Mechanism for Talent Development and Competency Enhancement in Mainstream Media

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Abstract

As media convergence advances further in depth, the shortage of talent and structural imbalances in mainstream media severely constrain their high-quality development. This paper, based on the functional positioning of mainstream media and relevant planning requirements, analyzes the characteristics of talent transformation from single editorial roles to multidisciplinary competencies. It proposes a talent development mechanism comprising "optimized recruitment, tiered training, practical refinement, and technological empowerment," along with supporting safeguard systems. In line with the demands of the AI era, this framework offers practical pathways to address talent challenges and enhance professional competence.

Keywords

Mainstream media, talent development, competency and literacy.

1. Introduction

Under the context of media convergence advancing vertically and deeply, media ideologies are undergoing iterative updates and communication landscapes are experiencing profound adjustments, presenting both opportunities and challenges for mainstream media. With rapid evolution in digital information technology, the new media industry urgently needs a new breed of versatile professionals who possess the ability to guide public opinion with positive values, creative communication skills adapted to market dynamics, and technical expertise aligned with technological transformation [1]. Media convergence has now entered a "chemical reaction" phase, where multimedia products such as short videos and live streaming have become dominant communication platforms. However, talent shortages remain prominent: traditional editorial personnel struggle to meet the demands of integration, while there is insufficient supply of hybrid talents in technology and operations-falling short of the goal set forth in the National Talent Development Plan for Radio, Television, and Online Audiovisual Media (2024–2028) to "alleviate talent shortages in key areas." Two core questions must be addressed: What kind of talent does mainstream media need in the new era? And how can we establish a scientific and efficient mechanism for talent cultivation and competence enhancement? In light of the rapid development of artificial intelligence, this paper proposes a "one-body-two-wings-four-integrations" model for cultivating versatile new media talents, effectively addressing the challenges faced by local universities in new media education [2]. With the swift advancement of information technology, the era of deep integration-characterized by omni-media coverage, holographic media, participatory media, and effective media-has already arrived [3].

Based on the reality of deep media integration, this study combines the functional positioning of mainstream media with relevant policy orientations to systematically analyze the structural transformation in talent demand. It establishes an integrated talent development mechanism encompassing "recruitment, training, practical application, and technology," along with

supporting guarantee systems. This approach not only provides practical pathways for mainstream media to address talent challenges and fulfill policy requirements, but also enriches related research outcomes, offering significant theoretical and practical value.

2. Structural Shift in Talent Demand for Mainstream Media

The deepening of media convergence has led to fundamental changes in the communication models, content forms and operation methods of mainstream media. The demand for talents has shifted from a single orientation to a more comprehensive and diversified one, which aligns with the goal of the "15-19 Talent Development Plan for National Radio, Television and Online Audio-Visual" to "cultivate high-level, innovative, comprehensive and leading talents". This is specifically reflected in three aspects:

In terms of capabilities, there is a transformation from "single news gathering and editing" to a "comprehensive ability including planning, collecting, editing, publishing, evaluating, operation, and technology". Traditional media professionals focus on text gathering and editing. In the new era, they must possess the ability to handle the entire process, being able to plan mainstream-oriented and audience-relevant communication themes, optimize the collection, editing, and communication effects, and also be able to use tools such as short video editing and data analysis to adapt to the needs of multiple platforms, becoming "specialized and versatile" all-media talents, which aligns with the requirements of the "implementation of a special plan for all-media talent cultivation" as stipulated in the plan.

The imbalance in the talent structure is particularly prominent and has become a development bottleneck. On one hand, there is a huge shortage of technical, operational, and product-oriented talents. Traditional media mainly rely on journalists and editors as their core, lacking professionals who are proficient in big data and artificial intelligence, which is inconsistent with the deployment of "strengthening the cultivation of audio-visual new media talents"; on the other hand, there is a significant generation gap in talents. Older media professionals have rich experience but lack skills in new technologies, while young people are familiar with new media but lack professional accumulation and political judgment, which is at odds with the requirement of "optimizing the talent structure".

The core competencies have been restructured into a four-dimensional system: "Politics + Profession + Technology + Innovation", with the addition of current era essential competencies such as AI cognition and AI application. Political competence is the foundation, and it must comply with the plan's requirement of "strengthening the political competence of talents"; professional competence is the core, while technical competence facilitates communication, and innovative competence drives development; AI competence focuses on technical laws, security prevention, and authenticity risks.

3. The Core of the Talent Cultivation Mechanism Construction

3.1. Entrance Optimization: Accurately Attracting Talents and Building a Solid Foundation for Talent Development

Accurate recruitment is the prerequisite for talent cultivation. Create scientific recruitment standards and flexible mechanisms that break away from traditional models. Establish a three-dimensional selection standard of "politics + profession + technology", prioritizing political literacy, while taking into account AI applications and assessing professional capabilities and work experience in accordance with job requirements, thereby ensuring a rapid match between talents and positions.

Implement various forms of flexible talent introduction models such as part-time and consulting positions to address the problem of insufficient core talents. Establish talent supply

bases and cultivate specialized talents in a targeted manner, fully strengthening deep cooperation with universities and research institutions, in line with the requirements of the plan to "enable enterprises and institutions to play a leading role in talent cultivation". Also, optimize recruitment policies to tilt towards welfare benefits and career development.

3.2. Hierarchical Cultivation: Full-cycle Growth and a Complete Talent Pipeline

Establish a hierarchical and classified full-cycle training system that takes into account the differences in talent levels, and implement the requirements of "promoting the construction of a high-level talentand promoting the cultivation of young talents", to facilitate the step-by-step growth of talents.

During the training period for new recruits， implement the "mentorship system + job rotation system" to comply with the deployment of young talent cultivation in the plan. Assign industry senior mentors to new recruits to guide them in familiarizing with business， improving skills and political literacy; arrange multi-position job rotations to avoid single-mindedness in abilities; conduct basic theoretical knowledge training, covering news basics, new media advanced technologies, political theory and basic application skills of AI tools in the new era, to help new recruits quickly transform in their work.

During the period of cultivating key talents, implement large-scale thematic reporting and media convergence projects where key talents play core roles. In practical operations, hone talent skills and coordination abilities, and implement the planning requirement of "guiding talents to participate in major publicity reports". Promote cross-departmental team collaboration to facilitate exchanges among talents at different levels of various departments, and enhance professional depth, innovation ability and AI deep application ability.

During the period of fostering leaders, focus on strategic vision and management ability cultivation, aligning with the planning goal of "cultivating all-media expert-type talents". To broaden horizons, organize leading talents to participate in high-level training and industry exchanges; give leading experts studios autonomy to implement the planning requirement of "encouraging leading talents to lead teams and achieve results"; establish a "passing on and helping" mechanism to drive the overall improvement of the entire talent team.

3.3. Practical Experience: Grow and Enhance Core Competencies Through Project Participation

To meet the requirements of the plan for "strengthening practical training", we will enhance practical experience through project-based efforts. We will focus on major thematic reports to plan coverage of rural revitalization and technological innovation, and involve talents at different levels throughout the process. This will help hone political judgment and professional skills, and implement the plan's deployment of "supporting outstanding works and talents".

Based on integrated innovation projects, we will encourage talents to participate in the development of new products such as short videos, establish an incentive mechanism to attract talents, stimulate the innovation enthusiasm of the team, which is in line with the plan's requirement of "promoting the high-quality development of online audio-visual content", and at the same time enhance the team's project planning, execution and operation capabilities.

We will implement a studio or project group system that breaks down professional departmental barriers, to integrate talents from multiple positions to work collaboratively in order to implement the plan's requirement of "improving the project system and studio system". Through cross-professional collaboration and complementing weaknesses, we will enhance the comprehensive skills of talents and team collaboration capabilities to meet the requirements of integrated development.

3.4. Technology Empowerment: Digital Capability Leapfrogging and Adaptation to Integration Needs

Build a technology-enabled system that promotes a significant leap in the digital capabilities of talents, thereby fulfilling the requirement of the plan to "strengthen the training of audio-visual new media talents". Establish a hierarchical technical training system, with newcomers focusing on basic technologies and AI basics, key personnel emphasizing data analysis and AI deep application capabilities, and leading talents concentrating on cutting-edge technologies and strategic thinking. Strengthen the cultivation of compliant application of AI tools, clearly define usage norms and guide talents to adhere to content authenticity, reasonably use AI tools, prevent compliance risks, and explore the deep integration of AI and content creation and dissemination to enhance the effectiveness of mainstream media communication.

To fulfill the requirement of the plan to "establish a talent training base", it is necessary to strengthen cooperation with high-tech enterprises and universities for joint construction. Introduce advanced technology resources and training systems, jointly build high-quality training bases and carry out in-depth industry-university-research cooperation, and cultivate technical and interdisciplinary talents specifically; encourage talents to participate in technological innovation projects to enhance research and innovation capabilities.

4. Mechanism for Ensuring the Enhancement of Competence and Quality

Establish a tripartite guarantee system consisting of "evaluation incentives, career development, and cultural ecology", constantly stimulating the enthusiasm of talents at all levels, and implementing the plan "improving talent incentive service guarantees".

Establish a scientific evaluation and incentive mechanism that breaks through the concept of relying solely on traffic volume, in line with the plan "innovating talent evaluation mechanisms and eliminating the 'four forms of worship'". Continuously optimize diversified evaluation indicators, taking into account political literacy, professional ability, social benefits, etc.; combine the evaluation results with salary and other aspects, continuously improve the incentive system, establish a tolerance and error correction mechanism, and provide a convenient environment for talent innovation.

Build a dual-channel career development system, breaking the concept of "emphasizing management but neglecting professionalism", in line with the plan "opening up talent promotion channels". The management sequence is suitable for management talents, and the professional sequence is suitable for professional talents, enjoying the same treatment, establishing a regular promotion mechanism, achieving mutual benefit for individuals and the media, and implementing the plan "establishing a green channel for professional title evaluation".

Create a favorable cultural ecology, build a learning organization, and implement the plan "creating an environment for recognizing and loving talents". Advocate the concepts of lifelong learning and innovation, carry out regular learning and exchange activities, focus on improving AI-related skills; strengthen humanistic care, solve the actual difficulties of talents, and enhance a sense of belonging and cohesion.

5. Conclusion

In the in-depth development of media convergence, talent is the core variable for the high-quality development of mainstream media, which is consistent with the positioning of "talent is the core resource for industry development". Currently, the demand for talents has shifted from single journalism and editing to a more comprehensive type. Core competencies have undergone a four-dimensional reconfiguration and new AI-related competencies have been

added. To overcome the talent dilemma, it is necessary to establish a scientific training mechanism and a supporting guarantee system, and implement the requirements of policy planning. In the era of AI, media convergence will continue to deepen. Mainstream media need to optimize the training model for talents, strengthen the cultivation of AI competencies, and build a composite talent team, in line with the long-term goals of the plan. Strengthen collaboration with universities and technology enterprises, build an integrated system of industry-university-research, let talents become the core driving force for integrated development, and help mainstream media gain control of public opinion and fulfill their missions in the new era.

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