

Closing the Digital Skills Gap

Practical Strategies for Public
Sector Organizations

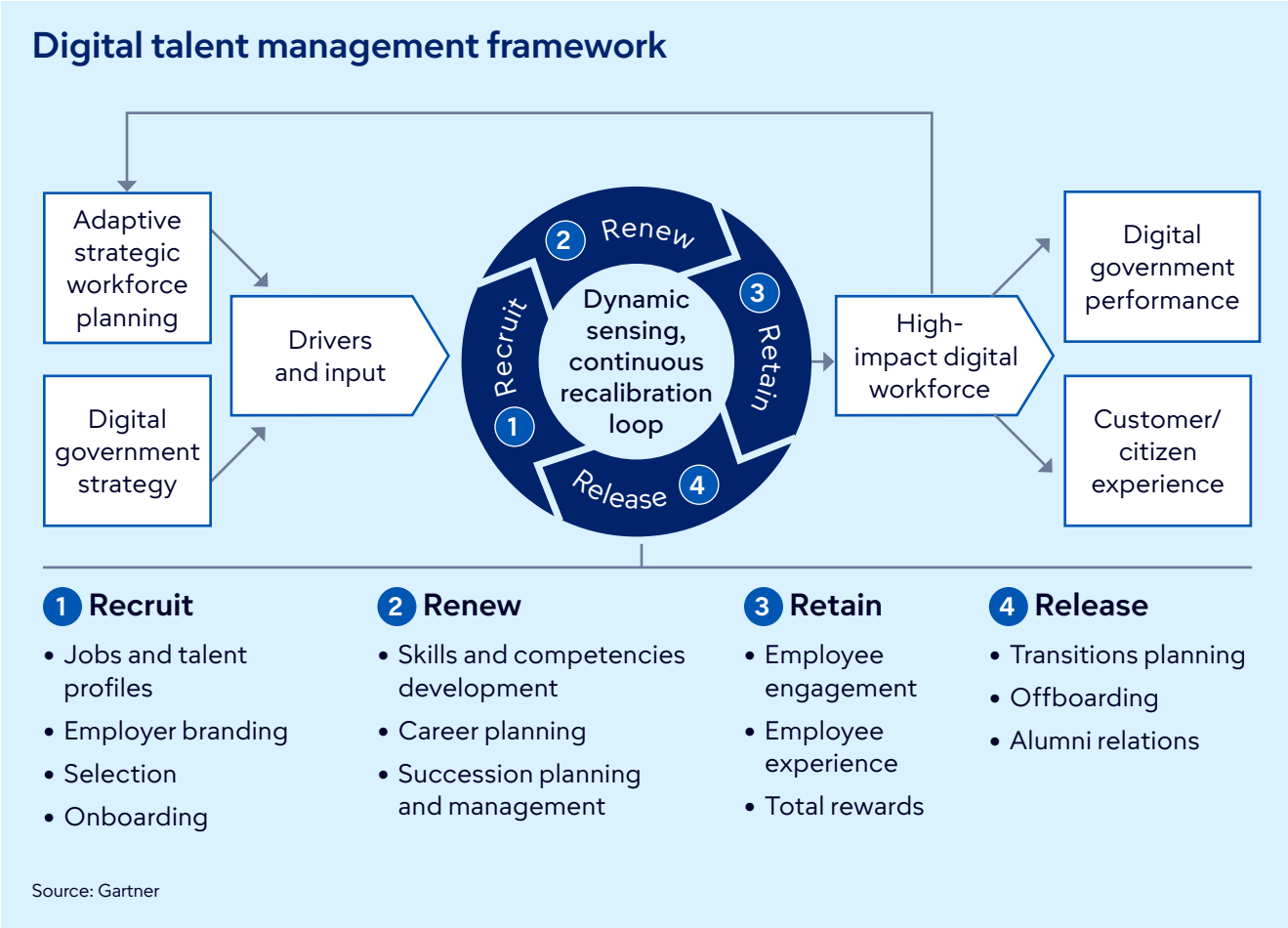


How can public sector leaders attract, develop and retain technology talent efficiently?

Government leaders face increasing pressure to advance digital capabilities, address talent shortages and meet rising expectations from citizens, policymakers and stakeholders who require advanced technology skills.

As emerging technologies are adopted more rapidly and expectations for government performance become more complex, technical and nontechnical leaders face mounting pressure to adapt. They must ensure their workforce keeps pace with innovation and leverages new tools, yet widening skill gaps are creating operational risks and slowing progress on critical digital initiatives. These challenges are prompting leaders to rethink how they attract, develop and retain technology talent.

To address these issues, government organizations need to move from role-based hiring and isolating digital skills in specific roles to a strategic, skills-based workforce plan that builds long-term capabilities and prioritizes continuous performance improvement.



3 essential questions for successfully closing the public sector digital skills gap

1 What technology capabilities do government leaders need to improve mission outcomes?

2 Which roles and skills are needed to deliver those capabilities?

3 How can government leaders maximize AI to accelerate mission outcomes?

What are the key stages?

This roadmap outlines five actionable steps for successfully developing technology talent within government organizations. It highlights essential, proven practices that government leaders can use to define talent priorities, strengthen organizational culture, attract top technology talent, establish effective onboarding and manage a digital talent framework.





Define job/talent profiles

Key outcome: Digital skill requirements defined and mission-critical capability gaps closed.

Actions to take:

Define digital goals and skills to close gaps and advance government mission delivery.

Create clear role profiles that align talent with government service delivery.

Use HR metrics to assess hiring, retention, renewal and workforce transitions.

Sample of Gartner client resources include:

Consultation

Kickoff call to draft an action plan based on mission priorities. [How CIOs Can Develop an IT Strategic Workforce Plan](#)

Case Study

- [Foundational Skills Strategy to Close Skills Gaps](#)

Tool

- [Talent Profile Templates](#)

Insights

- [CIOs Adopt Skills-Based Talent Strategies as IT Skills Gaps Linger](#)





Develop and market organizational culture

Key outcome: A compelling employee value proposition is created to attract talent motivated by and aligned with government mission priorities.

Actions to take:

- Build** a strong public sector value proposition to attract mission-aligned talent.
- Create** strategies for a blended workforce using staff, partners and AI capabilities.
- Promote** organization strengths to compete for and recruit top talent across technical and nontechnical roles.

Sample of Gartner client resources include:

- Consultation**
Work with a Gartner analyst to build a compelling organizational culture value proposition.
- Insights**
 - Transforming How Work Gets Done: 2025 HR Symposium/Xpo™ Keynote Highlights
 - Strategic Workforce Planning: 4 Shifts in the Era of Work Disruption
- Video**
 - Embrace AI to Get the Talent You Need

On-Demand Webinar: [AI Literacy for Mission Success: Building an AI-Powered Government Workforce](#)





Attract top technology talent

Key outcome: Clear talent profiles and role requirements established.

Actions to take:

Clarify required talent profiles and skills for each role through clear and attractive job descriptions.

Implement effective assessment tools and processes to evaluate how well candidates' profiles align with job requirements.

Ensure consistent skill assessments to verify candidates' demonstrated competencies.

Sample of Gartner client resources include:

Insights

- [Redesign IT Interview Process to Improve Quality of Hires](#)

Analyst Consultation

Ensure consistency in assessments of candidate skills/interviews: [5 Best Practices for CIOs to Effectively Attract and Hire Top IT Talent](#)

Conferences: Attend [Gartner HR Symposium/Xpo](#) and [Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo](#)





Establish effective onboarding and development

Key outcome: Standardize onboarding and accelerate new employee integration.

Actions to take:

Create a structured, comprehensive approach to integrating new employees into culture, mission and job responsibilities.

Equip new hires with tools and information to become productive as quickly as possible.

Evaluate onboarding program length and content to improve effectiveness and impact.

Sample of Gartner client resources include:

Tool

- [Create an Integrated Talent Development Strategy](#)

Insights

- [Know if You're On Track: First 90 Days' Onboarding Metrics](#)

eBook: [A Government CIO's Efficiency Toolkit](#)





Manage a digital talent framework

Key outcome: Cultivate a resilient workforce capable of adapting to mission objectives, technological advancements and changing geopolitical landscapes.

Actions to take:

Develop a digital talent strategy integrating AI-enabled processes to build an adaptive workforce.

Renew skills through agile learning, career growth and succession planning efforts.

Retain government talent by strengthening employee engagement and experience.

Sample of Gartner client resources include:

Insights

- [Build Resilient IT Talent: The Agile Learning Method of Progressive Skills Development](#)
- [AI Literacy Programs: Key Decisions That Define Success](#)
- [From C-Suite to Frontline: How CIOs Must Tailor AI Literacy Programs to Drive Impact](#)

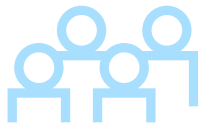
Case Study

- [Building an AI-Ready Enterprise Workforce](#)



Who needs to be involved?

The most successful organizations establish cross-functional teams to drive technology talent development. We outline the recommended functions to involve and their roles to ensure strong progress toward key milestones.



Chief Information Officer (CIO)

Provides strategic leadership, funds digital talent frameworks and partners with HR to plan and prioritize technology workforce needs.

Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO)

Leads talent strategy, partners with leaders to align workforce needs and builds systems that attract, develop and retain critical technology talent.

Chief AI Officer

Builds AI skills across teams, identifies capability gaps and drives training and practices that prepare the workforce to use AI responsibly and effectively.

Application Leader and Team

Support role shadowing, mentor new developers and guide teams through reviews and strong development practices.

Chief Digital and Analytics Officer (CDAO)

Monitors talent metrics, identifies skill gaps across teams and drives initiatives to close them while aligning work and responsibilities across the organization.

Infrastructure and Operations Leader and Team

Support reskilling efforts, drive adoption of digital talent frameworks and build a modern workplace with the tools new hires need to be productive.

Chief Information Security Officer (CISO)

Builds cybersecurity skills across teams, guides secure practices and ensures talent is prepared to protect systems and data in an evolving threat landscape.

Client Story

How Multnomah County, Oregon, Enhanced Its AI Strategy and Attracted Talent Through a Partnership With Gartner

Mission-critical priority

Multnomah County sought to develop a robust AI strategy that ensures responsible adoption, delivers measurable value to residents and fosters continuous learning for staff to keep pace with emerging technologies.



How Gartner helped

Gartner partnered with Multnomah County to develop its AI strategy, laying the foundation for responsible and innovative adoption. Gartner also provided access to analyst research, personalized consultations, the Gartner Peer Community™ network and Gartner for Technical Professionals — strengthening staff development and enhancing talent acquisition.



Mission accomplished

With Gartner support, Multnomah County has implemented AI governance policies that foster innovation and align with industry best practices. This collaboration ensures responsible adoption, attracts top talent, enhances public services and positions the County as a leader in innovation.

[Watch the full story ↗](#)



Actionable, objective decision intelligence

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for public sector leaders:

 eBook Improve Government Efficiency and Effectiveness With AI, Data and Analytics Overcome modernization barriers and unlock value in your government organization. Download eBook	 On-Demand Webinar AI Literacy for Mission Success: Building an AI-Powered Government Workforce Explore what AI literacy is and why it is important now to build an AI-powered workforce for your organization. Watch Now	 eBook A Government CIO's Efficiency Toolkit Learn how government CIOs can drive efficiency, modernize IT and deliver measurable outcomes. Download eBook	 Tool Government CIO Accelerators Explore our step-by-step tools and diagnostics tailored specifically for government CIOs. Learn More
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