



Division of Technology Services

State of Utah

Department of Government Operations

Operational Efficiency

***There and Back Again with Vantage: A HCM Tale by
Utah***

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Alan Fuller - alanfuller@utah.gov
Stephanie Weteling - stephanie@utah.gov

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across the country, state governments are modernizing enterprise resource planning (ERP) environments to replace aging, fragmented systems that can no longer meet the demands of a modern workforce. Utah's Vantage human capital management initiative represents a transformational step in that journey. Designed to modernize and unify Utah's human resource, payroll, recruiting, onboarding, and workforce management capabilities, the initiative focused on delivering a secure, integrated, and scalable platform capable of supporting more than 26,000 state employees.

Utah approached the initiative with a clear vision: modern technology should simplify operations, empower employees and managers, improve transparency, and reduce the administrative burdens created by disconnected legacy systems. Working collaboratively with agency stakeholders and CGI, Utah implemented an integrated Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solution built on CGI Advantage®, aligning human resource and payroll functions on a single platform while preserving flexibility for future growth.

The implementation strategy emphasized architectural integrity, agile delivery methodologies, intentional stakeholder engagement, and organizational change management. Following the successful March 2026 enterprise cutover, Utah established a foundation for long-term operational efficiency, enhanced reporting and analytics, stronger data security, and improved employee experiences through modern self-service capabilities and mobile accessibility.

IDEA

Problem or opportunity addressed

Utah recognized that its existing HR and payroll ecosystem could no longer effectively support the operational needs of a modern government workforce. The state relied on multiple homegrown and disconnected aging legacy systems that created inconsistent data, duplicated effort, cumbersome manual processes, and significant administrative overhead. The fragmented environment limited reporting capabilities, complicated integrations, and hindered the ability to provide employees and managers with modern digital tools.

Several longstanding challenges drove the modernization effort. Previous audits identified the absence of Employee Self Service (ESS) and Manager Self Service (MSS) functionality as a significant gap in the state's workforce technology capabilities. Enhancements to the legacy HR and performance management systems were costly, time-consuming, and difficult to implement. Interfaces between the HR and payroll systems frequently required manual intervention and correction.

Payroll operations faced similar obstacles. Reporting tools were limited, data exports required extensive manual manipulation, and interface and batch-processing issues between HR and payroll systems created daily correction efforts. The management of employee security roles and access permissions consumed significant administrative time, particularly when assigning or correcting ESS-related access. The state also faced increasing complexity in tracking out-of-state employees and complying with varying withholding and reporting requirements. From a technical perspective, the state needed to modernize core infrastructure capabilities related to batch processing, data integrity, real-time system integration, and mobile accessibility.

The legacy environment also increased the operational burden associated with system maintenance, upgrades, backups, and disaster recovery.

The Vantage initiative addressed these challenges by consolidating multiple systems into a single modern platform designed to improve operational efficiency, standardize processes, strengthen security, and deliver a more intuitive experience for agencies, managers, and employees alike.

Why it matters

Utah's modernization initiative was rooted in the belief that HR and payroll systems should actively enable organizational success rather than constrain it through outdated processes and technology limitations. State leaders recognized that integrating HR and payroll on a single platform would improve operational alignment, increase transparency, and create opportunities for more informed workforce management. The state believed that employees and managers should have direct access to modern tools and reliable information that empower them to make decisions and complete tasks efficiently. By moving away from siloed systems and fragmented processes, Utah aimed to foster greater collaboration across agencies while reducing administrative overhead and improving overall service delivery.

The transformation effort was designed to deliver measurable operational benefits across the enterprise. Standardizing business processes around industry best practices streamlines workflows and improves consistency across agencies. Establishing a centralized data environment provides accurate, timely, and dependable reporting capabilities. Employee and manager self-service functionality reduces administrative workloads while improving accessibility and user experience.

Utah approached the initiative as more than a technology replacement. The state intentionally challenged historical processes and long-standing assumptions, designing toward industry best practices while engaging agencies throughout the transformation process. Change champions and "Camp Guides" were embedded throughout agencies to increase understanding, identify concerns early, encourage collaboration, and maintain a solution-oriented mindset across the organization.

What makes it different

Several factors distinguished Utah's Vantage initiative from traditional ERP modernization efforts:

- First, the project was grounded in a strong team mentality focused on shared purpose and collective success. From the outset, stakeholders across HR, payroll, finance, security, communications, and technology aligned around a common understanding of the initiative's long-term goals and organizational impact. Rather than operating in isolated workstreams, teams consistently emphasized collaboration and mutual support.
- Second, the state established an Executive Steering Committee that provided enterprise-level governance, accountability, and prioritization throughout the project lifecycle. This governance structure ensured alignment between project objectives, organizational priorities, and implementation decisions.
- Third, Utah placed special emphasis on organizational change management. The initiative was designed not only to modernize systems, but also to transform the way employees and agencies interacted with workforce technology. The project team actively

engaged stakeholders throughout implementation, provided ongoing communication and training opportunities, and encouraged continuous feedback to support adoption and long-term success.

What makes it universal

Utah's modernization journey reflects challenges and priorities shared by many state governments across the country. Agencies everywhere are seeking to replace aging legacy systems, improve operational efficiency, strengthen cybersecurity, modernize workforce management, and provide employees with more intuitive digital experiences.

The Vantage initiative demonstrates how states can successfully modernize enterprise operations by combining strong governance, intentional change management, agile delivery methodologies, and modern SaaS-based technology platforms. The project aligns closely with common state CIO priorities related to digital government, workforce modernization, cybersecurity, cloud adoption, data-driven decision-making, and operational efficiency.

The state's emphasis on stakeholder engagement, agile execution, enterprise collaboration, and continuous improvement provides a replicable model for other governments pursuing large-scale modernization initiatives.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Vantage implementation was executed through a phased, enterprise-wide modernization strategy designed to reduce risk while maintaining operational continuity.

The first phase launched on July 1, 2025, with the deployment of Performance Management capabilities. The second and largest phase occurred on March 18, 2026, when the state completed the full enterprise cutover for HR, payroll, finance integration, recruiting, and onboarding.

The project team utilized agile methodologies throughout implementation, organizing work into Program Increments with defined sprint cycles. As the initiative evolved, the team continuously refined sprint lengths and collaboration structures to better align with the complexity and pace of the work being performed.

Daily standups initially served as a key coordination mechanism across the growing implementation team. As the project matured and participation expanded, the team transitioned to twice-weekly enterprise standups focused on blockers, dependencies, and issue resolution, while smaller focused working sessions addressed high-priority topics and specialized workstreams.

Mock conversions and parallel testing exercises played a critical role in preparing for deployment. During the Workstream 1 mock cutover, the team achieved exceptionally high conversion success rates, with only 612 failures among more than 140,000 historical records and only 215 failures among more than 25,000 active employee records.

For Workstream 2, the team completed six full mock cutovers and four parallel payroll exercises prior to launch. The extensive preparation, including countless hours of testing and weekend

validation activities, helped ensure a smooth enterprise transition for approximately 25,000 employees. The State also successfully validated payroll processing accuracy, established processes for triaging and resolving post-launch issues.

Successful implementation was measured through multiple operational and organizational outcomes. The State decommissioned six legacy systems, with an additional system scheduled for retirement in FY27. The implementation established accurate employee records across critical workforce data elements including organizational structure, position information, titles, compensation, and leave balances.

Who was involved

The success of the Vantage initiative depended on close collaboration between state leadership, agency stakeholders, and CGI implementation teams. Utah assembled a lean but highly focused core project team representing payroll, HR, finance, security, technical operations, quality assurance, communications, and centralized project leadership. CGI partnered closely with the State throughout planning, implementation, testing, organizational change management, and deployment activities.

Leadership support was critical throughout the initiative. Executive sponsorship and governance structures helped maintain organizational alignment, prioritize enterprise objectives, and sustain momentum during key implementation phases.

The state also prioritized stakeholder engagement and communication from the beginning of the project. Agency representatives, referred to as “Camp Guides,” participated in recurring fireside meetings designed to share updates, gather feedback, identify concerns, and strengthen agency readiness.

Manager engagement was another major focus area. The project team conducted more than 30 agency-focused manager Q&A sessions that provided targeted guidance, additional training, and opportunities for managers to raise concerns and share feedback. These sessions helped the implementation team identify common themes that informed training materials, communications strategies, and post-launch enhancement priorities.

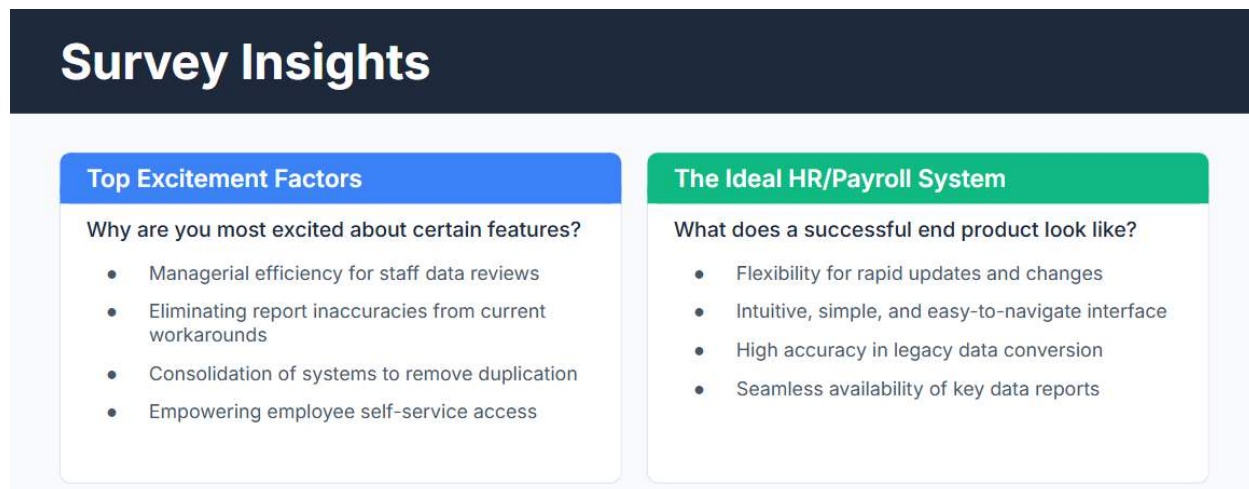
Utah adopted a “leave no employee behind” philosophy throughout the rollout. Camp Guides were encouraged to tailor communications and training delivery methods to meet the unique needs of their agencies and employee populations. Following launch, the State also implemented an employee feedback process that has already generated dozens of comments and enhancement suggestions to support ongoing improvement.

How we did it

Utah's formal project launch occurred in January 2024, but agency engagement began well before the RFP was finalized. The state conducted discovery sessions with key stakeholders and agencies to identify existing pain points, desired features, and essential requirements for a unified human capital management system. These insights informed the development of the RFP.

The second round of outreach started within a month of the project launch and was designed to identify and confirm the most critical system attributes for users, proactively address potential issues, and establish a baseline of expectations to serve as the benchmark for defining a

successful final product. More than 100 responses were received and used as a reference point and benchmark for evaluating both operational efficiency and overall success.



The modernization effort introduced a secure, cloud-based architecture designed to improve integration, reporting, analytics, scalability, and operational resilience.

One of the most significant advancements was the implementation of a centralized cloud-based data lake capable of securely storing, integrating, processing, and managing workforce data across systems and functions. The state also deployed enhanced analytics and reporting capabilities using Microsoft Power BI, giving agencies and business users access to interactive dashboards, operational insights, and workforce analytics.

The integrated architecture strengthened data security and reduced technical debt. During implementation, the state evaluated all external HR and payroll data interfaces and eliminated 40 outdated or unnecessary connections. At the same time, 61 modernized interfaces were developed with updated data-sharing agreements that reflect evolving privacy and security requirements.

By consolidating systems and reducing unnecessary integrations, Utah improved data integrity, strengthened compliance, reduced operational risk, and simplified long-term system administration.

IMPACT

What the project made better

Core workforce functions were spread across separate platforms that required extensive manual intervention and custom integrations to function together. Data consistency was a persistent challenge because information had to move between systems through batch processes and interface files that frequently failed or required correction. HR, payroll, and technical staff spent considerable time resolving synchronization issues, performing manual reconciliations, and correcting employee records and payroll transactions.

The legacy environment created significant operational and technical limitations. Reporting

capabilities were limited and often dependent on manually exporting and consolidating data from multiple sources. Managers and employees lacked modern self-service functionality, resulting in increased administrative workloads for HR and payroll teams. Many systems were not mobile friendly and could not support the level of accessibility or user experience expected in a modern digital workplace.

The unified architecture significantly reduced complexity by eliminating redundant systems, removing outdated interfaces, and standardizing workflows across agencies. Vantage introduced real-time integration capabilities, centralized workforce data, and substantially enhanced reporting and analytics functionality.

By consolidating systems, eliminating obsolete interfaces, and modernizing data-sharing agreements, Utah improved governance, enhanced compliance, and mitigated operational risk. The transition to a secure, cloud-based environment with standardized workflows allowed the state to reduce technical debt while strengthening resilience and scalability. This initiative established a sustainable technology foundation designed to support future efforts in workforce modernization.

How we know

The success of the Vantage initiative is demonstrated through both operational outcomes and user adoption. The launch introduced over 60 operational reports that enhanced data accuracy and accessibility. By leveraging the new system's baseline functionality and addressing redundancies, the state was able to retire more than 250 legacy reports. Vantage has enabled significant process improvements across agencies. One agency successfully decommissioned a third-party time entry tool in favor of using Vantage exclusively. An upcoming interface with a different third-party system will automate time entry for another agency, removing the burden from managers who previously had to manually input employee hours.

The system now features automated candidate dispositioning. Instead of manually launching emails, HR simply updates the candidate's status - such as "not qualified" or "withdrew" - and the appropriate notification is sent automatically. The transition to automate payroll cycles has replaced the need for manual job execution, and the integration of workflows now supports all payroll transactions. HR gained the flexibility to overfill positions, eliminating the delay of waiting for a role to be completely vacated. These advancements represent just a portion of the initial successes and operational efficiencies we continue to realize.

What now

The state views the Vantage initiative as the foundation for ongoing modernization rather than a one-time implementation. Our progress in refining the onboarding experience has only just begun, with initial successes such as enabling email and network access before an employee's first day. As we look ahead to enhancing the entire journey for new hires—from their initial application to their first system login—we are certain that our combined expertise, updated processes, and robust toolset will allow us to achieve these goals.

The investment in Vantage has already demonstrated significant value through stronger workforce visibility, enhanced employee experiences, modernized security capabilities, and reduced administrative complexity. Most importantly, the initiative has established a modern digital foundation that will enable Utah to continue delivering efficient, transparent, and responsive government services for years to come.