

Adam K. Clifford

Hands-On Technology Executive · Responsible AI, Data Governance & Security

// AI gives us a head start. People carry us across the finish line.

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Frequent speaker on responsible AI (a dozen+ talks; new sessions 2026) · VP, Wisconsin
InfraGard · Operates a self-hosted multi-agent AI lab

Professional summary

People-first technology leader with 20+ years across nearly every seat in the profession – engineer, consultant, founder, Director of IT, and CIO – serving organizations from small business to the Fortune 100 in both public and private sectors. Deep, current expertise in responsible AI adoption, data governance and compliance, and advanced security. I build before I advise: new technology gets proven in my own AI lab before I set strategy or policy on it. I lead people-first, and I measure success by the strength of the teams I leave behind.

Core competencies

Responsible AI Strategy & Governance · Microsoft 365 & Security (Defender XDR, Sentinel, Purview) · Data Governance & Compliance (incl. CMMC) · Cybersecurity Leadership & Zero Trust · Cloud & Identity (Azure, Entra) · Enterprise Architecture · Digital Transformation · IT Operations · Vendor & Partner Management · Team Leadership & Development

Career highlights

- **First CIO** in Miron Construction's 100+ year history – led technology, cybersecurity, and innovation for a ~\$3B firm with a 60-person IT organization and ~\$20M budget.
- **Zero attrition** guiding a 60-person organization through the company's first-ever CIO transition – while promoting two service-desk team members into new roles.
- **Saved nearly \$700,000** by negotiating a Microsoft E7 enterprise agreement that extended Copilot from a planned 250 seats to ~1,000 employees.
- **Averaged \$2.5M per quarter** in solution-architecture sales at 70% margin at CoreTek Services; created Graph-API-delivered fixed-bid offerings that opened new revenue streams.
- **Migrated 40,000+ mailbox enterprises** to Exchange Online and served on active-breach and ransomware response teams at Heartland Business Systems.

- **Built and operates a self-hosted multi-agent AI lab** – a working study in responsible AI: tiered autonomy, least-privilege and break-glass controls, on-premises privacy.

Professional experience

Miron Construction Co., Inc.

Chief Information Officer · July 2025 – June 2026

Recruited as the first CIO in the company's 100+ year history to establish enterprise technology, cybersecurity, and innovation leadership at a ~\$3B commercial construction firm. Led a 60-person IT organization and ~\$20M budget.

- Created and led a people-first responsible AI strategy – policy, governance, a champions network, an in-house training curriculum, and company-wide communication positioning AI as an accelerator of expertise, not a substitute for it.
- Guided the organization through significant institutional change with zero attrition across the 60-person team; promoted two service-desk team members into advanced roles.
- Negotiated a Microsoft E7 enterprise agreement extending Copilot from 250 planned seats to ~1,000 employees, saving nearly \$700,000.
- Directed data governance and AI-readiness across Microsoft Purview and Varonis to classify and protect sensitive data ahead of AI adoption.
- Strengthened security posture via Intune CIS hardening, layered Conditional Access that reduced MFA friction, a new privileged-access model (later shared with the InfraGard community), and a continuous penetration-testing program at the cost of one prior point-in-time test.
- Led the CMMC exploratory assessment, established change- and portfolio-management frameworks in ServiceNow, and helped lead the Oracle ERP program including a mid-project integration-partner transition.
- Designed and launched an innovation grant program whose process guardrails turned technology proposals into business decisions the executive committee could act on – three grants approved and funded in year one.

Clifftech LLC

Owner & Technical Director · November 2023 – June 2025

Independent consultancy serving enterprise clients and multiple Microsoft partners, maturing their Microsoft security, Purview, and modern-work practices.

- Consulted to three Microsoft partners on building AI, compliance, and security practices – go-to-market offerings, sales enablement, and partner specialization strategy.
- Served as virtual CISO and trusted advisor to enterprise clients on security strategy, roadmaps, and risk-based decisions.
- Delivered partner-enablement workshops as a Microsoft Certified Trainer at regional Microsoft offices, in partnership with Microsoft and Technofocus.
- Led data governance and Copilot-readiness engagements – data taxonomies, DLP and insider-risk policy, and data-custodian programs alongside legal, HR, and business stakeholders.

Concurrency

Secure Modern Workplace Technical & Solution Architect · January 2023 – November 2023

- Delivery lead and pre-sales architect for the security and modern-work practice; authored SOWs and led deployments across Defender XDR, Sentinel, and Copilot for Security.
- Created and ran a new security assessment program, including client workshops and team training.
- Presented at the Microsoft Technology Center in Minneapolis on modern security and advanced threat hunting.

CoreTek Services

Senior Enterprise Consultant, Modern Workplace Solution Architect · 2020 – 2023

- Averaged \$2.5M per quarter in solution-architecture sales at 70% margin.
- Architected modern-workplace solutions: zero-touch provisioning, modern device management, Purview and compliance, Teams voice, and SharePoint Online.
- Created fixed-bid, Graph-API-delivered go-to-market offerings that opened new revenue streams.

Heartland Business Systems

Technical Architect · 2018 – 2020

- Migrated organizations of 40,000+ mailboxes to Exchange Online; designed MFA, Conditional Access, and passwordless authentication solutions.
- Member of the Security Response Team supporting clients in active breach and ransomware; served clients as a virtual CIO.
- Received Heartland's highest honor for teamwork and integrity; top-10 engineer by billable hours in year one.

School Specialty

Progressive IT leadership through Director of IT Infrastructure & Engineering · 2009 – 2018

- Drove \$750,000 in first-year savings through vendor consolidation as Director.
- Defined the Microsoft 365 migration and Azure strategy; implemented DLP, network segmentation, and single sign-on; drove server virtualization to 95%.
- Led an infrastructure merger and support-services transition following an acquisition.
- Recruited and developed two interns – one transitioning from HR – both of whom went on to successful careers in IT.

Spectrum Health

Network and Systems Operator II, IT Security · 2008 – 2009

Thought leadership & community

Applied AI Research (Independent Lab). Design and operate a personal multi-agent AI system on self-hosted infrastructure – role-specialized agents, a shared MCP-based memory and tooling layer, and an on-premises model-serving stack. A working study in responsible AI: tiered

autonomy, least-privilege and break-glass controls, auditability, and privacy. See [The Lab](#) →

- **Vice President, Board of Directors, Wisconsin InfraGard chapter** (an FBI partnership program); AI Advisory Panelist, Fox Valley Chamber of Commerce.
- **Speaking & content.** A dozen+ conference and webinar talks on responsible AI, security and incident response, and data governance – including the Microsoft Technology Center in Minneapolis – with new responsible-AI sessions in 2026. Technical deep-dive videos on YouTube. See [Speaking](#) →
- **Empowering the next generation.** Cybersecurity Instructor, Microsoft TEALS (teaching high-school students two days per week); IT Advisory Board, Audubon Technology High School; former curriculum advisor, Fox Valley Technical College.
- **Community.** Volunteer educator teaching free computing and security classes for adults reentering the workforce; Girl Scout troop leader; ELCA East Central Synod council member.

Certifications

Trainer: Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT)

Expert: Microsoft 365 Enterprise Administrator · Cybersecurity Architect · Teams Voice Engineer

Associate & Specialty: Security Operations Analyst · Information Protection Administrator · Identity and Access Administrator · Azure Administrator · Azure Security Engineer · Security Administrator · Modern Desktop Administrator · Messaging Administrator · Teams Administrator · Exchange Online & Teams Support Engineer

Education

Grand Valley State University, Computer Science
