

How Cloud Fluency Helps Organizations Drive Innovation

Advance Comprehensive Training to Accelerate Cloud Adoption

More organizations than ever are embracing the cloud and investing resources toward cloud adoption. In 2015, just 35% of organizations worldwide were planning to invest in cloud computing; by 2019, that number nearly doubled to 60%. Cloud computing was also the top investment area for North America in 2019.¹

A growing number of organizations identify cloud adoption as an essential step toward a state of digital transformation. During this period of change, how can businesses keep the disruption to a minimum? One way is through rapid, efficient cloud adoption guided by skilled professionals who understand the nuances of the cloud.



A challenge facing decision makers is finding cloud talent with relevant expertise—there just does not seem to be enough qualified applicants.² Many businesses start by investing to train the talent they already have. Others try to hire professionals who understand the complexities of cloud adoption, while still more organizations utilize a combination of both approaches. Yet, this is harder than it sounds.

The cloud talent skills gap

A lack of available talent with cloud skills is a real and growing problem. In fact, the cloud skills gap has more than doubled since 2016, with 90% of organizations reporting gaps in one or more cloud disciplines, compared to 50% in 2016.

Skills gaps are not only troubling; they are expensive and non-productive: 76% of leaders feel the lack of talent poses a medium-to-high risk to business objectives. This risk manifests across the company as employee stress, delays, and loss of business. Leaders also believe three to eight hours of weekly productivity are lost to skills gaps.³

So, the question remains: If cloud adoption is a business priority and business leaders seem to be aware of the cost of the skills gap, why do the skills gaps persist? And, more importantly, how can leaders solve for their own organization's skills gap?

One possible explanation for the talent crunch is that the breathless pace of change makes it hard for IT professionals to keep up, let alone ensure that their people are upskilled quickly.⁴ Still, it's dismaying to learn that 59% of decision makers did not authorize training, even when they had an opportunity to do so.⁵

Even so, IT professionals remain undeterred and are motivated to learn. In North America, 81% of IT professionals hold at least one certificate.⁶ However, this places the burden of upskilling disproportionately on individual professionals when, in fact, professional development should be a shared responsibility within the organization.

The missing ingredient: training

Simply stated, an investment in cloud training can help organizations bridge the skills gap, as AWS general manager Stephen Orban pointed out in the title of his blog post, “You Already Have the People you Need to Succeed in the Cloud.”⁷ In other words, training is the missing ingredient.

Onboarding new employees, as experienced or promising as they may be, is an expensive endeavor. Ensuring that your people are up to speed comes at a high internal cost and can become a difficult and time-consuming process.

Training is a necessary attribute of a successful and accelerated cloud adoption because it acts as an intersection for different business needs. Dedicated training programs help to create a core base of expert employees who will understand the potential and practical application of the cloud in the organization. They will be able to readily and rapidly contextualize the interaction of the cloud and the organization with the work they’re doing.

The advantages of comprehensive training

Any training is better than none, but a comprehensive approach provides more practical advantages.

Comprehensive training aligns cloud strategy to the specific needs of stakeholders—deep technical training for technical teams and training in cloud fundamentals for business decision makers. According to IDC, organizations that were “comprehensively trained” were 80% faster in adopting the cloud.⁸

Comprehensive training also propels transformation—providing the momentum for organizations to move nimbly through the different stages of cloud adoption. For example, comprehensively trained organizations are four times more likely to agree that the cloud can improve IT resource utilization.⁹

Business decision makers may be reluctant to make the necessary investment in cloud training, as it may seem to detract employees from their immediate priorities. This short-term thinking must be contrasted with the potential long-term gains in productivity.

Organizations may also fear a “brain drain” as its most highly trained employees become increasingly sought after in the space. By contrast, what happens if you don’t invest in your people? While cloud professionals may be enticed by good pay, they are most likely to leave from a lack of growth opportunities.¹⁰

The strong desire on the part of IT professionals for knowledge and growth is a significant motivator and can be harnessed by forward-looking organizations to accelerate their cloud-adoption journeys. Organizations can actively nurture their employees’ careers—and even help increase their loyalty—by investing in training and mentorship through internal practice communities.

Training helps many businesses address the multiple concerns of cloud adoption—to bridge the skills gap, to develop the cloud talent the organization needs, and to rapidly accelerate the cloud adoption journey. [Discover](#) how investments in comprehensive skills training of your teams can help your organization achieve a smoother transition to the cloud.

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