

# Digital transformation demands a flexible staffing model





The enterprise is rightly preoccupied with digital transformation, the process of converting legacy business models into forward-leaning strategies in which digital services become the primary driver of revenues.

Naturally, this has a broad technological component that stresses cloud computing, automation, artificial intelligence, and other advancements that place a premium on efficiency, high performance, and reliability.

But one of the more overlooked aspects of this change is the way it will affect the enterprise workforce. While it is becoming clear that tools like automation and AI will not result in the massive job losses that were initially feared, they will nevertheless change the makeup of the workplace and the skills needed to build and operate a modern service-oriented architecture.

## The right person for the job

One of the key challenges going forward will be finding and retaining the highly skilled technical professionals to execute new strategies. The fundamental problem is that demand for specialized workers will increase as new digital projects enter the pipeline, but the pool of available professionals with these particular skills is likely to remain shallow for some time.

This is particularly true for positions like data scientists, IT architects, and security engineers. In part, this is due to the demanding education and training regimens that candidates must complete in order to acquire the necessary skills, but it also has to do with the fact that the fundamental technologies driving these disciplines are evolving so rapidly that it is hard for even the most dedicated worker to remain current.

Another problem is the fact that many emerging projects require key, niche, skillsets that don't lend themselves particularly well to the broader demands of the digital enterprise. This results in organizations having to hire extremely specialized talent only to assign these workers to tasks that are ill-suited or undervalued in relation to their salaries for the bulk of their time. In an age when efficiency is a key driver to maintaining profitability under ever-tightening margins, such a waste of useful talent is unworkable.

Many organizations respond to these challenges by, in essence, doing nothing. Usually, digital transformation initiatives are foisted upon existing staff that may simply have a rudimentary understanding of what is required or how success is to be defined. This results in the CIO performing much of the heavy lifting on key digital projects, which in turn hampers progress at the strategic level, particularly the need to recruit the necessary talent to accomplish the transformation. In the end, frustration sets in, followed by the inevitable loss of technical talent to more forward-leaning competitors.

What about AI technologies like machine learning and neural networking? Aren't they supposed to assume many basic IT management functions, freeing up staff to concentrate on digital transformation? To some extent, yes, but at the same time, these technologies will require new skills in the deployment and operational phases. And even under a fully automated, intelligent infrastructure, the enterprise will still need to hire new workers or retrain existing ones to function in the new environment.



## Bimodal workforce

To make matters worse, existing legacy infrastructure will likely remain operational for some time, meaning the enterprise will need to retain workers with experience in ERP and other applications both as they relate to legacy systems and services and the emerging digital-facing infrastructure. As the transformation progresses, of course, competency in these legacy environments will start to wane, similar to the way large corporations struggle to find technicians for legacy mainframe platforms that still provide valuable service in the cloud era.

But even as these challenges play out among mid-management and the rank-and-file, the enterprise faces an equally difficult task should the need arise to replace someone in a senior-level technology role. In a fast-paced digital economy, the loss of a top executive even for a short duration can put the business at risk. Day-to-day functions will certainly take a hit, and it could bring core processes to a standstill.

Speed is of the essence in this scenario, but so is finding a quality candidate. The tech industry is one of the most competitive on the planet, and jobs are harder to fill higher up in the organizational structure. A key challenge is finding candidates with both the technical know-how and key leadership skills to navigate the organization through an era of unprecedented change. The successful candidate must meet a long list of requirements:

- **Communication skills.** The ability to explain complex technological solutions to non-technical executives is crucial. Likewise, they need to understand the needs and responsibilities of the business and ascertain how they can be met with technology.
- **Leadership.** Must be able to champion new initiatives and overcome the inherent resistance to change that exists in most organizations. This extends to the ability to collaborate across a diverse array of team members, technology professionals, and end-users.
- **Flexibility.** Must have the ability to understand existing technology projects and be able to adapt them to new technologies.
- **Team building.** Must be able to effectively mentor junior staffers both on their skill sets and their ability to work in, and lead, teams.
- **Experience.** Must have a complete grasp of all technologies that impact a traditional business model and a digital one. As well, they should be an authority on all regulations, standards, and compliance requirements for their respective industries.
- **Strategy-oriented.** Must remain focused on the big picture, bringing multiple disciplines to bear on the future of core business products and services and how they will be influenced by technology developers, particularly those that could disrupt the business model.

Clearly, hiring the right people for all levels of the enterprise is a complex process that requires substantial time and effort and can have a detrimental impact on the organization if not completed successfully. In today's digital economy, however, organizations that shift attention away from core revenue-generating tasks risk losing out to nimble, more focused competitors.

This is why many businesses are outsourcing their staffing functions to third-party consultants like CBTS. Our IT Staffing and Consulting database of experts consists of highly vetted, trained, and certified specialists backed by a team of experienced IT professionals.



## CBTS IT Staffing and Consulting Services provides a full suite of solutions including:

- Entry, mid-level, and senior job fulfillment.
- Rapid placement.
- Flexible staffing options, from temporary placement to permanent hires.
- Access to a large, qualified, pre-tested candidate pool.
- Active engagement to help our clients transition new talent into their culture.

Since we are a technology company at heart, with more than 30 years of experience, we understand the technology needs of our clients and the means to successfully enhance manpower in rapidly evolving work environments. Our placements are adept at taking control of demanding technical projects and seeing them through to successful conclusions. In this way, the risk of bad hires and the complexities of difficult terminations are reduced.

We also provide a more dynamic means of employment than a traditional hiring process. In the case of highly specialized niche skills, for example, we can provide the right person on a temporary or intermittent basis, giving you the ability to scale your workforce according to technical requirements or overall workload. This also helps to lower costs by avoiding full-time benefit costs for short-term needs.

The hallmark of the new digital enterprise is the ability to shift from a rigid, inflexible data environment to a lean, dynamic entity that can quickly capitalize on emerging market opportunities while keeping costs to a minimum. Achieving this level of performance on the infrastructure side, however, will only produce marginal results if the workforce remains locked in the past.

Going forward, enterprises of all types must drive efficiency throughout their organizational structure in order to maintain profitability in an increasingly competitive business landscape. The cost of human labor is usually the single biggest line item in the budget, which means that inefficiency in the labor pool is one of the chief factors in a failing business model.

By offloading staffing requirements to a third-party like CBTS, organizations will find that they gain access to better, more focused talent at less cost and in a flexible manner that more closely matches the demands of the business.



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