



The future of IT in the Public Sector



A new focus on organizational change management will help IT workers keep up with a rapidly evolving technology landscape.

Don't get left behind

Our Future of IT survey found that with the pace of digital transformation accelerating during the pandemic, Public Sector IT workers risk being left behind if they don't develop new skills. The sector's practice of once-in-a-generation tech upgrades means that many workers have an outdated knowledge base.

Given this unprecedented rate of technical change, 64% of respondents indicated that they will face significant pressure to develop new skills in the next three to five years. Approximately 70% of Public Sector IT workers said digital transformation would also increase demands on their existing skill sets.

That's set to slow down the sector's digital transformation just as IT leaders will be making the case to policymakers and funders to include key advances – such as case management solutions, the internet of things (IoT), business process management, and smart cities technologies – in budgets. New policy and legal frameworks will mean data security and data privacy will also be cumbersome components of any tech upgrades.



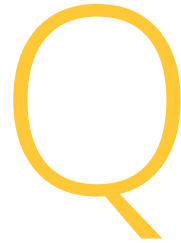
New skills are needed fast

IT workers in the Public Sector have been using outdated databases and systems for years – and that means technology modernization requires IT teams to swiftly adapt their skill sets.

Not all teams are able to keep up. As one CIO reports, the sector will likely rely on contractors or consultants to help bridge tech transitions in the future. “We’re having some growing pains and having to contract with outside help to bring in skill sets because my staff are not learning fast enough,” he said.

Digital and computational skills, problem solving, and emotional and social skills will all gain in importance in the sector. These competencies will help mitigate future challenges, including those arising in internal and cross-agency data migration and the integration of new tech with legacy systems.





A new importance on quick adoption

In the future, Public Sector IT leaders should prioritize implementing technologies that are easier for their teams to adopt. Tech that supports compliance, assists with change management, and simplifies legacy systems will achieve better outcomes for tech teams, stakeholders, and the public.

Which competencies are important to you now, and which will be most important to you in two years' time?

Digital & computational



Problem solving



Emotional and social



■ Currently
■ In two years

Budgets and regulations will cause challenges

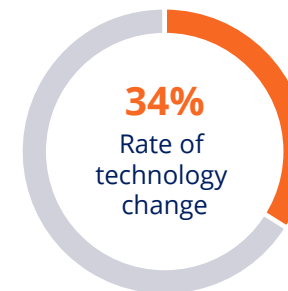
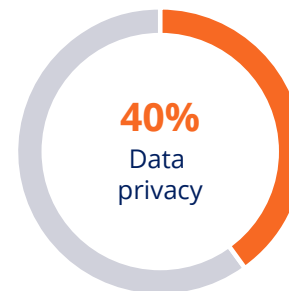
However, two of the biggest issues for Public Sector IT leaders are lobbying for bigger budgets and navigating regulations. That won't change in the future. Data security and data privacy will be major focuses for the sector as government agencies try to keep ahead of policy changes.

It may become even harder for IT executives to get policymakers to understand the different budgetary mechanisms required for innovations like managed services, subscription software, or the cloud. "Policymakers don't understand that the cloud means a significant increase in operational cost," the same CIO said. "Every budget cycle, I keep getting offered capital dollars and they keep trying to cut my operational funding."

IT leaders will continue to struggle with the mismatch created by the rapid rate of technology change and slow government funding cycles. "I have to budget 32 months in advance," said one CIO who works for a state agency. "There are technologies that I would be using that don't even exist at the time I create my budget."



What are the biggest challenges for your IT function?



Tech that simplifies complexity is crucial

Given the data privacy legislation with which the Public Sector must comply, it's not surprising that cyber security will be the sector's top priority in the future. The cloud is a close second, as the Public Sector looks to find savings, share information across agencies, and utilize open data for added citizen engagement.

Real-time data will round out the top three priorities for this sector and will drive significant change as the Public Sector uses customer management software, IoT analytics, and enterprise risk management to improve service for all stakeholders and create more data transparency for policymakers.

While all of these innovations are designed to simplify systems, implementation is not necessarily straightforward. It's critical that IT leaders choose software that is easily customized to their sector and simple to adopt so that their teams don't fall behind.

The bottom line

To succeed, IT leaders in the Public Sector will have to take the lead on organizational change management for their teams and other stakeholders. They should choose tech from providers who have deep experience in the Public Sector and are focused on easy deployment to help IT workers and organizations transition more quickly to the digital era.

Survey scope and methodology

To understand how IT managers and leaders' roles are being shaped in response to digital transformation, we surveyed IT senior vice presidents, vice presidents, senior directors, directors, senior managers, and managers across key sectors.

For more on The Future of IT and our research methodology, go to pega.com/futureofit



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