

Five Technology Priorities for Government Leaders

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Successful policy and program delivery relies on understanding technology and how to best work with technologists at your agency. The following tips will help you—as a senior leader in government—navigate challenges in five key areas so you can more effectively use technology to advance your agency's mission.



1. TALENT

Priority

Most federal agencies face challenges in recruiting, hiring and retaining skilled technical talent to manage and develop technology solutions. In addition to hiring new technical staff, it's important for agencies to invest in training and empowering existing staff to best utilize modern technical systems to improve government service delivery.

Actions

Work with your chief human capital officer to:

- Reduce how long it takes to hire someone at your agency.
 - Take full advantage of the different hiring authorities and flexibilities available to help with hiring.
 - Create the most positive hiring experience possible for job applicants and include a robust onboarding process.
 - Partner with OPM and use the Subject Matter Expert Qualification Assessments ([SME-QA](#)) process to improve hiring outcomes.
 - Partner with existing tech talent programs, such as the [U.S. Digital Corps](#) or the [Public Interest Technology University Network](#).
- Work with your chief information officer or chief human capital officer, or both, to expand training on technology and digital services for your staff, and empower teams experienced in modern digital services to use best-in-class tools.
- Collaborate across your agency to bring technology and other subject matter experts deeper into your agency's hiring process.

Links to Resources

- ["Technologists wanted" – Consumer Financial Protection Bureau](#)
- ["Join the DHS CX Team" – Department of Homeland Security](#)
- ["Building a Federal Tech Workforce" – General Services Administration](#)
- ["Tech Talent for 21st Century Government" – Partnership for Public Service and Tech Talent Project](#)
- ["Federal Tech Workforce Data" – Tech Talent Project](#)



2. CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Priority

Customer experience is the sum of all experiences a customer has with your organization, from in line to online. Improving that experience involves centering your organization's strategy, governance and culture around the customer experience, in accordance with the presidential [executive order](#).

Actions

- Work with the leaders responsible for your agency's customer-facing business operations to involve customers when designing new policies and services.
- Set an expectation across the agency to update customer touchpoints frequently and reduce administrative burdens.
- Work with business leads to develop customer experience metrics to inform decision-making.
- Ask service designers to create journey maps for each key service offered, to understand your customers' experiences.

Links to Resources

- ["Key Questions Agency Leaders Can Ask About Customer Experience" – Tech Talent Project](#)
- ["Customer Experience Toolkit" – General Services Administration](#)
- ["Customer Experience Resources and Guides" – Department of Homeland Security](#)
- ["Journey Mapping" – General Services Administration](#)
- [Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government](#)
- ["Government For the People: Designing for Equitable and Trusted Customer Experiences" – Partnership for Public Service](#)
- ["Leading with Experience: A Framework for Customer-Focused Leadership in Government" – Partnership for Public Service](#)
- ["How to Start a Burden Reduction Initiative" – Department of Homeland Security](#)



3. CYBERSECURITY

Priority

Cybersecurity is “the art of protecting networks, devices, and data from unauthorized access or criminal use; and the practice of ensuring confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information.” ([CISA](#))

Actions

Meet with your chief information security officer to discuss:

- Empowering and expanding your agency’s in-house cybersecurity workforce e.g., providing autonomy and professional development for team members.
- Your agency’s latest cybersecurity audit.
- Reducing the number of critical vulnerabilities in agency systems.
- Testing the agency’s incident response plan.
- Your role in supporting cybersecurity at your agency.

Links to Resources

- [“Cyber Resource Hub” – Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency](#)
- [“Cyber In-Security: Strengthening the Federal Cybersecurity Workforce” – Partnership for Public Service](#)
- [“Cyber In-Security II: Closing the Federal Talent Gap” – Partnership for Public Service](#)



4. LEGACY TECHNOLOGY

Priority

Legacy technology is technology that has become outdated or obsolete due to improvements in the capability, capacity or security of technology that have not yet been incorporated into a technology system. This often occurs when technology is no longer supported by the original vendor, or when complex software systems have not been updated or invested in for many years. Legacy technology poses a threat to successful delivery of services and achieving mission outcomes.

Actions

Work with your chief information officer to:

- Understand the different risk levels of different legacy systems.
- Review the legacy status of your agency's technology infrastructure.
- Understand the operational impacts of legacy infrastructure.
- Develop organizational capabilities to support otherwise unsupported systems e.g., systems that do not have anyone performing routine maintenance, managing updates, or owning system updates and developments.
- Prioritize which legacy systems need to be updated or replaced soonest.

Links to Resources

- [Congressional Testimonies from the Federal Chief Information Officer, the Administrator of the United States Digital Service, and the Director of Technology Transformation Services](#)



5. ACQUISITION AND PROCUREMENT

Priority	<p>The federal government spends over \$60 billion annually on information technology¹, with the vast majority of that used to bring in technologies and services from vendors. The procurement process, which includes determining requirements and selecting a vendor, has a large impact on the delivery of government digital services. Agencies need to adopt best practices on how to procure digital services and technology, including process improvements, training and knowledge building among government procurement professionals, and budgeting for iterative technology development.</p>
Actions	<p>Work with your chief procurement officer, senior procurement executive and chief information officer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the number of contracting professionals that have enrolled in Digital IT Acquisition Professional Training. • Set ambitious targets for rapid procurement cycles of “modular contracts” for technology. • Cap the budget on large-scale tech procurements to encourage modular, smaller procurements. • Develop processes for technical staff to evaluate the capabilities of vendors in procurement reviews.
Links to Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “TechFARHub. Resources for digital service acquisition” – US Digital Service • Digital IT Acquisition Professional Training • The Office of Federal Procurement Policy

¹ https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/ap_16_it_fy2023.pdf