Stack Playbook:
Cloud Hiring Best Practices

Saving Critical AWS, Azure and GCP Projects:
5 Compelling Hiring and Staffing Ideas

TALENT

Contents

No Escaping Cloud

Cloud has always been a trending buzzword in IT, but its popularity has exploded beyond measure in recent years - primarily due to the rise of hyperscale cloud providers, such as Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft Azure, and Google Cloud Platform (GCP).

These agile and cost-effective platforms allowed enterprises to rent bigger infrastructure to scale and hire services from storage and computing to data management and application development on a pay-as-you-go model, leading to its grand success. As per reports, the international hyperscale cloud industry boasted a **$191.15 billion market size in FY2021** and is predicted to rise to $693.49 billion by FY2026.

This massive industry growth has simultaneously propelled the demand for Cloud roles in AWS, Azure and GCP. However, with the increasing vacancies and inadequacy of expertise, the present state of cloud hiring is volatile, to say the least. The battle for tech talent only gets fiercer with time, as businesses struggle to recruit top-quality talent and handle mission-critical GCP, AWS, and Azure projects with a notable skill gap.

If you are a staffing professional looking for GCP experts or AWS pros, then read on for our insider recommendations to make your talent sourcing journey easier.

Stack

Five reasons why AWS, Azure or GCP Cloud projects can fail

Although hyperscalers have revolutionised the way enterprises operate, one of their most feared pitfalls, i.e. platform failure, can have the best of the lot in dire straits.

In general, public cloud platform designs for enterprises focus on being readily available and fault-tolerant. However, it does not make these platforms immune to failure. GCP, AWS, and Azure platform failures can and do occur for various reasons, including the possibility of both hardware/software faults and human error.

In this context, here are five core reasons behind Public Cloud failures, common mistakes made while AWS vs Azure vs Google Cloud talent hiring, and necessary precautions to integrate an error-proof cloud infrastructure:

01

Ineffective hiring & search maturity

The past ten years have witnessed quite a few high-profile failures amidst hyperscalers; even market leaders weren't spared in this fiasco. In 2021, OVHcloud, one of Europe's biggest cloud service providers, suffered an outage caused by human error. In another example, in 2017, AWS had many of its servers offline due to employee error. Yes, even AWS - can you imagine?

Let's face it - **seven out of 10 hyperscale cloud platform failures** occur due to human error or a skills gap. On average, a single hyperscaler platform outage costs millions, and these numbers will only shoot upwards as more companies adapt to public cloud platforms. These reasons scream why recruiting a top-quality team and support is every organisation's safest bet in dodging massive losses.

"Companies are recruiting at junior level and there is a recognition we need a talent pipeline and how we get that, & quot; she says. "... employers are looking at how they can engage in other approaches to ensure they can access that talent pipeline" **- Annette Allmark, Head of Apprenticeships at BCS.**

Let's get specific.

Here's how you can level up your recruitment process and hire the best GCP, AWS and Azure talent:

Look for passive talent

The competition to attract the most talented professionals in the **Cloud talent** field isn't slowing down anytime soon. With so many roles opening up, from devs and engineers to security analysts, software architects, and consultants, companies worldwide are aggressively looking for the perfect fit for their teams.

Recruitment becomes even more difficult for HR professionals, as many eligible candidates are either previously employed or not actively searching for new cloud computing job opportunities. Here at Stack, this is how we would suggest extending your search toward passive talent:

- Social media platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter are proven to be a gem when it comes to connecting and interacting with potential cloud-based candidates.
- Keep your eyes peeled for seminars, conferences, and live events or **meetups** dedicated to technology/ hyperscaler/ cloud computing to network with many talented people in the industry.
- Leverage the power of referrals and communicate with your network. You never know where you might find your next star engineer!
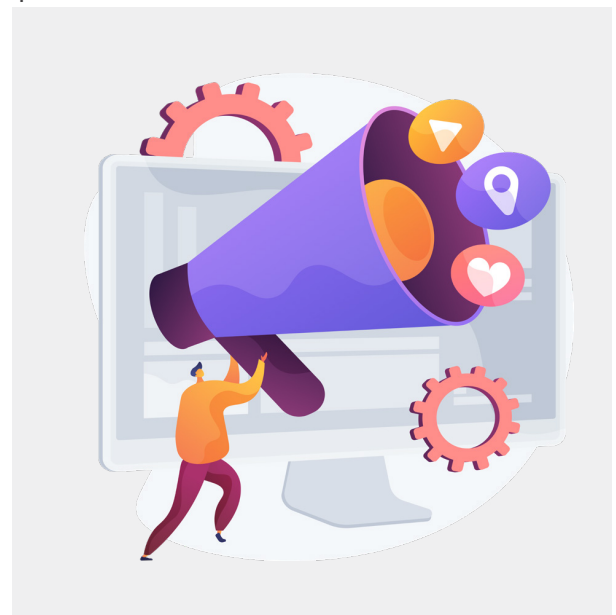
Implement return-to-work programmes

The global IT industry appears to be an avid believer in "second chances". Returnship or return-to-work is increasingly becoming a popular trend, as leading companies such as AWS, Accenture, Cognizant, HCL, etc. wholeheartedly embrace return-to-work programmes.

As employers, understanding that not every employee can share the typical, consistent career path helps diversify their search and introduces them to a wider pool of eligible candidates. Providing an opportunity to those willing to return to the workforce helps the company leverage their years of experience to make more informed, data-driven growth decisions.

Returnship programmes for AWS, Azure, and Google Cloud jobs help these companies attract more people despite the talent crunch, by diverting the focus from fresh to experienced candidates. Essentially, these programmes help experienced hyperscaler candidates resume working in their field after a while, and simultaneously enable recruiters to attract top talent.

Make your requirements clear in job descriptions

Believe it or not, you're always one poorly-written job description away from losing a genuinely interested candidate who would have been a perfect fit.

Passive hiring through social media ads and one-on-one interactions is undoubtedly beneficial, but actively posting jobs is still the #1 way to attract top talent.

The more tactfully you're advertising your company values, key job perks or benefits, and other relevant Must-have/Should-have/Nice-to-have (M/S/N, as we call it here in Stack) information, the quicker you can gather their attention. If potential applicants can quickly comprehend what the role entails, they can easily decide whether it's what they are looking for and respond.

That said, a well-written job description outlines the required qualifications, duties, responsibilities, and work schedules associated with the role in sheer detail. When drafting one for your Azure or Google Cloud or AWS staffing needs, ensure to be clear and concise. Include all relevant information about the job role, but avoid excessive jargon or stretching the JD longer than needed.

> "Firstly, they're casting their recruitment net wider, considering candidates based further afield than they would have done before due to the new remote working model. Parallel to this they are developing new, attractive employee offers that reflect the new home-office hybrid working environment." - **Bev White, CEO at Harvey Nash Group**

If your goal is to attract and retain top-quality talent in today's competitive landscape, attractive job perks and growth opportunities should be on your to-do list.

However, perks and growth opportunities are much more than just a standard competitive salary in cloud computing, as AWS, GCP, and Azure candidates have distinctive preferences, needs, and demands.

And increasingly, an AWS expert builds her talent more and more in this field and thus, this is leading to three swimlanes of expertise. Which means that as a person looking to hire and staff AWS, Azure or GCP talent, you must know what to do differently for each too.
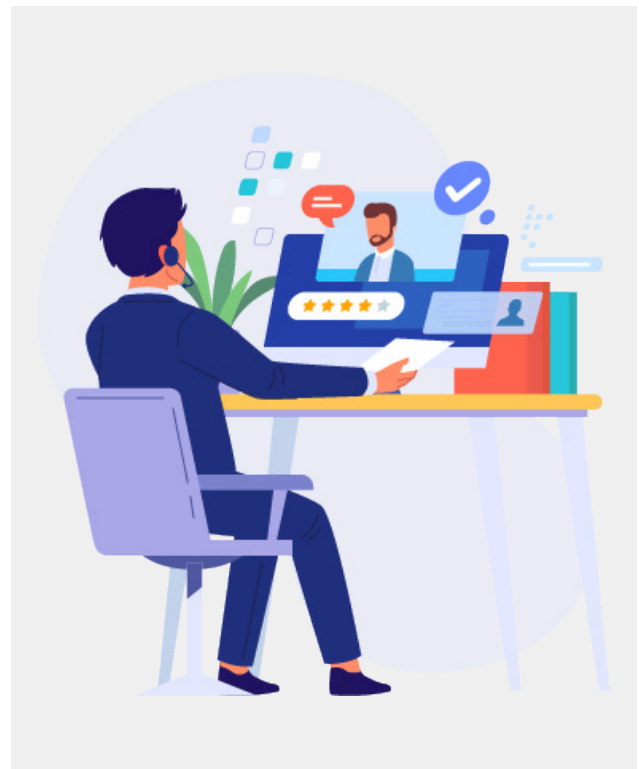
Here are some thoughts from our extensive experience working with each hyperscaler.

Azure-centric hiring

Regardless of how well-designed it may be, your recruitment process can always be optimised for a particular swimlane.

Azure professionals today are mainly searching for a highly flexible, work-from-anywhere model that isn't bound by geographical borders. An AOS survey revealed that when offered flexible working options, **85% of Azure professionals** sign up instantly.

More millennial/Gen Z Azure professionals also root for increased diversity in the workplace. By establishing D&I programmes for underrepresented groups to join your company, you gain the advantage to attract the hidden talent your competitors have missed.

AWS-centric hiring

It's not a secret that Amazon Web Services is currently the #1 choice when it comes to hyperscaler cloud platforms. Thus, to lead the race to attract the best AWS talent the market has to offer, it's important to revamp your AWS cloud talent hiring procedures as an increasingly seamless and painless experience.

"Most of our applicants have multiple offers from different companies, so competition among employers is fierce, and this is where culture and competitive pay are key." **- Sharon Miles, COO at Chip**

AWS professionals are mostly motivated to join by offering attractive career growth and personal development opportunities. These tech wizards are always looking for a chance to handle challenging situations, or to learn more, upskill and diversify their resumes. As with any other employees, AWS personnel would not want to work in toxic work environments, so it's important to ensure your company culture is pleasant and motivating.

GCP-centric hiring

There is no simple answer when it comes to hiring the best GCP professionals out there.

Being in an ever-evolving industry, your Google Cloud talent staffing process should also evolve side-by-side with recent market trends to offer an engaging, remarkable experience. For example, to stay ahead of the curve, begin by offering more than mere basics - remote working, GCP-centric training and development programmes, etc.

Here's another - instead of asking the applicants to commute to your location, arranging virtual interviews or travelling to their location makes it easier for them. Building a GCP-centric micro-site full of relevant information, such as core values, testimonials, work culture, and more, to portray a "GCP culture" would also increase your chances of attracting top talent.

If all this seems a bit overwhelming, do reach out to us here at Stack for all the necessary guidance you need to get it right.

02

Find skill generalists to get you out of Cloud vendor lock-in situations

Vendor lock-ins while moving data or apps across different cloud platforms is a major impediment in hyperscaler projects, and makes collaboration, application portability, or data inter-operation very difficult. It can lead to lost opportunities, in situations where existing cloud providers are notably falling behind in quality, or new competitors offering better services at more competitive prices. Initiating a vendor switch can lead to higher costs, reduced flexibility, and decreased innovation, if not handled tactfully.

Now, you must be wondering why we switched from best practices for hiring Cloud talent to talking about issues with Cloud services. Here's why.

As much as you require super-specialists who know hyperscalers like the back of their hand, you also need generalists who have a broad understanding of Cloud services, infrastructure and operations. Because if you ever get stuck with vendor lock-ins or need help with switching tech, they will be the ones to rescue you and ensure business continuity.

Although being locked in can be troublesome, the best way to avoid this issue is by researching your vendor before hiring their services. Using open-source products is also advised, as these platforms are not tied to an individual vendor and can be effortlessly switched to another vendor if needed. Also, consider using multiple vendors for different purposes to avoid relying on any one provider. Additionally, don't forget to keep an eye out for that pool of architects or SMEs who can toggle across these areas.

03

Think skills beyond AWS, GCP or Azure - well beyond.

Hyperscalers continue to grow and exert more influence over the IT market - at a **23.75% year-on-year growth rate in 2022** to be precise. However, the cost of cloud is also simultaneously increasing to the point of unaffordability for many enterprises.

A recent Gartner study found that hyperscaler expansions have fueled global IT expenditures to **$4.5 trillion in 2022**. Market-dominating platforms such as AWS, GCP, or Azure have the power to drive up their costs due to their economies of scale, which is a red alert for enterprises that hugely rely on cloud services.

However, the following strategies can help manage these rising expenses to ensure your business runs uninterrupted. First, research for more cost-effective alternatives to the dominating hyperscale providers like AWS, Google Cloud, or Amazon web. Various small-scale CSP brands that can offer similar services at a fraction of the cost are available in the market. Think Digital Ocean, for example. It's wise to keep your options open for talent that has exposure to non-hyperscaler usage too.

Second, train your employees to optimise daily workloads to run more efficiently on the cloud, as it can help reduce usage and costs by a great deal. Investing in training your existing staff who you have already onboarded to your Cloud projects would make things effortless and smooth.

Lastly, resort to AI-powered cost management tools, if necessary, to keep any additional, overlooked cloud expenses in check.

When you scout for Cloud talent, do you encounter some cool folks who think beyond the obvious along these lines?

04

Layer in FinOps skills to surface hidden costs with AWS, Azure or GCP usage

While hyperscalers offer various benefits, including (but not limited to reliability and scalability, their hidden costs and lack of transparency can put the best businesses on a tightrope.

When hiring for core AWS, GCP and Azure roles in your organisation, it is worthwhile to also look out for FinOps talent who straddle these three Public Clouds and can act as the gatekeepers for maintaining transparency in costs and budgets.

In this manner, you deliver way beyond the immediate requirement of finding 'Cloud people'. You, as a strategic and operational-thinking staffing expert, would be helping the Project Lead reduce the overall cost of owning the Cloud in question.

So, how do those gatekeepers function, you might ask? These platforms are frequently observed to charge for extra services that are "hidden" in their normal pricing breakdown, such as data egress fees. This can quickly add up to a hefty amount, especially for organisations that move around large amounts of data.

Hyperscalers also typically charge for services on a pay-as-you-go basis, which can be difficult to budget for. In addition, their opaque costing structures make it harder to comprehend how much is required to set aside for the cloud. This lack of transparency can raise various issues during negotiations of contracts, or while budgeting for future costs.

It's not a surprise then that staffing and hiring for Cloud roles is never a one-track job! This is where Stack can step in and make things painless for you.

05

Ask whether your hyperscaler is right for you

For one of your data-intensive projects, you might need a GCP as the core, but for your volume compute needs, you might opt for an AWS. Point is that while you might opt for different Cloud service providers, you will also have to factor in different interfaces/ systems. If the project team chooses a hyperscaler that might not fit with your current organisational skill pool, or does not have skill fluidity across the hyperscalers, you might be starting off on a wrong note.

The market today receives competing and conflicting messages from these established hyperscalers, each with their distinctive interfaces and operating systems. While the thought of choosing the best fit may be haunting for enterprises just getting their hands on cloud computing, it's not that complicated.

At Stack, we believe the secret is to find the hyperscaler that best fits your requirements by weighing in a few imperative factors, such as pricing options, core features, support, and specific needs. For instance, let's say you frequently need to connect to multiple devices; choose a hyperscaler with a robust interface. Once you've figured out the perfect vendor, the rest becomes relatively easier.

If not, you risk less than successful completions on your AWS, Azure and GCP projects.

Now What?

Although growing complexities make hyperscale platforms appear risky as investments, there's always a silver lining to this cloud.

Challenges like lock-ins, opaque pricing structures, increasing costs, and more can be critical to run operations smoothly, but it is easily manageable with the right strategy in play. Besides, hiring for AWS, Azure, and Google Cloud roles can never be successful with a "one-size-fits-all" approach: reinvent your HR processes, include attractive benefits, and follow rising industry trends to gain a competitive edge.

Still need help?

Worried about how to maintain your current cloud infrastructure with those hard-to-get Cloud experts? Come on over to Stack. We are ready to support you irrespective of which phase you're in currently. Trusted by market-leading companies worldwide, we're your go-to partner for guidance on Cloud talent search, to deliver partner-assisted Cloud-based outcomes such as on Cloud cost management, security, ROI, compliance, and more.