

Proactive Workforce Education Program: Foundational Training for Responsible AI Adoption for the County of San Diego

The Board of Supervisors directed the development of a workforce education and training plan on AI literacy and ethical use. This Workforce Education and Training Plan highlights the County Technology Office's (CTO) comprehensive and proactive steps underway through the initial pilot adoption program for new Generative AI (GenAI) tools. This initiative serves as a foundational element and practical demonstration of our commitment to responsibly integrate AI technologies and ensure our workforce is skilled, supported, and aware of ethical considerations.

Key Components of the Training Program

Structured Learning Pathway

Our approach focuses on building competency, not just deploying tools. Training begins with foundational knowledge – understanding what AI assistants are, their purpose in boosting productivity and creativity, and how to access and interact with them effectively. It progresses to practical skills, emphasizing effective prompting techniques (crucial for obtaining useful results from GenAI) and application-specific integration across common workplace software suites. The understanding of how to use a prompt to focus on the outcome is key and will need to be part of the training. This follows a deliberate schedule post-launch to reinforce learning over time.

Continuous and Comprehensive Training Content

We cover essential areas including understanding the capabilities and inherent limitations of current AI tools, integrating AI suggestions responsibly (emphasizing human review, critical thinking, and refinement), collaborating using AI-assisted features, and understanding data privacy implications within our County environment. Specific user guides and dedicated sessions address these topics directly. Training on AI will need to be continuous as things evolve and continue to change.

Multi-Modal Delivery

Recognizing diverse learning styles, we utilize a blend of methods:

- **Expert-Led Sessions:** Delivering live training provides interactive learning and immediate Q&A opportunities on these new technologies.
- **Self-Service Resources:** A dedicated "AI Success Center" acts as a central digital hub for user guides, FAQs, prompt examples, best practices, and recorded training sessions, ensuring on-demand access to information for these GenAI tools.
- **Targeted Communications:** A structured communication campaign introduces AI concepts and features incrementally, reinforcing learning and encouraging engagement.

Building Internal Capacity and Support

A key component is our "AI Champions" (or Digital Champions) program. These individuals receive specialized onboarding and act as peer resources within their departments, driving awareness, sharing best practices for using AI effectively, promoting new ways of working, and providing valuable ground-level feedback. This fosters a community of practice and a sustainable support ecosystem for evolving technologies.

Emphasis on Responsible Use

Throughout the training and communication materials, we stress the importance of critically reviewing AI-generated content, ensuring alignment with organizational standards and accuracy requirements, understanding data handling protocols, and using these tools ethically and effectively as assistants to augment human capabilities. Human in the Loop (HITL) methods allow human monitoring and intervention in automated processes, ensuring outputs align with expectations. This approach is critical for early stages of deployment, use, or first time initiatives to mitigate risk of AI generated errors or unintended consequences. Security AI training will be a key component of responsible use which will be developed and provided to our users.

Conclusion

This existing framework for our initial GenAI adoption provides a robust, practical foundation for the broader AI literacy and ethical use education plan requested by the Board. The lessons learned, structured content, delivery mechanisms, and feedback loops established through this pilot are directly informing our strategy for expanding AI awareness and training across the County workforce, in collaboration with labor organizations and employee resource groups.

The CTO is committed to equipping County employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the evolving landscape of AI responsibly and effectively, ensuring we

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leverage these powerful tools to enhance public service while upholding our core values. This pilot program represents a significant and tangible step already taken towards achieving this critical goal.