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Kyndryl Mainframe Workforce Transformation Service

The mainframe is an important part of many organizations' overall technology strategy. However, a significant percentage of platform experts have already retired, and that trend is expected to continue. Talent is key—and in the fight for talent, the mainframe hasn't always been presented as an exciting prospect for young developers. Service providers in both traditional and emerging markets are finding it hard to attract and retain the skills that they need, raising concerns over the continued availability of skilled IBM Z resources and the workforce's ability to rejuvenate.

Resource-related risks can be partly mitigated by implementing state-of-the-art tools, processes, and automation to reduce or eliminate the need for some of this knowledge; however, deep and broad mainframe skills are still required—and often in short supply.

Kyndryl™ Mainframe Workforce Transformation Service is a structured workforce management program designed to help identify, consider, and deliver your organization's specific skills needs, considering your IT resourcing strategy and delivering a tailored plan to sustain a vibrant community around your mainframe platform.

What skills are required to deliver value from your mainframe investment?

Precise requirements vary from one organization to another. Those investing in the mainframe need new skills in the latest platform capabilities, while those who are focused on simply maintaining the existing platform need to sustain the skills they already have. Having a comprehensive inventory of the skills required is the starting point for a workforce strategy, to identify potential gaps or new requirements. When assessing skills, it is useful to think broadly in terms of three platform layers: workload optimization, mainframe transformation, and infrastructure management.

Example skills requirements across mainframe layers

Workload
– Development environment
– Programming languages (COBOL, PL1 and Java, Python)
– CI/CD knowledge and tooling
– Workload characterization
– New workloads for AI, machine learning, and containers

Platform
– DevOps enablement
– Automation tooling (Red Hat® Ansible®)
– Security (RACF)
– Middleware (CICS, DB2, IMS)
– Batch scheduling
– Systems programming (JCL)
– New platform services for new workloads (open source, AIOps)

Infrastructure
– z/OS, z Linux, zVM
– Hardware, storage, network
– Data center
– New feature enablement, including encryption, compression, and Telum enablement for AI

Assessing your IT resourcing strategy

Many organizations have a well-developed IT resourcing strategy, typically setting out the IT skills and capabilities the organization needs to retain and upskill in-house, and those that can be achieved through third-party providers.

There are two key questions that must be addressed by any resource strategy:

1. **What skills and capabilities does your organization need employees to possess, not only to satisfy your in-house need for control, but also to meet legal or regulatory requirements?**

    With the increasing demand for organizations to show regulators that they are in control, the importance of deep skills in platform security, compliance, incident management, and platform management are on the rise.

2. **What skills does your organization need to optimize IT investments and deliver value for your customers?**

    The value here comes from the applications that serve internal and external customers, so skills that gain increased speed-to-market by transforming applications are often a major priority. We also see organizations building agile and DevOps capabilities around the mainframe to increase the speed with which they are able to address business requirements and developer needs.

Once you've identified your mainframe skills requirements, the next consideration is where those skills should be located. Many organizations prefer the security of a thin but complete set of skills in their home country, either through their own employees or using a co-sourced model with a strong partner.

Near-shore locations—for example, Eastern Europe or South America—are also popular, providing the opportunity to build a vibrant community of resources who will support the business for years to come, with the added benefit of lower costs. Resources located off-shore—for example, India, China, and other emerging economies—provide many of the same benefits as near-shore locations and can be effective with limited time-zone and regulatory constraints.

Kyndryl Mainframe Workforce Transformation Service

Our structured workforce management program can help identify your organization's specific skills needs, taking your IT sourcing strategy in account and delivering a tailored plan for how to sustain a vibrant community around your mainframe.

We have experience running more mainframes than any organization on the planet and have more than 8,500 experts in our mainframe practice. Simply put, we have worked hard to develop and sustain our mainframe workforce and bring this knowledge and breadth of experience to each of our engagements.

Step 1

What we do
- Assess your current platform, tooling, and environment
- Consider your future planned workloads

What we deliver
- An analysis of the required skill sets, including the capacity and capability levels you need for each of the skill sets in each layer of the platform

Step 2

What we do
- Assess the current workforce and compare to the outputs from Step 1

What we deliver
- An assessment of the likely attrition related to retirement
- A gap analysis, showing the skill sets that are missing and how that will change over time

Step 3

What we do
- Define career paths and map them to your HR policies
- Develop a resource plan based on your preferences

What we deliver
- A structured plan to ensure a vibrant mainframe team in the coming years
- Career paths for the mainframe community

Step 4

Review and finalization of the mainframe workforce strategy. Depending on your requirements, Kyndryl can help you with:

- Recruitment
- Structured training and development for early professional hires
- Resource provisioning to fill gaps, provision of entire squads, or outsourcing tasks

Why Kyndryl?

Kyndryl has deep expertise in designing, running, and managing the most modern, efficient, and reliable technology infrastructure that the world depends on every day. We are deeply committed to advancing the critical infrastructure that powers human progress. We're building on our foundation of excellence by creating systems in new ways: bringing in the right partners, investing in our business, and working side-by-side with our customers to unlock potential.

Kyndryl Mainframe Workforce Transformation Service delivers a comprehensive, actionable plan for your mainframe workforce, with clear recommendations on which skills you should retain in-house, which ones you should focus on growing, and which skills are good candidates for sourcing from partners. It is designed to provide clarity on career paths from operations through systems programing, architecture, and application development. Finally, it delivers a comprehensive recruitment and training plan that includes recommended on-the-job training and mentoring to help you keep your mainframe workforce fresh, vibrant, and capable of meeting business IT challenges for years to come.

For more information

To learn more about Kyndryl Mainframe Workforce Transformation Service, please contact your Kyndryl representative or Kyndryl Business Partner, or visit kyndryl.com/us/en/consult

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