



WORKFORCE & HUMAN CAPITAL FOR IT COMMITTEE

UPDATE 2002

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February 2003

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“...good software processes and good technology are important ingredients for success; but the most important ingredient of all is the people.”

-- Edward Yourdon, software engineer and author of 25 computer books.¹

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

For the past several years, the Federal Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council’s Workforce and Human Capital for Information Technology (IT) Committee has addressed the Federal Government’s ongoing demand for highly skilled IT workers. The Committee is the Government’s key advocate for strategies to recruit, develop and maintain an effective Federal IT workforce. The Committee’s broad agenda encompasses the full employment life cycle: workforce planning, recruitment and retention, and career development.

As the Council’s committee structure was reformed with the advent of E-Government initiatives, the Committee’s importance has not only been sustained, but also increased. In a December 16, 2002, memorandum to CIOs, Council Vice-Chair Karen Evans confirmed this, stating that as the Council engages in corporate management of IT resources, with a Government-wide enterprise approach to projects, it must also ensure that the IT workforce is well-versed in project management and trained to execute such projects with minimum risk.

The Council’s immediate focus is on today’s critical workforce needs: project managers, solution architects, and security specialists. However, the potential for severe shortages across the spectrum of IT competencies looms in the future as a result of an aging workforce, limited recruitment at entry levels, and the eventual resurgence of the U.S. economy. Today’s low turnover rates and plentitude of applicants may be deceptive. The crisis is merely postponed, not averted. This temporary relief from an IT workforce crisis is a window of opportunity. It provides time to put into place practices that will enable CIOs not only to prevent chronic skill gaps, but also to create the highly skilled workforce needed in the future.

Update 2002

This report, commissioned by the Committee in the fall of 2002, is intended to describe not just the actions the committee has taken, but also their impact. Over the past three-plus years, the Workforce Committee has implemented most of the recommendations in its June 1999 report, “Meeting the Federal IT Workforce Challenge.” This update

¹ Edward Yourdon, *Death March: A Complete Software Developer’s Guide to Surviving “Mission Impossible” Projects*, (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall PTR, 1999), p. 124

