Cloud Transition Task Force

Meeting Minutes
August 17, 2021, 10:00 – 12:00 Noon
(approved 9/7/2021)

Members attending:

Bill Kehoe	**Cindy Guertin-Anderson**
Vinod Brahmapuram	**Rose Feliciano**
Michael Mattmiller	**Sandra Toussiant**
Camille Kruger (did not attend)	***Staff:***
Debbie LaCroix	***Sue Langen***
Omid Ghaffari-Tabrizi	***Derek Puckett***
Grant Rodeheaver	***Sheri Sawyer***
Franklin Plaistowe	***Jill Satran***

Attending but not on the list:

- Gina Comeau
- Angie Hogenson
- Lewis McMurran
- Craig Keating
- Mark Quimby

1. **Welcome and introductory comments** – Bill Kehoe

   Approval of minutes - Minutes were approved as written. The adopted minutes will be posted to the task force website.

2. **Overview of Impacts to Workforce issues**

   Jill Satran provided an overview of the agenda. Today's meeting will focus on impacts on the workforce. **Retraining** and **Delivery** will be discussed in later task force meetings. Today's meeting is to identify issues, identify gaps and opportunities, and to develop potential findings and recommendations.

   A draft issue paper has been distributed to stimulate discussion. Four issue areas have been identified to date:

   Defining the roadmap – What does the future look like?

   Worker retention – How will we retain the state IT workforce?

   Retraining – How do we retrain the state IT workforce to match the state's needs.

   Classification and Compensation – Will there need to be changes to the current ITPS?

3. **Anticipated Workforce Impacts of the State Cloud Strategy**
   (Presenter: Sue Langen)

State government already has projects moving to cloud technology from on-premises services. For example, several agencies have moved to Salesforce. Other agencies are moving smaller applications to the cloud.

The current cloud strategy used a five-year window for migration. There will be some systems that remain on-premises for many reasons. The change will be gradual, but thoughtfully planned.

It is very different managing technology on premises rather than in the cloud. Skill sets will need to shift. There will be an increased need for new skill sets such as cloud architecture, data and analytics support, cloud operations, process automation, XaaS platform support, security, and vendor and SLA management.

Demand for some skill sets will reduce (e.g., as physical server management, on premise storage, traditional application management, and mainframe-based technology and programming.)

Bill Kehoe noted we need to ensure we talk about the application side of the work. There is still programming required when moving to the cloud. That work might not be on-premises but the integration with back-end systems will be critical to include in the task force's analysis. There will still be a need to develop microservices, APIs, etc.

Michael Mattmiller noted that not all cloud installations are the same. Some applications will look like they do today and others will require a full modernization project. There will be nuances to how we manage what we do today. But others will look different depending on the progression we choose.

Sue Langen noted two additional questions to consider:

- How do these new skill sets match to the classification system?

- How do we manage the tension between running the current operations on premises and moving to a cloud environment? Agencies will need to determine their pace of transition. Each agency will need to do an assessment that will help them to be strategic and purposeful in the types of training they will need. This includes the need for "just in time" training.

Vinod Brahmanpuram added that if we are planning to move to the cloud then we need to have an inventory of the skills we will need and identify how we can train staff. These skills are completely different. Need to understand what the agencies' appetite is for change to cloud computing.

4. **Workforce Planning**
   (Presenters: Angie Hogenson, Franklin Plaistowe, Gina Comeau)

Franklin laid out workforce planning four objectives:

- Define the elements that are needed to create a successfully equipped workforce to support a cloud environment.

- Determine what skills, abilities and competencies will be needed for IT staff successful in the transition to cloud computing.

- Identify the skills that are needed to support new cloud platforms and find ways to bridge the gap between the current and future state.

- Identify resources needed to make the transition (e.g., budget, trainings and certifications, existing capacity and capabilities to support the transition.)

Angie reviewed workforce planning principles, insights and results that can be used as a framework to achieve objectives. From a human resources (HR) perspective, a workforce plan must be in alignment with statutes, policies and collective bargaining agreements.

Gina discussed the need to prepare existing employees to embrace the change through a transition framework. The following resources will need to be available to make needed changes.

- State Human Resources (Labor Relations, ITPS Governance Committee, Enterprise Classification and Compensation)

- Department of Enterprise Services (Workforce Growth and Development)

- Office of the Chief Information Officer (Manage and Inform)

Bill Kehoe noted that targeted and progressive training will be critical to success. The movement is iterative so training cannot happen all at once. And the impacts will differ for each agency as their migration path will be different.

Franklin responded to a question about whether there is a repository on skill sets and progressive planning? That is a gap right now. The Human Resources Management System (HRMS) has the opportunity to track this information. There are education fields but they are not fully used or used consistently across agencies. The data points would be difficult to tack. The central Learning Management System (LMS) can maintain training data but likely does not include all the training that is done. If you want a clean sense and view of collective training and exposure – there will need to be a more intentional outreach to get complete data.

5. **Workforce Perspectives on Impacts**
   (Presenters: Sandra Toussaint and Debbie LaCroix

The presentation was developed to provide IT workers' perspectives on the migration to cloud technologies.

- Concern that 85% of agencies report they have no plans to reorganize staff workloads to support emerging technologies.

- Discussion regarding the use of "snackable" training for certification. This type of training will be best suited for generic training rather than certification.

- Several questions were raised that will need to be addressed (what types of training will be available, who pays for training, will training be available to all staff, will small agency staff be able to get the same training as larger agencies, how will it be paid for, can we use in-training and job shadowing, etc.)

- Staff will need to be allowed to get the training they need – and currently so many agencies are understaffed that freeing up staff for training is difficult.

- Change can be very hard on staff. For example, hearing that a person's job may be eliminated is disruptive, even when there may be options to move to a new position. Staff need support through change.

Bill Kehoe noted that, as we plan a funding strategy, we have to be intentional that we resolve the haves and have nots in agencies that have money and those that do not.

> **Recommendation** – Create a central training fund and distribute it to agencies as needed – so that all sizes of agencies have access to funds.

> **Recommendation** – Establish a change management strategy to support staff through the cloud transition.

Michael stated that maybe we should stratify training based on the size of the effort. For example, lifting and shifting a server takes minimal time and skill. But putting in a large, modern system requires much more in-depth skills and will require significantly more training. We need to think in terms of small, medium, and large efforts – and ensure equity in training so we don't disadvantage any particular department or team.

Rose Feliciano noted that we need to ensure we are not overthinking things – the cloud is not "one" thing – it is a suite of different options. The suite will depend on the needs of the agency and the needs of each individual.

Lew asked what is the baseline technology skill set for all state employees and what is needed for a small agency? There is a bigger need for non-IT employees to have higher level IT skills particularly in small agencies. What are the baseline skills sets.?

Sandra Toussaint said there will be a baseline of required knowledge and skills no matter where you reside in the agencies.

> **Recommendation** – Develop a baseline IT skill level. Maybe develop a shadow program to train staff? Once baseline is met then customize it to other agencies.

Debbie LaCroix noted that those identified to continue supporting legacy systems will find it difficult to advance further because maintaining the legacy system does not allow sufficient time meet daily deadlines and get training. Downsizing takes a toll on the workgroup. If you don't have leadership who can manage the staff through feelings – it is going to lead to personnel problems (not technical changes but emotional ones).

6. Industry Trends

Presenter: Omid Ghaffari-Tabrizi

Omid provided an overview of the industry outlook.

- *The current skills will remain in demand but the tools are changing.* Some of the tasks remain the same, but the processes will differ. When new tools and concepts are introduced, the required training is usually targeted at evolving from current skills to the next. This is really about micro-learning. These skills can also be targeted to meet a defined baseline skill set.

- *The workforce will be able to adopt and adapt.* The current workforce will need to iterate what they are doing right now, use new tools to optimize what they are doing today.

- *The remaining post-migration employee profile and demographic has generally remained consistent throughout time.* Mission-driven services keep people in the government arena. Staff want to see that the work provides bigger and better rewards for them.

Micro trainings can be used for "keep me up to speed" training and for certifications. It is not just one set of training – we need to focus on retention of the employee first, rather than just training.

> **Recommendation**: Employees need to be freed up from their daily work to take advantage of training (e.g., backfilling staff during training.)

Open Discussion –

Based on this discussion, a number of possible recommendations have been identified.

- Develop a current skills inventory.

- Create a central training fund and distribute it to agencies as needed.

- Develop a baseline IT skill level.

- Ensure that the ITPS remains current as new jobs/skill sets are introduced.

- Provide ways to ensure employees have sufficient time to access available training.

- Develop a organizational change management strategy to help employees manage the change.

Bill Kehoe noted that the state is already doing work in the cloud, so it would be helpful to develop "use cases" that document those transitions (e.g., moving to Teams, M365, etc.) Use cases can help us identify lessons learned from those transitions were carried out and what could be done better. Grant Rodeheaver noted that the movement of virtual servers to AWS and Microsoft and the migration to SaaS identity management might also be good use cases.

7. Next Meeting and Wrap Up

Next meeting is on September 7. The focus will be on retraining needs.

The issue paper will be revised based on today's presentations and delivered to all of the task force members. Staff will begin developing use cases.

Bill thanked the task force members for their participation and perspectives.

Chair asked for public comment and there was none.

Meeting adjourned.