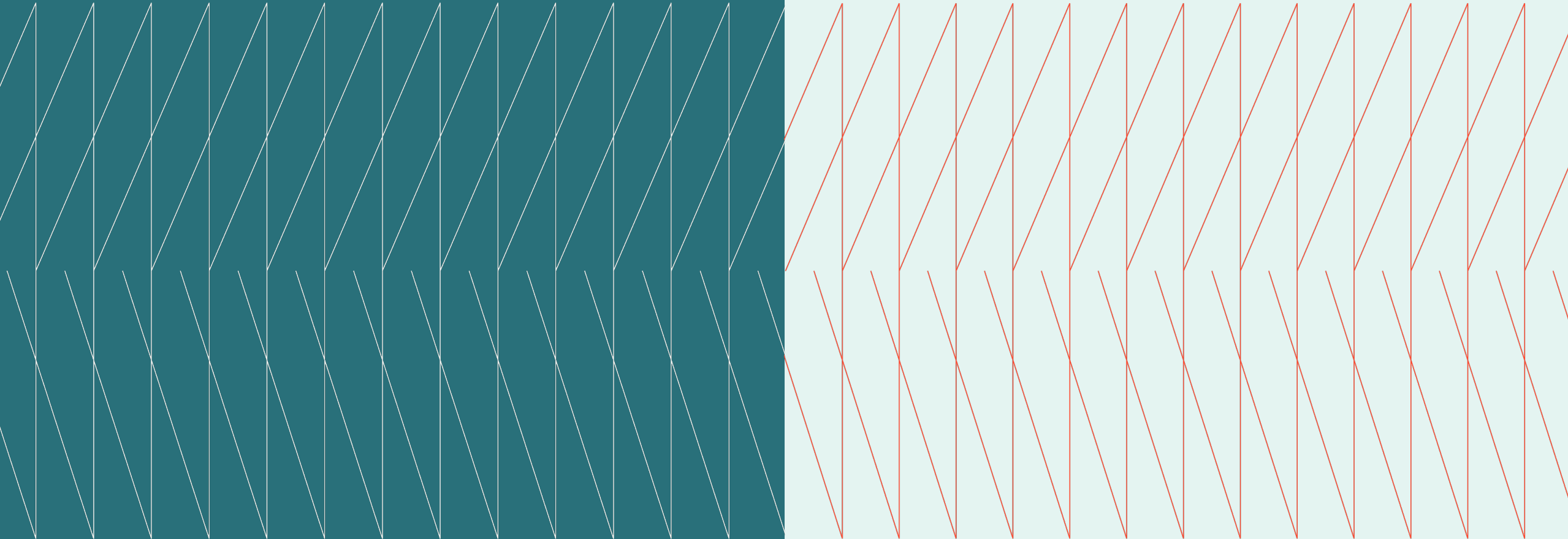


Government CIO

# Expert Exchange

Executive Summary  
March 4, 2026





# Overview

In this Expert Exchange session, several CIOs convened to discuss various topics including transitioning artificial intelligence from proof of concept to production, establishing effective governance and data classification policies, cultivating a modern and adaptable workforce, and balancing infrastructure modernization strategies against existing operational costs. The agenda was created based on advanced interviews with participants.

# Host(s)

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# Key topics

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# Transitioning AI from proof of concept into production

- Executives agreed that deploying artificial intelligence solutions delivers substantial operational efficiencies; however, they emphasized the importance of matching the right type of technology to the appropriate business cases to control overall costs.
- One official shared a successful deployment involving automated document redaction that processed backlogged case files to meet a strict judiciary mandate. This innovation resulted in thousands of saved labor hours and significant improvements in quality. Participants praised this approach because it maintained human oversight for final determinations, applying human intelligence where it remained most valuable.

- Participants noted differing perspectives on the financial viability of complex, purpose-built automated agents, such as those used for environmental water permitting. While off-the-shelf productivity tools see widespread adoption, custom-built solutions require substantial financial investment and consulting partnerships, prompting leaders to carefully scrutinize the return on investment before proceeding.
- Exploring advanced use cases, leaders debated the merits of using one artificial intelligence model to review the software code outputs of another. A participant highlighted a successful university project where three distinct models evaluated student essays, ultimately breaking ties and producing superior, more consistent results than human reviewers.

- A government official highlighted the utility of artificial intelligence in software testing, noting that automating manual test scripts for enterprise resource planning upgrades demonstrated clear business value. By running automated scripts through isolated testing containers, the organization proved the technology's effectiveness and generated wider enthusiasm for future self-service applications.

**“When we look at use cases like automated document redaction saving thousands of hours of human effort, that is the type of progress to get excited about because the technology is moving faster and doing better work.”**

**— Government CIO Expert Exchange Participant**

**Bridge the gap between AI, experimentation and execution with Kyndryl's 90-Day Agentic AI Roadmap**

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# Implementing governance and data security policies

- Organizations are prioritizing simple, readable technology policies and foundational data classification models to securely enable innovation rather than strictly forbidding the use of new tools.
- Executives widely agreed that establishing a rigid, overly complex governance framework stifles technological progress. One leader detailed a risk-based approach featuring a technology registry, allowing advisory groups to review proposed use cases quickly to prevent duplicative efforts across departments.

- A diverging view emerged regarding the chronological order of implementing security policies. One official argued that organizations must overcome internal resistance and first establish foundational data classification before rolling out broad technology access. This prerequisite ensures employees understand how to handle restricted, confidential, internal and public data appropriately.

- Legal departments frequently express apprehension regarding institutional liability and public records laws when deploying automated assessment tools for public infrastructure. To alleviate these concerns, executives shared strategies centered on robust, mandatory employee training programs that clearly define acceptable use and mandate comprehension checks prior to granting software licenses.

**“If all we do is step in and lock things down, people will just find a way around it; instead, we must educate them to operate safely and responsibly.”**

– Government CIO Expert Exchange Participant

How AI sees more clearly with policy as code

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# Cultivating an adaptable technology workforce

- Addressing employee resistance to learning new technologies requires a blend of hands-on project assignments, peer-led innovation groups, and formal integration into employee performance reviews.
- Several executives voiced frustration over a pervasive legacy mindset among existing technology staff, noting that employees often fail to utilize provided educational resources for modern systems. Participants recognized this reluctance as a significant barrier to organizational modernization and sought collaborative strategies to incentivize self-guided learning amidst heavy daily workloads.

- To counter training fatigue, one leader recommended abandoning theoretical coursework in favor of assigning practical, hands-on projects. By forcing staff to deploy advanced tools to solve real-world problems, such as predicting behavioral patterns in public transit systems, employees recognized the immediate value and tangible impact of their learning.

- Participants highlighted the success of grassroots initiatives, noting that employee-led analytics groups and internal innovation hubs naturally drum up excitement and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. Building on this momentum, another executive advised making continuous learning a mandatory, tracked objective within annual performance reviews to enforce dedicated development time and hold management accountable.

**“Academic learning is valuable, but employees truly internalize these new capabilities when you assign them real business problems that require advanced technology to solve.”**

**– Government CIO Expert Exchange Participant**

# Balancing infrastructure modernization strategies

- Moving infrastructure off-premise offers significant operational relief for overworked staff, though leaders must strategically right-size their environments to avoid exorbitant, unchecked expenses.

- Maintaining legacy infrastructure requires heavy administrative effort, resulting in substantial staff overtime to manage routine security updates and system maintenance. Executives are aligned on the necessity of moving toward modernized hosting to alleviate these operational burdens and restore work-life balance for infrastructure teams.

- Despite the operational benefits, leaders expressed shared anxieties regarding the high costs associated with external hosting providers. A participant cautioned against traditional transfer methods that merely shift oversized legacy servers to external hosts, which wastes capacity and drives up monthly billing for fractional usage.

- To combat rising vendor costs for internal hardware, executives recommended migrating non-production environments and deep storage archives to highly economical, off-premise tiers. By strategically placing rarely accessed data in the most cost-effective storage available, organizations can significantly optimize their technology expenditures while retaining essential disaster recovery capabilities.

**“Entering into an external infrastructure agreement is like an expensive marriage, and extracting yourself from it can be an equally expensive divorce.”**

— Government CIO Expert Exchange Participant

See how organizations are approaching modernization in the [Kyndryl Readiness Report](#)

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