

HILLSIDE AI · AI TRANSFORMATION TOOLKIT

AI Talent Matrix

Map your organisation's AI capability across three categories — and identify where to act

Chapter Reference: Chapter 7 — Building the Team, the Tools, and the Culture for AI

THE THREE AI TALENT CATEGORIES

Successful AI adoption requires three distinct categories of talent. Rate your organisation's current capability (1–5) and the criticality of each category to your planned AI programme (1–5). Any category where Criticality exceeds Capability by 2+ points requires immediate action.

Category 1: AI Builders

People who create AI systems: data scientists, ML engineers, data engineers, AI architects.

Role / Sub-Category	Current Capability (1–5)	Programme Criticality (1–5)	Gap (C – Cap)	Action Required
Data Scientist				
ML Engineer				
Data Engineer				
AI Architect				
AI Developer				

Strategic Note: Build internally only when use cases are proprietary and pipeline is large enough. Otherwise partner.

Category 2: AI Managers

People who direct, oversee, and govern AI systems: programme managers, AI product owners, data governance and ethics leads.

Role / Sub-Category	Current Capability (1–5)	Programme Criticality (1–5)	Gap (C – Cap)	Action Required
AI Programme Manager				
AI Product Owner				

Data Governance Specialist				
AI Ethics Lead				
Technology Executive				

Strategic Note: The most consistently underinvested category. Every significant AI initiative needs a named AI Manager.

Category 3: AI Users

Frontline and operational staff who interact with AI systems in their daily work.

Role / Sub-Category	Current Capability (1–5)	Programme Criticality (1–5)	Gap (C – Cap)	Action Required
Operations Staff				
Customer-Facing Staff				
Finance Analysts				
HR Professionals				
Sales Team				

Strategic Note: The largest group and the most often neglected. AI User effectiveness determines your actual AI ROI.

BUILD / BUY / PARTNER DECISION GUIDE

Option	Choose When	Key Risk
Build Internally	Proprietary data, distinctive competitive AI, large pipeline	Higher cost, longer timeline, talent competition
Buy Commercial	Common use case, speed critical, cost of differentiation exceeds value	Vendor dependency, limited customisation
Partner	Need to move fast, bespoke requirements, want capability transfer	Relationship dependency, knowledge transfer quality

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