Are you building cloud skills for the future?

Business plans should have a long-term strategy for addressing the cloud talent drought

Cloud adoption continues at a pace as enterprises seek out agility and new revenue streams. But what happens after the migration? Enterprises must have a long-term plan to have cloud expertise embedded across all aspects of the business to address the crippling skills shortage – because it will only get worse.

The issue is that every business, organization, and start-up is moving to the cloud. However, there isn't enough expertise to go around. The stark truth is that without cloud talent, cloud will not deliver on its business promises.

You can't hire your way out of the cloud skills shortage

To compete, enterprises need to innovate with software. But the skills shortage is putting the brakes on many. Access to modern application development skills is now the most significant pain point for one in five organizations in Europe, according to IDC. In addition, 20% "strongly agree that the skills drought is delaying digital transformation journeys".

The only way out of this drought is for enterprises to grow their own talent pools. This means investing in training internal staff during, and after cloud migration. They must build extensive upskilling programs and consider using experienced partners to accelerate development. It is vital to take action because the challenge is systemic, and the issue isn't going away.
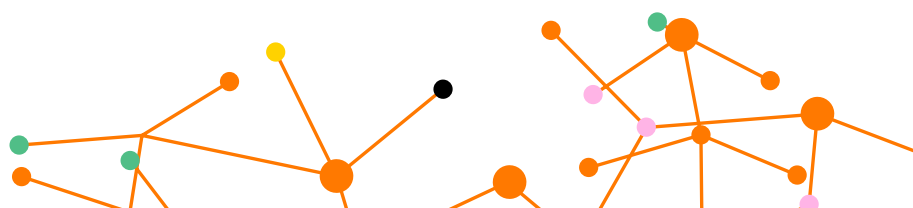
Enterprises undergoing a digital transformation will have experienced teams that may be phased out. These teams should be re-trained as a priority. As well as ensuring the enterprise has the required skills beyond cloud migration shows that management is willing to invest in professional development. This will also help retain staff going forward.

Unlocking your potential in the cloud

The best way for an enterprise to future-proof its cloud strategy and skillset long-term is to put in place a center of excellence program that will enable and empower its business. It will allow you to tap into the benefits of evolving cloud technologies and cloud-native apps, including:

- High performance and rapid deployment
- Advanced data security and compliance capabilities
- Enhanced internal and external collaboration
- Decreased latency using cloud-native applications and edge computing, bringing applications closer to data sources

Most enterprises want to be at least partially self-sufficient moving forward in their cloud operations, but they need knowledge transfer to empower their workforce to develop critical cloud skills. This is where an experienced partner can help you with strategic workforce planning for cloud environments. Even after developing a skills enablement plan, some enterprises may wish to continue working with their chosen partner on co-development projects for the cloud.

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Building cloud skills development: train, enable, and empower

At Orange Business Services, we take a three-phase approach to cloud skills enablement built around a continuous twelve-month engagement.

Train: Orange Business Service consultants take the lead, focusing on knowledge and best practice transfer. To optimize the cloud, technical teams need to understand new and emerging technologies and also how to initiate FinOps and DevOps programs, for example.

Enable: our consultants work side by side with customer teams, who have gained enough knowledge and experience to be productive in cloud environments. This phase includes collaborating on co-development projects to instigate cloud projects that align with business outcomes.

Empower: the final phase sees the customer empowered to plan their long-term journey in the cloud with the skillset to support their business ambitions.

Individual customer requirements drive our enablement and empowerment program. We determine where you are on the cloud maturity scale, assess where you want to get to, and work out the most efficient journey. We help define the team, training, and resources required to get there.

Our experts cover data and analytics, application development, DevOps, cloud architects, and project management. They deliver a mix of coaching, workshops, training and strategy modules, and business alignment courses.

Five steps to ensuring cloud skills don't dry up

Even with the best cloud transformation plan, it will not deliver the business outcomes you expect if you don't have the skills to implement it. To ensure that cloud skills can keep pace with your cloud ambitions and you can manage your journey effectively, you should consider the following:

1 **Form a center of excellence for cloud skills.** This can be a focal point for training initiatives and best practices. A place to develop cloud skills and understand the potential hurdles that a lack of specific skills may create. These can then be rapidly addressed and enable you to grow cloud skills parallel with evolving cloud technologies.

2 **Make sure you have defined future skills needs based on your business strategy.** Link this to workforce planning and business development plans.

3 **Use data to create benchmarks** to help you understand your skills gaps and if you have the right plans to fill them. Measure your progress and continuously analyze data to ensure that your in-house skills are flexible enough to address market changes.

4 **Provide plenty of opportunities for employees to upskill and reskill** and deliver appropriate training that is simple to undertake.

5 **Finally, invest for the long haul.** Enabling and empowering your cloud workforce requires commitment in terms of budget and time. Change won't happen overnight, but you will harvest the rewards down the line.

In a world that increasingly depends on the growth of the digital economy, reskilling is a straightforward way forward. One that will better prepare enterprises for what is around the corner.

Why choose Orange Business Services as a trusted partner to drive cloud value

Wherever you are on the cloud maturity scale, Orange Business Services can help you train, enable and empower your cloud teams to be self-sufficient, reducing time to market and driving innovation. This is done by embedding new skills, processes, and mindsets with domain experts via pick and mix modules.

Set up a center of excellence (CCoE)

We work with customers to set up a CCoE or competency center to establish and promote best practices, provide support and education, and lead the way in adopting new tools and technologies.

Coaching and training

Our team of experts can provide coaching and training in several critical areas, including best practices, code assessment, joint prototyping to increase speed to market, agile development, and risk management.

Resource training strategy

We can help you discover your cloud skills gaps and set up an ongoing initiative to train staff long-term. We can help you enable and empower your cloud skills as part of your overarching business roadmap, ensuring you have the resources to deliver on business outcomes.

Drive innovation

Innovation is central to the growth of any digitally enabled company. We can help you expand your innovation capabilities through artificial intelligence (AI) driven solutions and external expeditions with our Silicon Valley Incubation Team.

Align data to business goals

We can help you align your data strategy to your business goals to provide valuable insights for business growth. Without a robust data strategy in the cloud, you can end up working with unreliable forecasts, resulting in unsound decision-making and missed revenue goals.

Orange Business Services expertise

- 15 years of experience operating private, public, and pan-European sovereign clouds
- 8,500 experts worldwide to manage your digital transformation
- Specific tools and technicians skilled in connectivity, multicloud networking, and security
- 160 countries with local sales and support
- 24 x 7 cloud support via five major service centers across the globe
- Business practices with in-depth knowledge of big data and analytics, AI, ML, IoT

- Extensive experience in designing, building, and running digital infrastructure and cloud solutions
- Orange helps develop European standards, including GAIA-X and the European Commission's High-Level Expert Group (HLEG) on AI
- Orange Business Services is an AWS Advanced Consulting Partner with the AWS Direct Connect Service Delivery and the capacity to address AWS cloud transformation needs on a global scale

We provide a modular approach to managing your multicloud estate, so you choose the services most relevant to your business needs. We can integrate, operate and support your cloud applications 24/7. To find more about how we can help you get more value from your cloud estate, contact us here **https://www.orange-business.com/en/any-request**

1. IDC: The Cloud Skills Shortage in Europe

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