



NUCLEUS
RESEARCH

Cornerstone unveils Workforce AI

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The Bottom Line

Cornerstone recently hosted the New York City leg of its Connect 2026 tour. At the event, the vendor announced the launch of Cornerstone Workforce AI, repositioning itself from a provider of talent management software to an intelligent workforce readiness platform. At its foundation, Cornerstone's People Graph and Skills Engine continuously ingest data from internal and external sources to automatically infer employee skills and surface workforce insights. The platform also introduces Readiness Agents, deployable on an a la carte basis, to automate repetitive administrative tasks and drive targeted outcomes such as improved internal mobility and skills optimization. Nucleus expects the platform's outcomes-focused approach to drive strong adoption as organizations seek solutions to address skills gaps and other workforce challenges without the noise and confusion that have emerged in a market largely driven by AI innovation.

Overview

At the New York leg of its 2026 Connect Tour, Cornerstone announced the launch of Cornerstone Workforce AI. Positioned as an intelligence platform for workforce readiness, Workforce AI delivers insights, skills, and AI agents to help customers drive measurable outcomes from their talent management initiatives. Despite moving away from the Cornerstone Galaxy branding, existing functionality for learning management, dynamic content, team development, skills optimization, and workforce intelligence remains. However, taking a new Agentic AI-forward vision, Cornerstone Workforce AI introduces Readiness Agents that customers can adopt as needed to solve specific problems or drive targeted outcomes.

Under the Hood

The core of the Cornerstone Workforce AI platform is the People Graph, which, together with the vendor's Skills Engine, continuously ingests and maps data in real time across an organization. It can then automatically infer employee skills, tasks, and capabilities. This replaces inconsistent data collection methods, such as self-reporting. Instead, the People Graph and Skills Engine pull Cornerstone's workforce data and taxonomy of more than 55,000 skills, along with one billion workforce profiles and signals from various systems of record, into an inference layer. Guardrails are built into the platform, and maintain compliance with internal policies and regulations, such as ISO/IEC 42001 standards.

Readiness Agents can be deployed within the platform on an as-needed basis, with examples including the Embark Navigator, Dynamic Goals, Proactive Coaching, Skills Architect, and Internal Mobility. In addition to prebuilt agents, Cornerstone also offers customers the ability to build custom agents for more specific uses. Extensibility is central to the new Workforce AI platform, offering model context protocol (MCP) servers that enable AI agents to securely communicate and share context across enterprise systems. This openness is increasingly highlighted through strategic partnerships. For example, the vendor has joined Salesforce's AgentExchange marketplace, where MCP servers enable Agentforce agents to use Cornerstone's skills intelligence and learning capabilities directly within Salesforce workflows and Slack.

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Expected Benefits

Nucleus expects customers adopting Cornerstone Workforce AI to more effectively keep pace with the rapid changes in a volatile labor market. Through its intelligence layer, the platform can surface skill gaps, identify hidden internal talent, and benchmark against broader labor market data. The ability to synthesize vast amounts of information, not only from Cornerstone but also from other various business systems, provides a more comprehensive, holistic view of the workforce, which can drive improvements to workforce planning and prescribe more targeted learning and career paths.

The platform's readiness agent architecture further supports efficiency by automating repetitive administrative tasks such as assignment management, compliance monitoring, and content curation, freeing teams to focus on higher-value initiatives. These agents are designed to drive specific outcomes based on an organization's most pressing needs, including closing skills gaps, accelerating employee readiness for new roles, and building the broader readiness required to adapt to environments where AI is increasingly pervasive.

Looking Ahead

The pace of technological change shows no signs of slowing down, making traditional, static approaches to learning and development insufficient. Cornerstone Workforce AI represents a tangible solution for organizations lacking the visibility or bandwidth to close rapidly emerging skill gaps. The platform's focus on driving specific outcomes through agentic AI, instead of simply competing with the market on the number of agents delivered, demonstrates a commitment to customer success. This approach will likely lead to higher rates of adoption as organizations can better understand their available options and tie them to actionable goals. Additionally, by expanding its partnerships and prioritizing extensibility, Cornerstone poises Workforce AI to serve as a command center for workforce leaders, pulling information in from various sources to create a more comprehensive view of the organization's workforce initiatives.

Skill gaps are emerging quicker than they can be filled, warranting a re-architecting of how learning and development are managed.