

Microsoft
Partner
Network

Hire & Train

This content accompanies the broader Cloud Practice Development Playbooks. For more information on these playbooks or to download the full versions, please visit aka.ms/practiceplaybooks



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Build a Technical Team

As you set up or build your cloud practice, you will evaluate the various services your business can pursue, identify some avenues of success, and determine how to build and train your team.

In this guide, we'll help you define the members of your team and the skills they should bring to the table. If you need to hire to fill gaps, we provide you with detailed job descriptions you can use, as well as ideas on where to look for resources, the factors you should look for in a candidate's skillset, and what you should expect to pay by role and region.

Starting a new practice requires you to start with an evaluation of your existing team members (if any) and then make the decision of whether to hire new employees or bring your existing team up to speed.

A big focus of this section is the critical piece of ensuring all of your practice resources are trained and continue to receive ongoing training. We cover not just the technical training, but also sales and marketing training.

Additionally, we'll give you details on the specific Microsoft certifications your technical resources should be working towards, both for their own professional development and to earn your organization Microsoft Partner Network competencies.



Role Descriptions

Sales Resources

You have a vision for developing the next great solution, but even the best products need a sales strategy to gain maximum market traction. Consider hiring for the following sales positions for broad reach.



The **Solution Sales Manager (SSM)** is a senior leader within the enterprise sales organization. The SSM leads, develops, and manages a team of high-performing sales and technical pre-sales/post-sales resources to drive solution opportunity revenue and market share by leveraging the Microsoft Security and Cloud offerings to meet their customers' Mission Critical Tier 1 security needs. Ten or more years of sales experience is required for this position. Qualifications include people management, business development, competitive selling, and the ability to thrive in complex, ambiguous, and dynamic environments.

The **Cloud Solutions Sales Manager** is a solution sales leadership role that is responsible for delivering sustainable new business growth across segments; providing thought-leadership; and driving customer acceleration to cloud and security across the enterprise sales and marketing teams. The Solution Sales Manager is a great sales coach and leader, has a challenger mentality, is savvy in sales leadership practice, and contributes with vision and flawless execution of solution sales across workloads and solution areas.

The **Technical Sales Manager (TSM)** is a senior leader within the enterprise sales organization. The TSM drives revenue and market share by leading a team of technical sellers that provide customers with insights and solutions. TSMs will manage, coach, and lead a team of solution architects and tech sales professionals to uncover and support the business and IT goals of customers by driving the technical decision and providing business value with the Microsoft platform, thus securing long-term sustainable growth. A computer science degree or related field is required for this role. Additional qualifications include strategic insight, project management, analytical problem solving, customer/partner relationship building, and exceptional product and technical expertise.

Technical Resources (Architecture, Infrastructure, and Development)

These roles form the heart of your solution. Hiring the right people can turn your vision into reality.

The **Cloud Architect** (CA) drives customer initiatives in collaboration with customers. The CA is a technical, customer-facing role that is accountable for the end-to-end customer cloud deployment experience. CAs own the technical customer engagement, including architectural design sessions, specific implementation projects and/or proofs of concepts. The ideal candidate will have experience in customer-facing roles and success leading deep technical architecture and application design discussions with senior customer executives to drive cloud deployment. A computer science or related engineering degree is required.

The **Mobility Solution Engineer** is responsible for the design, implementation, integration, support and monitoring of enterprise mobility solutions. The ideal candidate should have a diverse understanding of the current state of security best practices, including identity and access control, mobile technology, and mobile best practices throughout a variety of industries. In addition, this individual must have working knowledge of mobile development standards, can identify a landscape of mobile vendors (MDM, MADPs, etc.), and be familiar with the deployment of mobile applications across platforms. The candidate must have prior experience formulating, planning, and implementing a mobile strategy, including formulating policies for "bring your own device" (BYOD) policy and remote access. The candidate should have outstanding technical and analytical skills to outline why a mobile strategy is needed, and how to identify and prioritize applications, data, and devices to manage.

Management

Consider the following management positions if your development effort will involve eight or more technical staff. In smaller teams, senior-level employees sometimes take on management duties along with their other responsibilities, removing the need for dedicated managers.

The **Product Manager** (or Product Management team) establishes and sustains the business case for the project and plays a key role in identifying and setting priorities across the target audience. This includes ensuring that business expectations are clearly articulated and understood by the project team, and that the functional specifications respond to business priorities. Product Management owns the vision statement for the project. The vision statement is an informal document that communicates the expectations and assumptions on which the project is based. Product Management is also responsible for high-level project communications such as business projections, project costing, and contract negotiation. Product Management communicates the high-level milestones to the target audience and other team members.

The **Program Manager** or Program Management team "owns" the specification for an application's features and functionality and coordinates the day-to-day communication required to develop and deliver the application effectively and consistently within organizational standards. Program Management has a key communication and coordination role. With input from other team leads, Program Management assists Product Management in articulating the vision for the project. Using this vision, Program Management drafts the initial version of the functional specification and is considered the keeper of the functional specification. Program Management is responsible for all activities associated with analysis, specification, and architecture. Program Management is also responsible for defining how the project will interoperate with external standards, maintaining external technical coordination and communication, and managing the master schedule.

Support Resources

A lot of effort goes on behind the scenes, or in positions that involve post-sales customer engagement. To ensure long-term success of your projects, consider hiring some of these support roles.



The **Customer Success Manager** is passionate about engaging your customers and helping them expand their use cases. They have excellent relational skills, and can create win/win environments for all parties they work with. In their day-to-day responsibilities, they own the overall relationship with assigned clients by increasing adoption and ensuring retention and satisfaction. They make a large impact on your enterprise security business by establishing a trusted and strategic advisor relationship with each assigned client, driving continued value of your products and services. The Customer Success Manager will help drive sales by working to identify or develop upsell opportunities. Additionally, they will advocate customer needs and issues cross-departmentally and program manage account escalations. Qualifications include prior experience in customer success or equivalent history of increasing customer satisfaction, adoption, and retention.

The **Quality Assurance (QA) / Test Technician** is thorough and detail-oriented, and should work well with established processes. The primary goal of this role is to help avoid defects in your final product or solution. This

person will be involved throughout the development process and use their intuition to problem solve and identify technical, procedural, and usability concerns. They must take meticulous notes, be organized about recording process steps, and work well with others since they will be coordinating with technical and management teams to ensure that the correct measures are put into place to align the final product with the initial goal.

The **User Support Specialist** assists customers who are having technical issues with your product, or who need help realizing the full benefit of your solution to help them deliver their cloud-based workloads. They will likely be in a position to help customers navigate the operational challenges of cloud computing, so thoroughly training them on both your product — and the infrastructure on which it is built — is paramount to their success, and ultimately, your customers' satisfaction. Qualifications include technical support experience and great communication and interpersonal skills (soft skills). Experience with cloud technologies is a major plus.

Job Descriptions for your Technical Team

The following tables provides detailed job descriptions you can utilize to hire the key technical resources. All technical skills, non-technical skills, certifications, and technologies listed are potential proficiencies a candidate should have, but no candidate will have all those listed.

Cloud Architect

A Cloud Architect (CA) drive Azure based customer initiatives in collaboration with customers, and participates in both pre and post-sales (e.g., deployment) efforts. The CA is a technical, customer facing role that is accountable for the end-to-end customer cloud deployment experience. CAs own the Azure technical customer engagement including: architectural design sessions, specific implementation projects and/or Proofs of Concepts, and deployment. The ideal candidate will have experience in customer facing roles and success leading deep technical architecture and application design discussions with senior customer executives to drive cloud deployment. Five or more years of architecture, design implementation and/or support of distributed applications designed to run in the cloud or across hybrid cloud and on-premises environments. Experience in consultative sales, design and deployment of projects strongly preferred. A computer science or related engineering degree is required.

Technical Skills

Advanced analytics, agile, application architecture, application development, application design, application lifecycle management (ALM), capacity planning, cloud archival, cloud data analytics, cloud disaster recovery, cloud storage, cloud systems management, cloud systems operations, cloud transformation, compliance (PCI, HIPPA, etc.), data architecting, data migration (cross platform / upgrade), database and server virtualization, database architecture, database lifecycle management, database management, DevOps, diagnostics, distributed application design, distributed application development, distributed database design, event sourcing, HADR / replication, health checks, identity and security, information architecture, modern applications, monitoring, networking, performance tuning, polyglot resiliency, predicative analytics, resiliency (clustering, etc.), scalability (up and out, high performance), scrum, security architecture, security compliance, software design, storage, systems operations/management, technical migration upgrades, technology architecture, virtualization.

Non-Technical Skills

Consultative sales, collaboration, stakeholder management, relationship management, technical oversight, technical recommendations, problem solving, risk management, architecture design session, program management, proof of concept design, technical demonstration.

Certifications

MCSA Cloud Platform Solutions Associate, MCSA Linux on Azure Solutions Associate, MCSE Cloud Platform and Infrastructure, MCSE Data Management and Analytics, AWS Certified Solution Architect, AWS Certified Developer, AWS Certified Developer.

Project Experience Types / Qualities

Advanced analytics (including machine learning), database modernization, coordinate and execute pilots, burst to cloud, hybrid deployments, prototypes or proof of concepts, provide validation on specific scenarios, document and share technical best practices, further customer investment, hybrid solutions on premises or in the cloud, industry-visible, large project relative to size of customer, lift and shift, migrations and upgrades, on-premises to cloud, production environment, projects where data is born in the cloud, size of project team (complexity), significant challenges.

Technologies

AML, Analytics, APS, AWS, AWS RDS, AWS EC2, AWS Redshift, AWS S3, Azure Active Directory, Azure Data Factory, Azure Data Lake, Azure Storage, Azure API Apps, Azure API Management, Azure DocumentDB, Azure SQL Data Warehouse, Azure Import/Export, Azure HDInsight, Azure Logic Apps, Azure Machine Learning, Azure Mobile Apps, Azure SQL Database, Azure Search, Azure Stream Analytics, Azure Event Hubs, Azure IoT Hub, Azure Virtual Machines, Azure Web Apps, Azure Web Jobs, Azure Cognitive Services, BizTalk, Business Objects, Cassandra, Cloudera, Cognos, Cortana Intelligence, CouchDB, Data warehouse, Database, DB2, Docker, Excel, IBM Bluemix, Google App Engine, Greenplum, Hadoop, HANA, HBase, Hive, Hortonworks, IBM, IBM Teradata, Informix, IoT Solutions, Java, Kafka, Machine Learning, MapR, MapReduce, ML, MongoDB, MariaDB, MySQL, Netezza, Networking, NoSQL, Oracle, Oracle Exadata, Oracle SOA, PBI, Pig, Power BI, PostgreSQL, Python, Qlik Tech, REST, Samza, SAP HANA, SAS, Security, Spark, SQL Server, SQL Server IaaS, SQL Server Integration Services, Storage, Storm, Streaming, Sybase, Tableau, Teradata, TSQL, Virtualization, webMethods, WebSphere, YARN.

Programming/Scripting Languages: C++, C#, Java, JavaScript, PHP, Perl, Python, Ruby, Ruby on Rails, Pig/Hive, SQL, T-SQL, Scala, PowerShell



Senior Software Developer

A Senior Software Developer has a history of designing, owning and shipping software, as well as excellent communication and collaboration skills. With a focus on cloud-based application development, the candidate must have demonstrable experience architecting and deploying applications to cloud platforms, the ability to effectively integrate disparate services as needed, and decide when to implement IaaS, SaaS, and PaaS components. As a mentor to junior developers, the senior software developer should have a solid understanding of the software development cycle, from architecture to testing. They should have a passion for quality and be a creative thinker. A senior developer will write secure, reliable, scalable, and maintainable code, and then effectively debug it, test it and support it live. This person should also be comfortable owning a feature and making decisions independently, and should have leadership experience with agile methodologies, such as the Scrum approach to agile software development. Another aspect of a senior software developer, is that they can effectively gather customer requirements, and ask clarifying questions when needed. This person must be able to translate these requirements to actionable tasks they will perform, or delegate to members of the team. The ideal candidate will have experience in customer facing roles and success leading deep technical architecture and design discussions with senior executives. Eight plus years of experience with deep understanding of web technologies, API consumption/development, full lifecycle application development, database development (relational and/or NoSQL), and enterprise/cloud architecture. Technical BS degree in Computer Science desirable.

Technical Skills

API development, Application architecture, application development, application lifecycle management (ALM), caching, capacity planning, cloud archival, cloud disaster recovery, cloud storage, cloud systems management, cloud systems operations, cloud transformation, compliance (PCI, HIPPA, etc.), data architecting, data migration (cross platform / upgrade), data modeling (physical and logical), data movement, data transformation, database and server virtualization, database architecture, database design, database lifecycle management, database management, dev ops, diagnostics, distributed application design, distributed application development, distributed database design, event sourcing, HADR / replication, health checks, identity and security, information architecture, information management, IoC, mission critical DB design and architecture, modern applications, monitoring, package management (npm, NuGet, etc.), performance tuning, polyglot resiliency, reporting services design and deployment, responsive design, RESTful services, resiliency (clustering, etc.), scalability (up and out, high performance), security architecture, security compliance, source code repository management (git, TFS, svn, etc.), technical migration upgrades, technology architecture, testing / TDD, unstructured data formats (e.g. JSON), structured data formats (e.g. XML), UI / UX.

Non-Technical Skills

Collaboration, stakeholder management, relationship management, technical oversight, technical recommendations, problem solving, risk management, architecture design session, program management, proof of concept design, technical demonstration, excellent communication skills.

Certifications

MCSE Enterprise Devices and Apps, MCSE Business Intelligence, MCSA Cloud Platform Solutions Associate, MCSA Linux on Azure Solutions Associate, MCSE Cloud Platform and Infrastructure, Certified ScrumMaster, AWS Certified Solution Architect, AWS Certified Developer.

Project Experience Types/Qualities

API consumption and development, coordinate and execute pilots, prototypes or proof of concepts, provide validation on specific scenarios, document and share technical best practices, further customer investment, hybrid solutions on premises or in the cloud, industry-visible, CI / Continuous Deployment, large project relative to size of customer, lift and shift, migrations and upgrades (SQL, etc.), on-premises to cloud, production environment, projects where data is born in the cloud, cross-platform SQL Server migration, server-side/desktop development, service architecture, size of project team (complexity), significant challenges, source code repository management, team lead / scrum master, web application development.

Technologies

AWS API Gateway, AWS EC2, AWS SWF, AWS, AWS RDS, AWS VM, AWS Redshift, AWS S3, Angular, Aurelia, Azure Active Directory, Azure App Service Environment, Azure Data Catalog, Azure Data Factory, Azure Data Lake, Azure Logic App, Azure Mobile App, Azure Storage, Azure DocumentDB, Azure SQL Data Warehouse, Azure Functions, Azure Import/Export, Azure SQL Database, Azure Search, Azure Event Hubs, Azure Web App, Azure Web Jobs, Azure Cognitive Services, BizTalk, Business Objects, Cassandra, CDN, Cortana Intelligence, CouchDB, Data warehouse, Database, DB2, Docker, Excel, IBM Bluemix, Google App Engine, HTML, IBM, IBM Teradata, IoT Solutions, Java, Media Services, MongoDB, Microsoft Dynamics CRM, Microsoft SharePoint, MySQL, MVC, MVVM, Mobile Development, Networking, Node.js, NoSQL, Oracle, Oracle Exadata, Oracle SOA, PostgreSQL, Python, REST, Security, SQL Server, SQL Server IaaS, SQL Server Integration Services, Storage, Sybase, T-SQL, UWP, Virtualization, Web Services, WCF, WPF, XML.

Programming/Scripting Languages: .NET (C#, F#, VB.NET), Java, Python, JavaScript, Scala, Go, Ruby, PHP, SQL, T-SQL, PowerShell

Platforms: Linux (Red Hat, Ubuntu, Debian, etc.), Windows



Software Developer

A Software Developer enjoys the challenge of building applications that solve today's business needs. This person must be willing to keep up to date with the fast-moving cloud services landscape to remain an effective member of the development team. A software developer should work equally well on a team or independently, given a set of project requirements or tasks. This requires the developer to possess excellent communication and collaboration skills. The developer should understand the aspects of the software development cycle, from architecture to testing. This person will design, build, and maintain efficient, reusable, and reliable code. This person should have experience with participating in projects using agile methodologies, such as the Scrum approach to agile software development. Five plus years of experience with deep understanding of web technologies, API consumption/development, full lifecycle application development, database development (relational and/or NoSQL), and enterprise/cloud architecture. Technical BS degree in Computer Science desirable.

Technical Skills

API development, Application architecture, application development, application lifecycle management (ALM), caching, cloud storage, cloud systems management, cloud systems operations, cloud transformation, compliance (PCI, HIPPA, etc.), data architecting, data migration (cross platform / upgrade), data modeling (physical and logical), data movement, data transformation, database and server virtualization, database architecture, database design, database lifecycle management, database management, dev ops, diagnostics, distributed application design, distributed application development, distributed database design, event sourcing, health checks, identity and security, information architecture, information management, IoT, mission critical DB design and architecture, modern applications, monitoring, package management (npm, NuGet, etc.), performance tuning, polyglot resiliency, reporting services design and deployment, responsive design, RESTful services, security architecture, security compliance, source code repository (git, TFS, svn, etc.), technical migration upgrades, technology architecture, testing / TDD, unstructured data formats (e.g. JSON), structured data formats (e.g. XML), UI / UX.

Non-Technical Skills

Collaboration, problem solving, architecture design session, proof of concept design, technical demonstration, good communication skills.

Certifications

MCSE Enterprise Devices and Apps, MCSE Business Intelligence, MCSA Cloud Platform Solutions Associate, MCSA Linux on Azure Solutions Associate, MCSE Cloud Platform and Infrastructure, AWS Certified Solution Architect, AWS Certified Developer.

Project Experience Types/Qualities

API consumption and development, collaborate on and execute pilots, prototypes or proof of concepts, provide validation on specific scenarios, hybrid solutions on premises or in the cloud, industry-visible, CI / Continuous Deployment, large project relative to size of customer, migrations and upgrades (SQL, etc.), production environment, projects where data is born in the cloud, cross-platform SQL Server migration, server-side/desktop development, service architecture, source code repository usage, web application development.

Technologies

AWS API Gateway, AWS EC2, AWS SWF, AWS, AWS RDS, AWS VM, AWS Redshift, AWS S3, Angular, Aurelia, Azure Active Directory, Azure App Service Environment, Azure Data Catalog, Azure Data Factory, Azure Data Lake, Azure Logic App, Azure Mobile App, Azure Storage, Azure DocumentDB, Azure SQL Data Warehouse, Azure Functions, Azure Import/Export, Azure SQL Database, Azure Search, Azure Event Hubs, Azure Web App, Azure Web Jobs, Azure Cognitive Services, BizTalk, Business Objects, Cassandra, CDN, Cortana Intelligence, CouchDB, Data warehouse, Database, DB2, Docker, Excel, IBM Bluemix, Google App Engine, HTML, IBM, IBM Teradata, IoT Solutions, Java, Media Services, MongoDB, Microsoft Dynamics CRM, Microsoft SharePoint, MySQL, MVC, MVVM, Mobile Development, Networking, Node.js, NoSQL, Oracle, Oracle Exadata, Oracle SOA, PostgreSQL, Python, REST, Security, SQL Server, SQL Server IaaS, SQL Server Integration Services, Storage, Sybase, T-SQL, UWP, Virtualization, Web Services, WCF, WPF, XML.

Programming/Scripting Languages: .NET (C#, F#, VB.NET), Java, Python, JavaScript, Scala, Go, Ruby, PHP, SQL, T-SQL, PowerShell

Platforms: Linux (Red Hat, Ubuntu, Debian, etc.), Windows



Recruiting Resources

Top 10 Sources to Find Skilled Labor and What to Look For

Sourcing skilled labor can be a challenge. In our recent survey with MDC of 1,136 Azure partners, we found referrals and LinkedIn rank among the top sources for finding candidates.

	TOTAL (n=1136)	SMB (n=886)	ENTERPRISE (n=250)
Referrals from employees or partnerships	70%	69%	73%
LinkedIn	59%	57%	66%
Posting on website	47%	45%	54%
Local Universities	38%	36%	46%
Local Technical Communities	36%	35%	43%
Recruit from competitors	30%	29%	36%
Meet ups	29%	29%	30%
GitHub	8%	8%	7%
Stack Overflow	8%	8%	7%
Other job posting sites	6%	6%	4%

Source: Microsoft Cloud Practice Development Study, MDC Research, November 2016.

Now that you have an understanding of where to look, what are the most important factors to look for in a potential hire's skillset? In the Microsoft Cloud Practice Development Study, the top three most important factors reported were work history, cultural fit, and years of experience.

	TOTAL (n=1136)	SMB (n=886)	ENTERPRISE (n=250)
Work history	69%	68%	74%
Cultural fit	43%	40%	53%
Years of experience	42%	41%	47%
Professional certifications	32%	34%	22%
Referrals	28%	29%	26%
Professional training received	20%	21%	16%
Reputation through community	16%	15%	19%
Formal education	13%	14%	11%
Contract to hire or other means to test skills "hands-on"	13%	13%	13%
Publications	3%	3%	2%
Awards received	2%	2%	2%
Attitude	0%	0%	1%
Other	4%	4%	4%

Source: Microsoft Cloud Practice Development Study, MDC Research, November 2016.

Training & Readiness

Preparing and Training IT Staff for the Cloud

For technical staff to function as change agents supporting current and emerging cloud technologies, their buy-in for the use and integration of these technologies is needed. For this, staff need three things:

- An understanding of their roles and any changes to their current position.
- Time and resources to explore the technologies.
- An understanding of the business case for the technologies.



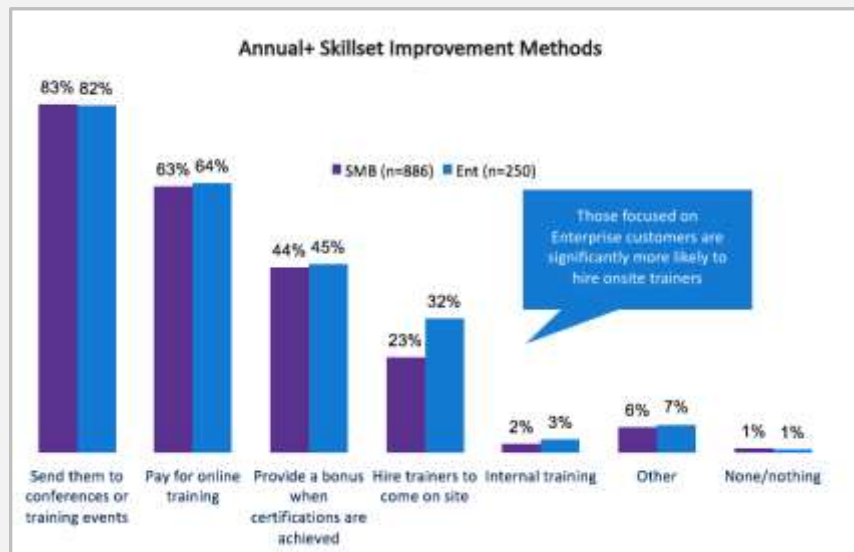
USE THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES AS PART OF YOUR AZURE TRAINING FOR NEW AND EXISTING STAFF

- [Azure Training and Certification](#) provides a free online training option and periodic discounts on Microsoft exam vouchers for Azure certifications. Microsoft and partners offer a variety of options for all audiences to develop their skills with Microsoft Azure services.
- [Microsoft Azure Hands-on Labs](#) provides free, self-paced labs to help you stay current with Azure. The live environments are fully self-contained. You do not need your own Azure subscription to complete the labs, just login with a remote desktop (RDP) client and get started.
- [Microsoft Virtual Academy](#) offers training from the people who helped to build Microsoft Azure. From the basic overview to deep technical training, IT staff will learn how to leverage Microsoft Azure for their business.
- [Microsoft IT Pro Cloud Essentials](#) is a free annual subscription that includes cloud services, education, and support benefits. IT Pro Cloud Essentials provides IT implementers with hands-on experience, targeted educational opportunities, and access to experts in areas that matter most to increase knowledge and create a path to career advancement.
- [The Microsoft IT Pro Career Center](#) is a free online resource to help map your cloud career path. Learn what industry experts suggest for your cloud role and the skills to get you there.
- [Microsoft Learning](#) offers a wide variety of official curriculum on-demand, as well as [edX courses that are taught by Microsoft experts](#), and help you learn through hands-on experiences with a broad reach of Azure technologies.
- [The Microsoft Partner Network \(MPN\) Learning Portal](#) provides a centralized interface with training opportunities and certification options organized by products, competencies, certifications, and job role.

Follow a learning curriculum at your own pace to build the skills you need most to stay relevant. Suggested resources to help onboard your team for training success are available in this section.

General Technical Training

Whether you need to fill a skills gap or are looking to improve your team's skill surface area, technical training is critical to your success.



Source: Microsoft Cloud Practice Development Study, MDC Research, November 2016

CLOUD AND ENTERPRISE PARTNER RESOURCES

The [Cloud and Enterprise Partner Resources](#) portal provides a source of sales and technical training for partner practices and key areas of specialization. Resources include customer success stories, sales and technical training, tools, engines, and resources available to help build your skills around selling, deploying, and architecting Cloud Infrastructure and Management, Cloud Application Development, Data Platform and Analytics, and Security and Compliance solutions.

MPN LEARNING PORTAL

The [Microsoft Partner Network \(MPN\) Learning Portal](#) provides a centralized interface with training opportunities and certification options organized by products, competencies, certifications, and job role.

CLOUD + ENTERPRISE UNIVERSITY ONLINE

Leverage the [Cloud + Enterprise University Online](#) to build knowledge, stay sharp, and prove your expertise on selling

aka.ms/practiceplaybooks

and supporting Microsoft cloud solutions through our live and on demand webcasts and virtual, instructor-led courses—giving you the flexibility to train at your own pace.

MICROSOFT INSPIRE CONFERENCE RECORDINGS

Even if you missed the annual live event, the [Microsoft Inspire Conference](#) provides many of its sessions as on-demand recordings — no conference pass required.

PARTNER COMMUNITY EVENTS, CALLS & WEBINARS

The [Microsoft Partner Enablement Blog](#) maintains a schedule of trainings available to partners. Visit often and plan your training calendar.

SMART PARTNER MARKETING

Leverage the [Microsoft Smart Partner Marketing](#) site as your starting point for training marketing resources.



Microsoft Learning Partners

[Microsoft Learning Partners](#) are available worldwide to help enable your team for Microsoft Azure via live instructor-led training. This can be scheduled as a dedicated delivery at your location or virtually using remote learning technologies. Many courses are scheduled as open-enrollment courses, which does not require you to schedule a dedicated class.

- [Pluralsight](#) is a key Microsoft partner that offers Azure training. Gain the know-how and confidence your job demands through these free online courses, delivered in partnership with Pluralsight.
- [Opsgility](#) is a key Microsoft partner that offers Azure training. Find more than 70 [online classes](#) focused on Azure with full learning paths for Azure certification. Opsgility also offers a full set of [instructor-led Azure trainings](#) that focus on architects, developers, dev ops, operations, sales and decision makers. Course examples include [70-534 Training](#) - [70-533 Training](#) - [Real World EMS](#).
- [O'Reilly Safari](#) provides subscription access to more than 40,000 books, videos, and interactive tutorials from over 200 of the world's best publishers, including O'Reilly, Pearson, Harvard Business Review, and Packt. It also offers live online training courses led by instructors from O'Reilly's network of tech innovators and expert practitioners.

Join the Microsoft Partner Network

Partnering with Microsoft

The Microsoft Partner Network is the start of your journey. One of the first steps to partnering with Microsoft for your Azure practice is to join the Microsoft Partner Network if you are not already a member. As a partner, you will gain access to resources like training, whitepapers, and marketing material described in this playbook. It's also where you will set up your users to gain Microsoft Partner competencies and access to your partner benefits.

TO BECOME AN MICROSOFT PARTNER

The [Microsoft Partner Network](#) provides three types of memberships. Each type provides a set of benefits to help you grow your business. As you achieve your goals, participate in the program at the level that suits your unique needs, so you can access more benefits and develop your relationship with Microsoft and other Microsoft Partners.

- **Network Member:** Receive a set of no-cost introductory benefits to help you save time and money. Use our resources to help build your business as a new partner and discover your next step.
- **Microsoft Action Pack (MAP):** This affordable yearly subscription is for businesses looking to begin, build, and grow their Microsoft practice in the cloud-first, mobile-first world through a wide range of software and benefits.
- **Competency:** Get rewarded for your success with increased support, software, and training.



TAKE THE NEXT STEP WITH A COMPETENCY

As a competency partner, you can earn both gold and silver competencies in one or more areas. Earn a silver competency to help your business demonstrate its expertise or a gold competency to showcase your best-in-class capabilities within a Microsoft solution area. Later in this playbook we'll review the competencies relevant for launching a successful Microsoft Azure practice.

CLOUD ENABLEMENT DESK

The goal of the [Cloud Enablement Desk](#) is to assist partners in obtaining their first Silver Cloud Competency. Partners will be assigned a Cloud Program Specialist (CPS) for up to six months on their way to obtaining their first Silver Cloud Competency.

The Cloud Enablement Desk program requirements include:

- Partner must have a MPN ID.
- Partner must agree to and sign Conditions of Satisfaction that state partner is actively trying to achieve Silver Cloud Competency status and include the name of the primary contact person.
- Partner cannot have an existing Microsoft account management relationship.

Competencies and Certifications

MPN Competencies

One of the next steps is to ensure you align the technical team to the MPN competency for your practice.

The following table summarizes the **skill requirements** needed by people in your organization to achieve either a gold or silver competency in the Cloud Platform competency. Some competencies have alternative options your organization can meet to achieve the competency. You only need to meet the requirements of one option in any given competency.

CLOUD PLATFORM COMPETENCY	SILVER REQUIREMENTS	GOLD REQUIREMENTS
Option 1: Azure Consumption Option	<p>One person must pass one of the following assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Assessment for Cloud Platform • Technical Assessment for Remote Desktop Services on Azure • Technical Assessment for Using Azure for Data Analytics and Data Platform Solutions • Technical Assessment for Using Microsoft Azure for Application Development • Technical Assessment for Using Azure for Internet of Things Solutions <p>Or, one person must pass one of the following exams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam 70-532: Developing Microsoft Azure Solutions • Exam 70-533: Implementing Microsoft Azure Infrastructure Solutions • Exam 70-473: Designing and Implementing Cloud Data Platform Solutions • Exam 70-475: Designing and Implementing Big Data Analytics Solutions • MCSA: Linux on Azure 	<p>Two people each must complete one of the following assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Assessment for Cloud Platform • Technical Assessment for Remote Desktop Services on Azure • Technical Assessment for Using Azure for Data Analytics and Data Platform Solutions • Technical Assessment for Using Microsoft Azure for Application Development • Technical Assessment for Using Azure for Internet of Things Solutions <p>Or, two people each must pass one of the following exams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam 70-532: Developing Microsoft Azure Solutions • Exam 70-533: Implementing Microsoft Azure Infrastructure Solutions • Exam 70-473: Designing and Implementing Cloud Data Platform Solutions • Exam 70-475: Designing and Implementing Big Data Analytics Solutions • MCSA: Linux on Azure

Certifications

Increase readiness and marketability with MCSA or MCSE certifications.

There are numerous assessments and certifications your team should consider as motivation for advancing their skills, creating proof points for your practice and enabling you to achieve Microsoft Partner Network Competencies.



TITLE	DESCRIPTION	PRE-REQUISITES	REQUIRED EXAMS
<u>MCSA CLOUD PLATFORM</u>	Demonstrate your expertise in Microsoft cloud-related technologies to reduce IT costs and deliver more value for the modern business.	N/A	70-532: Developing Microsoft Azure Solutions 70-533: Implementing Microsoft Azure Infrastructure Solutions
<u>MCSA LINUX ON AZURE</u>	Demonstrate your ability to design, architect, implement, and maintain complex cloud-enabled Linux® solutions that leverage Microsoft Azure open source capabilities. This certification also validates your Linux system administration skills to show that you are fluent in today's cloud-native world.	N/A	70-533: Implementing Microsoft Azure Infrastructure Solutions Linux Foundation Certified System Administrator

MCSE CLOUD PLATFORM AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert (MCSE): Cloud Platform and Infrastructure certification validates that you have the skills needed to run a highly efficient and modern data center, with expertise in cloud technologies, identity management, systems management, virtualization, storage, and networking.

[Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate – Window Server 2016](#)

[Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate – Cloud Platform](#)

[Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate – Linux on Azure](#)

[Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate – Windows Server 2012](#)

Choose one of the following Azure exams:

[70-532: Developing Microsoft Azure Solutions](#)

[70-533: Implementing Microsoft Azure Infrastructure Solutions](#) (recommended)

MCSE DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYTICS

Demonstrate your broad skillset in SQL administration, building enterprise-scale data solutions and leveraging business intelligence data — both on-premises and in cloud environments.

[Microsoft Certified Solutions Architect – SQL Server 2012/2014](#)

[Microsoft Certified Solutions Architect – SQL Server 2016 Database Administration](#)

[Microsoft Certified Solutions Architect – SQL Server 2016 Database Development](#)

[Microsoft Certified Solutions Architect – SQL Server 2016 Business Intelligence Development](#)

Choose one of the following Azure exams:

[70-473: Designing and Implementing Cloud Data Platform](#)

[70-475: Designing and Implementing Big Data Analytics Solutions](#)

MCSA APP BUILDER

The Microsoft Certified Solutions Developer (MCSA): App Builder certification validates that you have the skills needed to build modern mobile and/or web applications and services

[Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate \(MCSA\) – Web applications](#)

[Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate \(MCSA\) - Universal Applications](#)

Choose one of the following Azure exams:

[70-532: Developing Microsoft Azure Solutions](#) - recommended

[70-487: Developing Microsoft Azure and Web Services](#)