Digital Culture and Innovation

Establishing a sector-wide digital culture

The CDOs mandate and ambition is to achieve a level where a sector-wide digital culture takes root in the sector, set-up an environment where innovation, digital adoption, and adaptation become ingrained in the sector's DNA.

Establishing a sector-wide digital culture has many advantages:

- It enables staff to acquire a good digital culture which will be a catalyst for the administration's digital transformation.
- It improves the acceptability of the staff of the digital changes implemented by CDOs.
- It accelerates digital transformation through the involvement of all stakeholders.
- It improves collaboration and innovation because sector staff are involved in the process.

Establishing a sector-wide digital culture involves a concerted effort to foster an environment where digital innovation, adoption, and adaptation are embraced at all levels.

Here are some steps to establish a sector-wide digital culture:

Leadership Buy-In: The CDO has to start at the top. Leaders must champion digital transformation, demonstrating its importance and integrating it into the sector's vision and Strategy. Without the sector leadership support, it is more difficult to achieve a digitally rooted environment in sectors.

Communication and awareness campaigns: It is necessary for the CDO to identify and educate stakeholders about the benefits and necessity of digital transformation. This involves regular communication about the sector's digital vision once defined and demonstrates that each individual role is crucial. Various tools can be used to do so: tutorial, internal communication campaign, webinar, guides... These communications must be precise, and the objective must be clear, information simplified, and the benefits highlighted.

Training and Upskilling: Investing in training programs to equip employees with digital skills is necessary. This could include workshops, courses, or certifications relevant to the sector's needs. A common program can be set-up at RISA’s level for all Ministries, but all CDOs can adapt it to his/her sector. Here, specific domains can be targeted and be topics of training: cybersecurity, paperless Strategy, efficiency through technology, etc...

Encourage Innovation: The CDO can create an environment that encourages experimentation and innovation within the sector’s leading Ministry and affiliated agencies. He/she should support initiatives that explore new digital technologies and methodologies.

Collaboration and Cross-Functional Teams: Foster collaboration among different departments and encourage the formation of cross-functional teams to work on digital projects. This breaks down silos and encourages knowledge sharing. This encompasses activities to gather employees from all over the sector (leading Ministry and affiliated agencies) to work on a specific project.

Agile and Adaptive Approach: Embrace an agile mindset that allows for quick adaptation to changing technologies and market needs. Encourage iterative processes and learning from failures.

Provide Resources and Support: Ensure that the necessary resources, tools, and infrastructure are available to support digital initiatives. This includes both technological resources and managerial support.

Recognition and Incentives: Recognize and reward individuals and teams that contribute significantly to the sector's digital goals. Incentivise innovative ideas and successful digital implementations.

Data-Driven Decision Making: Promote a culture of using data to drive decisions. Encourage the collection and analysis of data to derive insights and inform strategies.

Regular Assessment and Adaptation: Continuously assess the progress of the digital culture initiatives. Adapt strategies based on feedback and changing needs to ensure sustained improvement.

Promoting Digital Literacy

Promoting digital literacy directly engages the employees all over the sector. CDO simply must conduct basic activities to enhance the digital literacy of the leading Ministry and affiliated agencies staff. The overall goal is to enhance digital literacy among employees, empowering them to leverage technology effectively in their roles and improve overall operational efficiency.

The first step in building digital literacy is to assess the sector current workforce’s digital skills and determine which skills are necessary to make the digital transformation roadmap a reality.

Take stock of existing skills in the public sector: understand the transformations that all job families will undergo and identify gaps and specific areas where training is needed.

Professions within public administration are undergoing transformations due	
The following table describes common government job functions and the transformations they are experiencing in a digital transformation. All positions are impacted, from management to legal services, hence the importance of extending digital literacy across government.	
Profession type	**Transformations**

Purchasing in the digital sector	From acquiring equipments and network to purchasing cloud, infrastructure, software and intellectual services
Cybersecurity/Cybercrime	Enhance capacity to respond to new threats and respect standards
Stats/Data	From producing statistics to analysing raw data and making them available from public-decision making
Management & steering leadership	Adopt new ways of working: agile, remote, distributed governance
Development	Generalisation of the DevOps approach, new standards on eco conception, accessibility (design), use (and production) of open source softwares
Legal	Compliance (data privacy and new regulations), legal design
Infrastructures	From a “static” (IT architecture) to a dynamic vision (Ops, data circulation)
User support	Enhance relations to digital services users, measure impact
Project/Product Management	New methods to develop digital services for public policies
Communication	From institutional communication to community management

Set-up tailored Training Programs: Develop training programs that cater to various skill levels and job roles. Offer a mix of basic digital literacy courses covering fundamental skills like using software, email, and the internet, as well as more advanced courses for specific tools or technologies relevant to their roles and depending on their prerequisites.

Hands-On Workshops and Webinars: Conduct interactive workshops and webinars where employees can practise using digital tools in real-time. Encourage participation and provide opportunities for Q&A sessions.

- *Organise training and awareness campaigns on the digital issues*: IT Tools, collaborative tools. This encompasses organisation of training programs to upskill employees on new technologies, ensuring they can effectively use and leverage these tools.
- *Organise regular follow-up and workshops sessions on the IT ongoing projects* in the sector, in order to involve employees in the transformation projects.

Digital Resources and Support: Offer access to digital resources such as online tutorials, guides, and FAQs. Provide ongoing support through help desks or designated digital literacy mentors. Realise some demo and tutorial on IT tools usage, IT key topics for the sector's staff. These resources should be included on a dedicated webpage of the Ministry or on other specific webpage easily accessible to the employees.

Encourage Continuous Learning: Foster a culture of continuous learning by promoting online courses, certifications. Encourage employees to stay updated with technological advancements relevant to their roles.

Internal Knowledge Sharing: Facilitate knowledge sharing sessions where employees can share their expertise or experiences with digital tools. This could be through presentations, team meetings, or internal forums.

Pilot Projects and Sandbox Environments: Encourage employees to experiment with digital tools in a safe environment. Implement pilot projects where they can apply newly learned skills without the fear of failure.

Measurement and Feedback: Implement measures to assess the effectiveness of training programs. Gather feedback from employees to understand their experience and areas that need improvement. Reward the most involved employees/agents

Incorporate Digital Literacy into Policies: Embed digital literacy requirements into job descriptions, performance evaluations, and promotion criteria, emphasising its importance in the administration.

Various mechanisms must be put in place to build up digital literacy among all civil servants:

- **Digital academies:** set up an in-house digital academy to assess and develop current civil servants digital skills
- **Formal training:** Include formal training opportunities as part of your compensation package for civil servants and ensure that digital skills are available in course catalogues.
- **Informal training:** Encouraging civil servants to join a community of practice, giving opportunities for internal mobility and developing a culture of collaboration can all offer informal training opportunities for staff.

Digital Campus: An emerging cross-department resource centre to offer customised training to teams and individuals. It is made up of dedicated teams in charge of:

- Guiding HR offices & business managers to build trainings for teams:

- Identification of needs
- Conception of learning path (usually upskilling)
- Implementation
- Evaluation

- Building & Providing a training catalogue on every aspects of digital transformation

- Online / Presential
- In house / provided by external providers

- Possibility to obtain funding to build new learning approaches

- Possibility for civil servants to become teachers.

Digital Academy: An Academy which aims at teaching public servants the digital skills, approaches, and mindset needed to transform public services in today's digital age.

As part of its activities, the Academy must bring together partners from different spheres, including Government, Academia and the Private Sector, with the focus on Collaboration and the sharing of knowledge and experience. The Academy will offer both general and more specialised learning opportunities, in the classroom and online, for public servants at all levels.

Another good practice is also to **let civil servants find their own training courses** based on their interests and skills. This means potentially financing online courses given in other countries or about topics not yet included in the initial training catalogue. This promotes talent retention and gives staff maximum flexibility to advance their careers as they see fit.

Fostering Innovation and Growth

Fostering innovation and growth entails establishing an environment that champions creativity, experimentation, and ongoing enhancement. Innovation stands as a linchpin, and CDOs must cultivate it within their sector.

This endeavour begins by **nurturing a culture of innovation** within the team. The CDO plays a pivotal role in fostering a mindset that appreciates fresh ideas and solutions, fostering an environment where employees feel empowered to share their thoughts without fear of judgement. Embracing failure as a learning opportunity is integral—encourage experimentation and acknowledge that not all ideas will yield success.

Cultivating an innovation culture also entails **promoting diverse collaboration**. Encouraging teamwork among individuals with varied backgrounds, skills, and experiences often leads to novel and inventive ideas.

Furthering this culture means **embracing failure as a stepping stone to success**. Create a safe space where unsuccessful attempts are seen as opportunities for growth. Discuss lessons learned from setbacks and apply these insights to future endeavours.

Having dedicated resources—be it budget, teams, or platforms—is crucial. Allocate specific resources to innovation projects, empowering teams with the necessary time, finances, and personnel. Establish **platforms for idea sharing and encourage cross-functional collaboration** among different departments or areas of expertise, fostering the exchange of unique ideas that lead to innovative solutions.

Learning serves as the bedrock of an innovative culture by fostering adaptability, continuous improvement, and knowledge sharing. It encourages individuals to refine processes and seek better solutions, driving efficiency and effectiveness. CDOs should work with RISA core team to design the training catalog and invest in **ongoing learning programs** to keep employees updated with the latest trends and technologies.

Conducting innovation improvement activities is essential to nurture an innovation culture. These activities may include brainstorming sessions, problem-solving challenges, workshops, and collaborative events to ignite creativity and teamwork within the team.

- **Brainstorming Sessions**: Encourage open brainstorming sessions where team members freely share ideas without judgement. Focus on quantity over quality initially to generate a wide range of ideas.
- **Problem-Solving Challenges**: Present the team with real or hypothetical challenges and ask them to come up with innovative solutions. Encourage creative thinking and unconventional approaches.
- **Cross-Training and Skill Sharing**: Organise sessions where team members share their expertise or teach skills to others. This promotes a diverse skill set within the team and encourages learning from each other.
- **Innovation Workshops**: Host workshops specifically aimed at fostering innovation. Use exercises, case studies, or role-playing activities to stimulate creative thinking and problem-solving.
- **Hackathons or Innovation Days**: Set aside dedicated time for the team to work on innovative projects or ideas. Encourage them to collaborate across departments and generate prototypes or new concepts. These activities may involve external partners: innovators, private sector, academia, start-ups, researches…
- **Mind Mapping or Visualization**: Use visual tools like mind mapping to help team members organise their thoughts and explore connections between different ideas or concepts.
- **Field Trips or External Insights**: Arrange visits to other innovative companies or industries. Exposure to different environments often sparks new ideas and perspectives.
- **Design Thinking Exercises**: Introduce the team to design thinking methodologies, allowing them to empathise with users, define problems, ideate solutions, prototype, and test ideas.
- **Storytelling Sessions**: Allow team members to share success stories, innovative ideas, or lessons learned from challenges. This fosters a culture of sharing and inspires others to think creatively.
- **Gamification of Learning**: Incorporate games or challenges that encourage creative thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork. This adds an element of fun while promoting innovation.

The CDO can also **conduct reward innovation activities**. The aim is to recognize and reward employees who contribute innovative ideas or solutions. Incentivize creativity through rewards, bonuses (co-defined with RISA and MIFOTRA), or recognition programs.

Regular **evaluation and feedback mechanism** is mandatory. Establish mechanisms to regularly evaluate innovation initiatives. Gather feedback from employees and stakeholders to understand

what works and what needs improvement.

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