briefing: Effectively Leverage AI in the Software Development Life Cycle - Tool: Gartner IT Score for CIOs
Human resources	CHRO	- Collaborate directly with the CIO on the talent strategy - Update the IT EVP to attract top talent	- Webinar: The CHRO's Guide to Strategic Stakeholder Management - Webinar: Why Workforce Readiness — Not Technology — Determines AI Success - Virtual Briefing: CHRO's Role in Leading Enterprise AI Transformation - eBook: AI in HR: The CHRO's Role in AI Transformation
Vendor management	Head of procurement, vendor manager	Select modernization partners; manage contracts and SLAs	- Webinar: How CPOs and CIOs Can Partner for Success - Webinar: Steps for Procurement to Become AI-First - Virtual Briefing: Procurement Transformation: A CPO's Roadmap to AI Value - Tool: Gartner BuySmart

Trusted insights for CIOs and their teams

AI is reshaping how CIOs deliver value. Cybersecurity threats continue to grow. Cost pressures challenge future investments. Every decision matters more than ever, making trusted insights essential.

With a global team of 2,400+ analysts bringing together insights from 11,000+ CIO members and 14,000+ client enterprises, Gartner equips CIOs with an unmatched level of actionable intelligence on current priorities, challenges and best practices to help them validate decisions with absolute confidence.



Gartner helps CIOs make faster decisions that:



Drive growth

Make technology investments that position IT as a strategic growth driver for the organization.



Mitigate risks

Anticipate market shifts, stay ahead of threats, avoid strategic pitfalls and challenge their thinking.



Reduce costs

Implement new efficiencies, better evaluate technology purchases and negotiate more successful deals.

→ [Learn more about Gartner for CIOs.](#)

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CIOs must amplify their impact and lead beyond IT by partnering with C-suite peers to accelerate digital business models, enable the future of work and drive business growth.

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60,000+

business and technology insights professionals in attendance each year

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Actionable, objective insights

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for CIOs:

Virtual Briefing  IT 2030: How CIOs Should Reinvent IT for the AI Age Determine your “North Star” destination for the future of your IT organization. Watch Now	Webpage  Explore Gartner AI Hub Learn why Gartner is the world authority on AI. Discover More	Tool  AskGartner Explore your AI-powered tool for trusted Gartner insights. Discover More	Tool  Accelerators Accelerate organizational priorities for CIOs step by step. Get Started
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