MeriTalk
Improving the Outcomes of Government IT

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FEDERAL CYBER ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IQ TEST SHOWS 90 PERCENT OF FEDS VIEW AI AS CYBER FIX, BUT 48 PERCENT AFRAID OF AI RISKS

Low AI Anxiety – Only 24 Percent of Feds Fear AI will Eliminate Their Jobs

Alexandria, Va., November 14, 2017 – MeriTalk, a public-private partnership focused on improving the outcomes of government IT, today announced the results of its new report, "The Federal Cyber AI IQ Test." The study, underwritten by IBM, tells us that 90 percent of Federal IT decision makers assert that AI could help prepare agencies to defend against real-world cyber attacks. Further, 87 percent of Feds assert that AI will improve the efficiency of the cyber security workforce and 91 percent note their agency could utilize AI to monitor human activity and deter insider threats.

And, Feds view cyber as the best place for government to harness AI today – 59 percent select cyber as the first AI application, followed by data analytics (45 percent), fraud detection (31 percent), and risk management (26 percent).

But, it's not all good news for AI in Uncle Sam's cyber arsenal. Just 21 percent say that they are "very comfortable" with their agency enlisting AI for cyber security today. Further, 48 percent of Feds are afraid to lead the pack on AI cyber deployment – expressing concern about being the first to install AI on the front lines.

Against this backdrop, it's interesting to note that 54 percent of agencies have begun discussing using AI in cyber – and of that group, only 41 percent have a formal AI cyber strategy in place.

Considering agencies' roll-out plans, 70 percent of Fed IT decision makers prioritize detecting breaches or hacking attempts – with 64 percent calling out predicting threats, 51 percent uncovering new patterns, and 46 percent training for cyber attacks. Some agencies are already utilizing AI, "We monitor IT trends like AI and data analytics, to provide us with indicators of

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where the technology marketplace is investing and can expect significant advancements," says Frank Konieczny, chief technology officer, Air Force.

Drilling down on human factors, Feds say AI is more likely to add jobs to the workforce than eliminate them. Feds tell us AI will allow cyber workers to react to attacks more quickly, allow cyber workers more time for advanced investigations, and can improve strategic planning and scenario training. "Using AI for cybersecurity in the federal government can significantly help close the resource gap in the near term, as long as policy – or lack thereof – doesn't inhibit its use," says Ian Doyle, executive security advisor, IBM U.S. Federal.

"Is AI the silver bullet for Uncle Sam's cyber ailments?" asks Steve O'Keeffe, founder, MeriTalk. "Clearly something has to change – an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

"The Federal Cyber AI IQ Test" is based on an online survey of 150 Federal IT managers familiar with their agency's AI plans and policies, in September and October 2017. The report has a margin of error of ±7.97 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. To download the full report, please visit: https://www.meritalk.com/study/federal-cyber-ai-iq-test/.

About MeriTalk

The voice of tomorrow's government today, MeriTalk is a public-private partnership focused on improving the outcomes of government IT. Focusing on government's hot-button issues, MeriTalk hosts Big Data Exchange, Cloud Computing Exchange, Cyber Security Exchange, and Data Center Exchange – platforms dedicated to supporting public-private dialogue and collaboration. MeriTalk connects with an audience of 115,000 government community contacts. For more information, visit www.meritalk.com or follow us on Twitter, @MeriTalk. MeriTalk is a 300Brand organization.