

How New York State Uses AI to Rebuild the Public Talent Pipeline

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Webinar Digest: How New York State Uses AI to Rebuild the Public Talent Pipeline

Overview

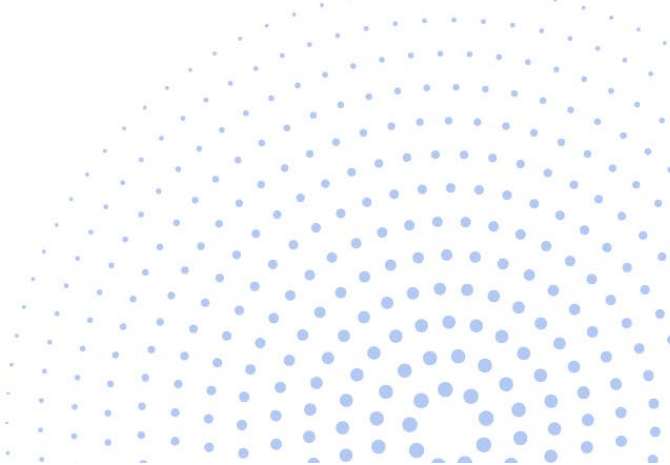
The discussion highlighted how New York State is modernizing workforce management through AI-powered technology in partnership with Eightfold. Leaders from the New York State Department of Labor and Department of Civil Service shared how they are replacing decades-old hiring and workforce processes with more intelligent, skills-based solutions designed to better connect residents with employment opportunities and help agencies recruit top talent. While the technology itself is significant, speakers emphasized that successful transformation depends just as much on leadership, collaboration and organizational change as it does on AI.

Modernizing Workforce Services Through AI

New York State's Department of Labor implemented an AI-powered Labor Exchange during the pandemic to improve how unemployed residents connect with employers. The platform helps job seekers discover opportunities based on their skills while giving career counselors better tools to guide individuals toward meaningful employment. Leaders explained that the pandemic created an opportunity to accelerate innovation, allowing the agency to launch one of the state's first AI-powered systems while managing hundreds of thousands of workforce participants each year. The technology also supports workforce development at scale, making personalized job matching possible for far more people than traditional methods allowed.

Transforming a 132-Year-Old Hiring Process

The Department of Civil Service is undertaking one of its most significant modernization efforts by replacing hiring processes that have remained largely unchanged for more than a century. Supporting over 70 executive agencies, thousands of local governments and hundreds of thousands of employees requires balancing complex regulations with the need for modernization. Rather than pursuing perfection, leaders stressed the importance of setting measurable milestones, celebrating incremental successes and maintaining transparency with stakeholders throughout the transformation. This phased approach helps build confidence while keeping agencies engaged during a long-term modernization effort.



Putting People at the Center of Change

Throughout the discussion, panelists agreed that technology is often the easiest part of digital transformation. People are the true challenge. Successful implementation requires strong executive sponsorship, dedicated resources, skilled project teams and thoughtful change management. Leaders emphasized respecting existing processes while encouraging employees to question outdated practices, demonstrating the value of new technology and involving staff early in the transformation process. Building trust, communicating frequently and helping employees understand how AI will improve, not replace, their work were identified as essential components of long-term success.



Measuring Success Through Better Outcomes



Rather than focusing solely on technology deployment, the agencies are measuring success by improved workforce outcomes. For the Department of Labor, this means helping residents return to work more quickly, giving case managers more time to address barriers like housing and childcare, connecting job seekers with upskilling opportunities and helping employers create stronger job descriptions. Looking ahead, panelists encouraged other public sector organizations to begin their modernization journeys without waiting for perfect conditions, invest heavily in change management from the outset and treat transformation as a continuous process rather than a one-time implementation.

Measuring Success Through Better Outcomes

A recurring theme throughout the discussion was the importance of collaboration across agencies and with trusted technology partners. Leaders from the Department of Labor and Department of Civil Service emphasized that sharing knowledge, learning from each other and maintaining strong partnerships have been instrumental in advancing their modernization efforts. As both organizations continue expanding their AI initiatives, they remain focused on building a more agile, responsive workforce while delivering better services to New York residents. Looking ahead, the panel expressed excitement about measuring long-term results and encouraging other public sector organizations to embrace innovation through collaboration, continuous learning and a shared commitment to improved government service.



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