

CIO - Chief Information Officer

All About the Role of a CIO

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The Chief Information Officer (CIO) is a job title for the head of information technology within an organization. The CIO typically reports to either the chief financial officer or, in IT-centered organizations, to the chief executive officer.

Chief Information Officer (CIO) is a job title commonly given to the person in an enterprise responsible for the information technology and computer systems that support enterprise goals. As information technology and systems have become more important, the CIO has come to be viewed in many organizations as a key contributor in formulating strategic goals. Typically, the CIO in a large enterprise delegates technical decisions to employees more familiar with details. Usually, a CIO proposes the information technology an enterprise will need to achieve its goals and then works within a budget to implement the plan. Typically, a CIO is involved with analyzing and reworking existing business processes, with identifying and developing the capability to use new tools, with reshaping the enterprise's physical infrastructure and network access, and with identifying and exploiting the enterprise's knowledge resources. Many CIOs head the enterprise's efforts to integrate the Internet and the World Wide Web into both its long-term strategy and its immediate business plans.

The prominence of the CIO position has risen greatly as information technology has become a more important part of business. The CIO may be a member of the executive board of the organization. While the CIO job title originated in the US, is slowly replacing IT Director as the senior IT executive title in Europe and Asia.

While no specific qualification is typical of CIOs in general, historically many CIOs have degrees in computer science, software engineering, or information systems. CIOs are increasingly gaining an MBA to strengthen their business management skills. More recently CIOs' leadership capabilities, business acumen and strategic perspectives have taken precedence over technical skills. It is now quite common for CIOs to be appointed from the business side of the organization, especially if they have project management skills.

The CIO role is also sometimes used interchangeably with the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) role, although they may be slightly different. When both positions are present in an organization, the CIO is generally responsible for processes and practices supporting the flow of information, whereas the CTO is generally responsible for technology infrastructure.

CIO – Skills and Training

A CIO needs a solid foundation in information technology, project management, and business management. As such, some of the common components of a successful CIO might include the following:

- [Project Management](#)¹
- [PMP Certification](#)²
- [MBA Programs](#)³
- [MIS Degrees](#)⁴
- [CIS Degrees](#)⁵
- [Information Technology Certifications](#)⁶

CIO – Professional Organizations:

CIO – Publications of Interest

- [CIO Magazine](#)⁷
- [ComputerWorld](#)⁸
- [Extreme Technology](#)⁹

CIO – Compensation and Benefits

- [Salary Research](#)¹⁰
- [Stock Options](#)¹¹

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