

**CASE STUDY**



**Capital One**

**Leading in cloud by  
investing in people**

# About Capital One

Capital One Financial Corporation ([www.capitalone.com](http://www.capitalone.com)) is a financial holding company that offers a broad spectrum of financial products and services to consumers, small businesses, and commercial clients through a variety of channels. A Fortune 500 company, Capital One trades on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "COF" and is included in the S&P 100 index.



## Eric Lawson

Senior Director of Tech Learning  
at Capital One



 **Virginia, USA**

 **Industry**  
Financial services

 **Founded**  
1994

 **Revenue**  
28 billion USD (2018)

 **Employees**  
48,800 (2019)

 **Client Since**  
2016

# Capital One is a leader in cloud adoption

Capital One was one of the first enterprises to understand the potential of the public cloud, recognizing the unmistakable value in the agility, productivity, security, and efficiency that building on it provides. To help achieve their cloud-based transformation, Capital One developed Tech College to serve as its internal tech-learning organization. Programs such as Tech College are able to standardize associate learning by curating their course offerings while still empowering associates with the freedom and flexibility to customize their learning.

As Eric Lawson, Senior Director of Tech Learning at Capital One explains:

“

**We have really focused on building a culture of continued learning and development, with advocacy from our most senior Tech leaders, and action in the way of opening up more time for associates to learn.”**



# The value of skills development and reskilling

Skills development programs allow organizations like Capital One to source the talent they need while retaining valuable institutional knowledge.

“

**As we continually advance our technology stack and integrate new technologies into our products and business, we must continually train and re-skill our employees to remain on the bleeding edge of technology,”**

Lawson explains.

Due to the virtual nature of A Cloud Guru, Capital One's cloud-based learning hasn't stopped even while the office commutes have.

“Capital One's shift to the cloud and broader tech transformation has been a key enabler in our ability to swiftly respond to the coronavirus and ensure our associates were able to remain connected and focused on helping our customers in this time,” Lawson notes.

## About Capital One Tech College

As a part of Tech College, Capital One provides A Cloud Guru as a resource for associates to grow their cloud development skills. Capital One associates have eagerly taken advantage of various A Cloud Guru offerings and received AWS certifications, including Cloud Practitioner, Solutions Architect, Developer, Machine Learning, Advanced Networking, Data Analytics, SysOps Administration, and Big Data.



**7,200** A Cloud Guru users at Capital One



**35,000+** lessons completed



**10** study groups

# A winning formula for scaling cloud transformation

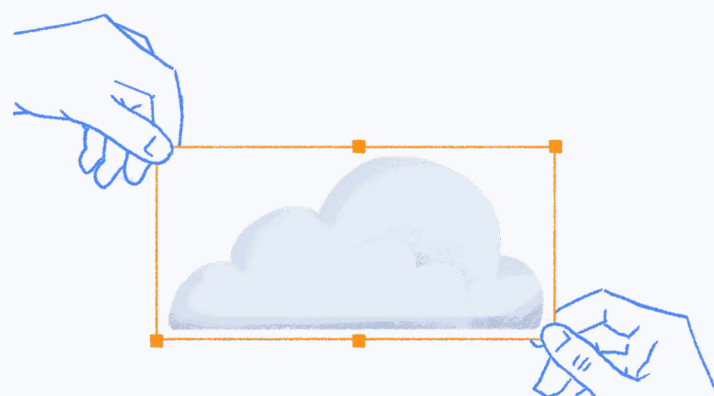
With thousands of engineers on staff, Capital One leverages creative approaches like gamification and collaboration to keep associates engaged with tech learning. As Aaron Sturgill, Capital One's Product Owner for Tech College products explains, "Learning League has enabled all associates an easy tool to engage learning and make it more fun."

Thus far, we've seen engagement changes of **500+ percent** among thousands of associates.

We expect this to grow as we provide additional learning opportunities like third-party partners and Gosu contributions."

In terms of collaboration, Capital One has found bootcamps to be a particularly useful tool for learning. Based on the complexity of the course, associates can sign up for 4 and 10 week sessions to learn in cohort settings. As one Capital One bootcamp attendee affirmed, "Bootcamp is very helpful to associates because of the structure and weekly reminder emails."

Bootcamps drive further value by setting course and certification expectations while fostering collaboration and accountability. As another attendee noted, "The kickoff meeting was helpful to understand the course logistics, tools, resources, and participant expectations. I received all information needed to get started with the AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner training."



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*Bootcamp Attendee*

# Measuring success through certifications

Cloud certifications can be used to develop cloud fluency, set benchmarks, motivate, standardize, and build the momentum needed to break through legacy practices. Capital One has prioritized engineer certifications and is continuing to raise the bar on its yearly goals and metrics. As Lawson explains, “AWS certifications have been a great way for us to demonstrate fluency of associates working in the cloud ecosystem. Preparing for and passing AWS exams requires focus, knowledge, and experience. We’ve anchored to this as an industry-recognized marker for cloud fluency, though we also highly encourage supplemental training for how we work in the cloud at Capital One.”

## LEVEL UP WITH ACG

A Cloud Guru offers hundreds of courses and technical deep dives into the latest tech to help you prep for your AWS, Azure, GCP, and Linux certification exams.

[View ACG Courses](#)

## What’s the business value of certifications?

Certifications are linked with improved job performance.



<sup>1</sup> Global Knowledge, 2019 IT Skills and Salary Report

<sup>2</sup> Deloitte — Becoming Irresistible (edited)

Certifications create positive business value.

Certified engineers outpace their non-certified peers in a number of key performance areas. When asked to estimate their value,

**63%** of IT decision-makers peg the business value of a certified employee over a non-certified employee at more than **\$10,000 a year.**<sup>2</sup>  
**22%** said the value was far higher, at over **\$30,000.**<sup>1</sup>

Certifications are the foundation of the “comprehensively trained” organization.



Comprehensively trained organizations are 56% more likely to be first to market with an **innovative product or service.**<sup>2</sup>



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**Eric Lawson**, Senior Director of Tech Learning

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# Cloud transformation takes a talent transformation

Capital One proves that cloud transformation requires an **investment in people**.

“

**We've seen encouraging year-over-year increases in our associates achieving their certifications and plan to continue on this journey in 2021 and beyond,”**

Lawson summarized.

ACG For Business can help enterprises effectively scale learning and develop a culture of cloud innovation through self-paced, hands-on skills development; role-based learning paths; sprint-based tools to motivate; and analytics to measure ROI and justify spend.

## ACG For Business

-  **hands-on**  
skills development
-  role-based  
**learning paths**
-  sprint-based  
**tools to motivate**
-  **analytics**  
to measure ROI



# The ROI of certifications is cloud innovation

Industry-leading organizations know that investing in upskilling and reskilling talent are key to staying ahead of the competition. Cloud innovation takes talent with cutting-edge cloud skills, and certifications act as a proxy for those skills.

A Cloud Guru can help you create a culture of continuous learning in your organization with a hands-on approach to skills development. See why 96% of our business customers saw improved results within six months.

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[Get a Demo](#)

