Data-Driven Reskilling: The Missing Link in Your Transformation Toolbox

By Mary Ellen Buzzelli,
Director of SLED Industries, Iron Mountain

As provincial and municipal governments aim to meet citizen demands for digital services, workforce challenges remain top barriers to transformation.

As stipulated in the GC Digital Ambition mandate, the GC CIO identifies workforce skill limitations as a primary hurdle to realizing a digital government. The GC CIO emphasizes that the process of reskilling current employees and nurturing talent within a competitive labour market will be a pivotal factor, shaping the pace of progress[1]. Reskilling can be an impactful tool in combating unprecedented recruitment and retention demands.

These factors put the government in a unique position to accomplish two workforce goals – upskilling and unlocking valuable data. Reskilling can be a great way to improve the employee experience by removing tedious tasks and barriers – allowing employees to focus on more valuable and mission critical work. This in turn can establish a greater sense of pride and satisfaction in a job, as employees personally develop higher-level skill sets. Additionally, as governments continuously modernize, having a technology-driven and data literate workforce will smoothen this gradual transformation towards fully digital services.

The right data can establish a total experience framework that illuminates pain points while driving employee and citizen/resident satisfaction alike. Below are four ways provincial and municipal governments can utilize data in their reskilling action plan:

01
Understand the skills gap

02
Assess individual performance

03
Partner & automate

04
Skills-based recruitment approaches

[1] GC Digital Ambition - Message from the Chief Information Officer
https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government/digital-ambition.html#toc-1

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CIOs believe workforce skill constraints are a top obstacle to achieving digital government and that reskilling can be an impactful tool in combating unprecedented recruitment and retention demands.

1. UNDERSTAND THE SKILLS GAP:

To solve the skills gap, provincial and municipal governments must become crystal clear on the issues they are solving for. Getting a handle on departmental data establishes a baseline, and illuminates areas that need continuous improvement. Using data to understand citizen needs and thus workforce gaps sets the stage for successful reskilling. Departments can do this by circulating organization-wide surveys, assessments, and other materials to identify existing competencies, workforce gaps and priority education areas.

2. ASSESS INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE:

When implementing training, adequate collection, and analysis of performance data are imperative. With data in hand on workforce needs, talent availability and strengths, organizations can hone in on improving the employee experience, a key retention component. This can also help determine who needs reskilling and when to improve performance outcomes. Constructive feedback is a key component in employee performance and data can

help uncover weaknesses and opportunities to share knowledge to improve workforce efficiency and accuracy. Ultimately, reskilling employees to leverage aptitudes yet untapped results in increased job satisfaction, bolstering retention while enhancing operations.

3. PARTNER & AUTOMATE:

A fresh focus on optimal and automated workflows goes a long way in providing employees with quicker access and support for a myriad of needs, improving retention and overall satisfaction. Partnering with third-party expert vendors to automate tedious tasks allows employees to increase their focus on the mission at hand. Breaking down these inefficient barriers affords more time for employees to develop and deploy higher-level skills to increase job satisfaction, empower hybrid work opportunities, and enhance citizen/resident service.

4. SKILLS-BASED RECRUITMENT APPROACHES: Once provincial and municipal governments use their data to understand the skills gap and assess employee

performance, they can use the insights to develop new recruitment tactics that put desired technology skills at the forefront. For example, consider a skill-based recruitment approach. Skills-based hiring classifies a job by the skills required to perform it, with employers then considering all applicants by assessing whether applicant skills align with those that are needed. While many employers have been using a prerequisite approach, such as academic degrees, as an identifier for skills, this approach can reverse that trend, and open up new opportunities for workers who already have the right skill set while reskilling those who don't.

Governments at all levels must equally weigh operations and productivity with employee education, performance and morale. The turbulent times we live in call for an agile, digital workplace transformation that empowers today's public sector workforce while powering total experience. When it comes to addressing employee barriers to transformation, reskilling to meet modern IT demands is a great place to start.

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