



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NACo CTAC (County Technology Advisory Council) is developing layman's guides for county elected officials, as well as other county executive leadership to help raise awareness and understanding of the technology that is needed to support county essential functions. The guides will further provide education in the innovative uses of technology to take the county beyond the essentials and improve the delivery of citizen services and programs.

Each guide will include an executive summary and then will focus on a series of questions to ask that will include the risk or missed opportunity if not implemented. Guides identified include the following, with this guide focusing on Workforce Talent:

## CYBER

*Detection*

*Prevention*

*Response*



## GEOGRAPHIC TECHNOLOGIES

*Use Cases and Investment*

*Strategy*

*Policies and Data Sharing*



## WORKFORCE TALENT

*Flextime*

*Benefits*

*Career Growth*



## BUDGETING & GRANTS

*Procurement*

*Contracts*

*Grants*



## TECHNOLOGY PLANNING, INNOVATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

*Projects*

*Priorities*

*Innovation*



# TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE TALENT

## Purpose:

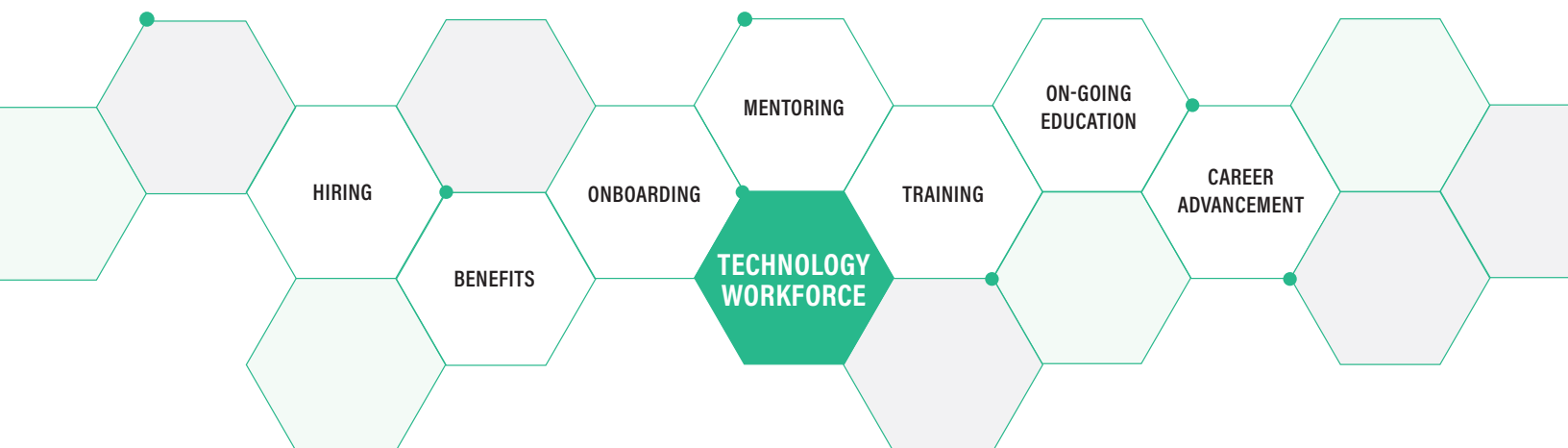
The ability for the county to recruit and retain qualified technology staff is becoming much more difficult than in past years\*. The challenges range from competitive pay to benefits including flexible schedules and remote work, as well as training and career advancement opportunities. The pandemic has taught us that there is a greater desire by employees to have (and they are demanding) work/life balance. This desire is further enhanced by the employee demand for remote work. Counties are balancing implementing this innovative approach with the needs of the county and the perception of resident needs being sufficiently and expeditiously met. This new world order has other complications including providing the proper equipment for remote workers as well as ensuring security protocols, methods, and tools are in place to protect the county, the employee, and resident data. Local leaders are reminded that if employees do not get opportunities to gain experience, they will go. Consequently, this flight of technology employees puts a significant strain on the county budget, other staff, the county culture, and ultimately the fulfillment of resident needs.

Key areas in employee recruitment and retention include:

With this wide array of government technology workforce components brings great challenges. This guide aids in understanding the benefits of a strong technology workforce as well as the questions that county officials should be asking. The guide has been compiled with input from the NACo Technology Advisory Council (CTAC) and the NACo Workforce Network, as well as NACo Tech Xchange members. The next two pages are the executive summary of benefits and the top ten questions to ask concerning growing a technology workforce. As you dialogue with Human Resources, Department Directors, and most importantly, IT leadership, whether full-time with the county or outsourced, it is important to remember that nurturing the technology workforce within your county requires ongoing assessment, adjustment, and dialogue, as well as creative thinking.

On the next page are the top ten benefits of securing and maintaining a “top-notch” technology staff. This is then followed by the top ten questions for county leaders to ask of the IT lead in the county (as well as human resources).

*\*Survey Findings State and Local Workforce 2022 (slge.org)*





# Top Ten Benefits That a Strong Technology Workforce Can Bring to Your County:

## 1 LONGER RETENTION

By growing, and nurturing technology staff, turnover tends to be less. This in turn promotes longer tenures and decreases the amount of constant retraining.

## 2 SERVICE DELIVERY CONTINUITY

There is less disruption and less impact on services to county departments and residents of the county.

## 3 BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Retaining staff for longer periods of time strengthens responses when continuity situations arise.

## 4 LOWER CONTRACTOR COSTS

Your county can avoid the hidden cost of contractors (volatility). While contractors may work faster, and take less time to complete tasks and projects, they are still temporary in nature and tend to have less of a sense of ownership and their priorities may not always align.

## 5 LIMITED OVERTIME COSTS

By having sufficient and well-trained technology staff, overtime costs both within in IT and other departments can be managed at an acceptable level.

## 6 LOWER LIABILITY

A well trained (i.e., jail) and satisfied workforce lessens the chance of liabilities occurring.

## 7 JOB SATISFACTION (HIRING MANAGER)

Hire carefully, is the slogan to be followed. When you hire the right staff and provide them with the right tools and training, not only is there job satisfaction with the employee, but also with the manager. It takes a toll on the manager when positions must be constantly filled and refilled, especially in technology areas such as project management and security.

## 8 GOVERNMENT VALUE

Staff that feel valued and have opportunities to gain experience will more likely convey positive attitudes and persona; and ultimately support and share the value of government services to those around them.

## 9 SECURITY

More tenured staff are more familiar with county policies on data security, which contributes to a more secure information environment.

## 10 CREDIBILITY

When other staff and outside stakeholders see consistency in technology staff, the degree of county IT credibility is higher.





## Top Ten Workforce Questions for County Leadership

- 1** What are your recruitment and hiring practices? What resources do you use to recruit? Are you using staffing agencies and if so, what are the pros and cons? How long is the general hiring process and do you allow the manager to do additional recruiting efforts?
- 2** What are you bound by? It is important to understanding federal, state, and local legal requirements, as well as any organized union terms.
- 3** What is your screening and interview process? Is the IT manager involved in screening all applications? If not, why? Are interviews expeditious and a multi-phase approach? And are they conducted by an individual county employee or by a team or a hybrid?
- 4** What is your onboarding process? Are there onsite and in person requirements? Is the employee given ample time to orient themselves to the county practices and processes?
- 5** What is the best way to measure productivity of the IT department?
- 6** What is your telework policy? Does the county allow it partially or fully. If not, why?
- 7** What is the county culture and mission as it pertains to the IT department and staff?
- 8** Who is your county competing with? Is it higher education, private industry, other counties?
- 9** What are the county benefits? Does the county provide training and growth opportunities? How are these trainings delivered? What is the general cost? Do we have the employees sign any type of stay or "pay-back" agreement?
- 10** What are the county educational and experiential minimum qualifications for IT?



# DIG DEEPER

Phase two will include the tracks below which will contain additional questions county leaders can use in dialogue with the county IT support.

## **Track 1**

More in-depth questions for elected officials

## **Track 2**

An IT track for county GIOs, CIOs, IT Directors, outsourced GIS support

## **Track 3**

A track for county executives and administrators

## **Track 4**

A track for department directors

**For more information on the guides or on NACo Technology resources, visit**

County Tech Xchange ([naco.org](http://naco.org)), or reach out to Rita Reynolds, NACo CIO at [rreynolds@naco.org](mailto:rreynolds@naco.org)



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