Cybersecurity

5 Steps for Improving Cyber Workforce Management

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There is an urgent need for a skilled cybersecurity workforce. However, the challenges implicit in ensuring a strong cybersecurity workforce are not easy to resolve. To ensure mission success and reduce cybersecurity risks, federal agencies must analyze, document, measure, and track their cybersecurity workforce. Agencies will be able to meet their current and future cyber needs and reduce risk through a systematic, repeatable process that generates valid and reliable information about their cybersecurity workforce.

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Below are five recommended steps an agency can follow to improve its cyber workforce management:

Align your workforce, including your executives, to your cyber requirements. Clearly determine your cyber functions, and identify specific skills you need to accomplish those functions.

Crosswalk your cyber workforce needs to the National Cyber Workforce Framework (NCWF). The NCWF enables you to categorize the roles, competencies, and skills you need. With this information, you can determine how best to document your cyber jobs and identify methods for assessing cyber competencies during recruitment or for improving the skills of on-board cyber workers.

Code each cyber position into your human resources or payroll system. This information is essential for tracking cyber vacancies and workers, and without this coding, you will be in the dark on key workforce management issues.

Mine and scrutinize your human resources/payroll systems for data insights on the cyber workforce. On a regular basis, obtain workforce reports to monitor cyber worker attrition, assess how long cyber positions are vacant, and evaluate the influence of compensation and other benefits on attraction and retention of cyber workers. Churn in the highly competitive cyber workforce produces a high level of risk to cyber operations.

Create targeted human resource strategies to manage cyber workers in a highly competitive market. Using data insights, identify specific human resources interventions—such as recruitment and retention bonuses or student loan repayment—to attract and retain cyber workers. Consider specialized hiring authorities, such as direct hire. Pinpoint the best recruitment sources, and ensure your cyber jobs are known to potential applicants from those sources.