

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ROI of Resilience:

HOW CYBERSECURITY TALENT MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES IMPROVE THE BOTTOM LINE

>\$125,000

AVERAGE SAVINGS PER CYBERSECURITY WORKER

Skills-based, talent-friendly practices save over \$125,000 per cybersecurity worker through faster hiring and better retention.



The cybersecurity workforce is being reshaped by two converging forces: rapid digitization and long-term demographic constraints. In this environment, pathways into cybersecurity and into leadership roles remain narrow and opaque, especially for women. That leaves the field structurally fragile at the very moment when resilience matters most.

This report examines how employers can widen those pathways and strengthen workforce resilience by focusing on skills-based, talent-friendly practices and by leveraging third-party partnerships to reduce implementation barriers. **Our analysis shows that the most effective practices deliver measurable financial returns, improve advancement for underrepresented talent, and are often underutilized today.**

KEY FINDINGS



Skills-based, talent-friendly practices generate the highest returns

>\$125,000

saved per employee through better retention and faster hiring.

- Offers a formal mentorship program or facilitates connections between employees of multiple levels
- Provides personalized learning or training pathways based on skills
- Uses skills data to inform workforce planning and future talent needs
- Uses stretch assignments or lateral moves to help employees build new skills
- Provides employees with a skills profile or a record they can update and use internally
- Uses dashboard or analytics to track workforce skills and identify gaps
- Provides access to professional membership organizations
- Links pay, bonuses, or incentives to skill attainment
- Defines career paths or promotion criteria based on skills





High-impact practices benefit the entire workforce and are especially valuable for women

Firms using skills-based promotion criteria show **10-20%** higher women's representation in leadership.

Talent Practice	Increase in Female Cybersecurity Leadership at Firms Leveraging Practice	Average Cost Savings Per Cybersecurity Worker
Provides employees with a skills profile or a record they can update and use internally	15%	\$97,077
Offers a formal mentorship program or facilitates connections between employees of multiple levels	11%	\$127,465
Defines career paths or promotion criteria based on skills	8%	\$35,352
Links pay, bonuses, or incentives to skill attainment	7%	\$53,361
Provides personalized learning or training pathways based on skills	1%	\$127,167



Adoption of skills-based, talent-friendly practices is uneven

Despite the high ROI, the most effective practices are used by **no more than 55%** of firms.

Share of Employers Leveraging Practice	Average Cost Savings Per Cybersecurity Worker
Offers a formal mentorship program or facilitates connections between employees of multiple levels 49%	\$127,465
Provides personalized learning or training pathways based on skills 55%	\$127,167
Uses skills data to inform workforce planning and future talent needs 53%	\$114,658



Third-party partnerships expand capacity and ease adoption

Partnerships with external talent networks and training providers (such as WiCyS) help firms fill roles 16% faster and save \$71,800 in lost productivity.

16%
faster time-to-fill

\$71,800
savings in lost productivity avoided

ORGANIZATIONS CAN STRENGTHEN THEIR TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND IMPROVE BUSINESS OUTCOMES BY:



Grounding strategies in objective skills data.



Aligning top-down leadership actions with bottom-up employee development opportunities.

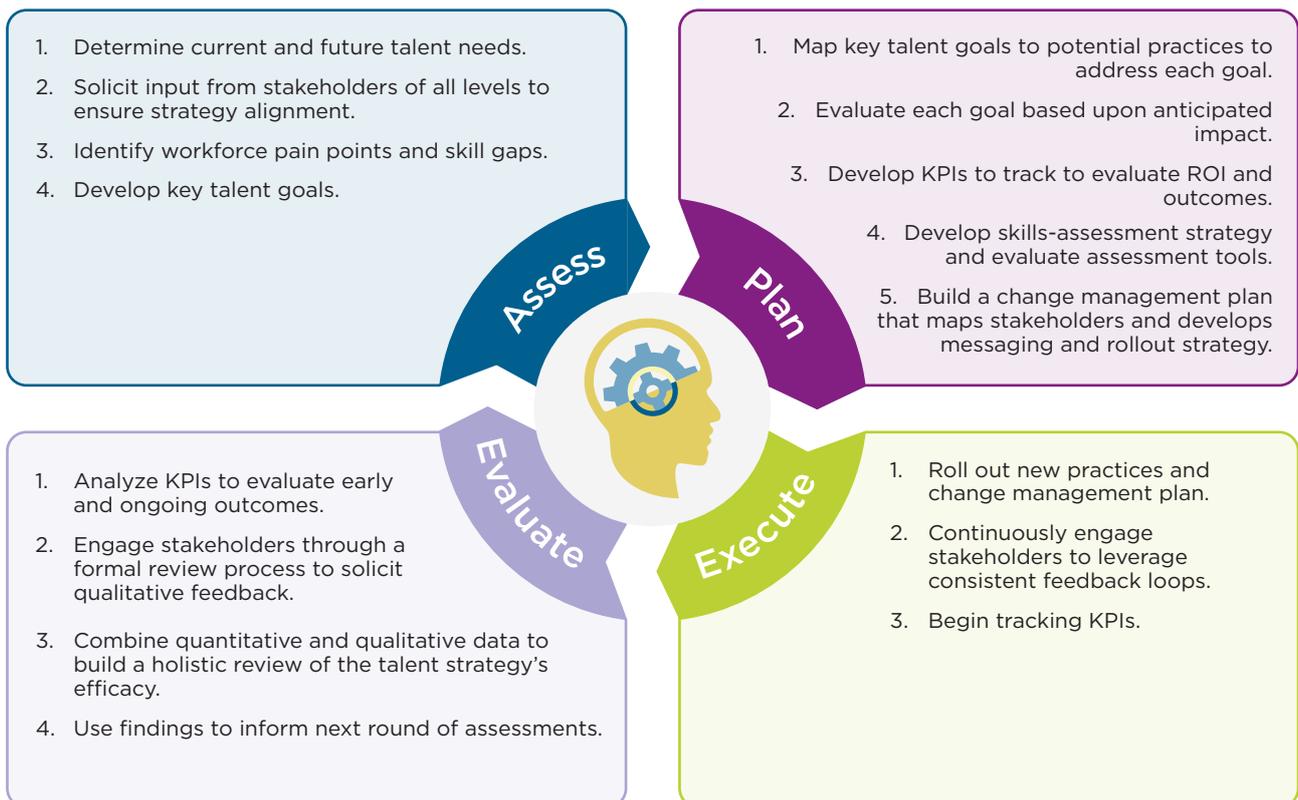


Building a repeatable process to continuously optimize talent management.



Implementing high-ROI, talent-friendly practices.

CONTINUOUS TALENT OPTIMIZATION FRAMEWORK



This study integrates data from several sources, including a survey of cybersecurity and HR leaders, qualitative interviews, and company-level data from Lightcast job postings and career histories to connect specific talent practices with business outcomes. We estimate ROI using a proprietary analytic approach that translates observed differences in time to fill and average tenure into conservative estimates of productively loss avoided. For the full report and supplementary appendices, please visit wicys.org or fouroneinsights.com.