

Tool: Chief Innovation Officer Job Description

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By Analyst(s): Mordecai ., Apoorva Chhabra, Tsuneo Fujiwara

Initiatives: [Executive Leadership: Innovation and Disruption Management](#); [CIO Technology and Innovation Leadership](#)

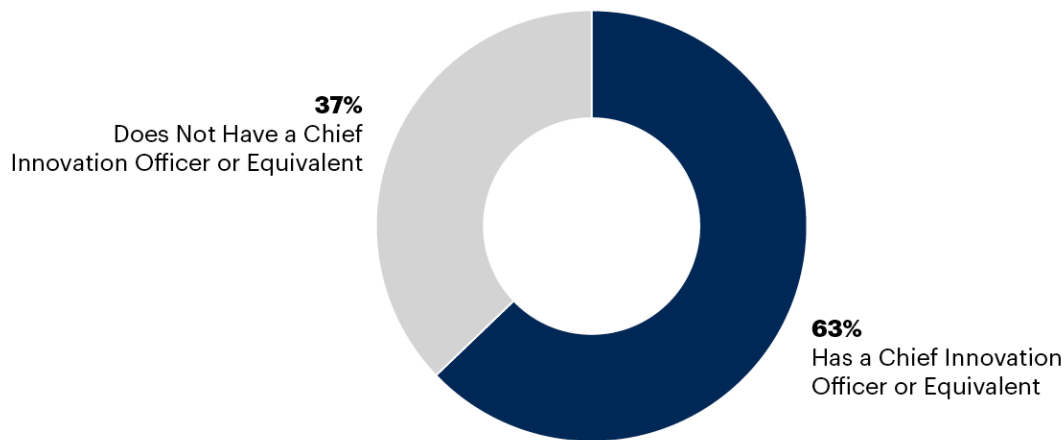
Enterprisewide innovation leadership continues to grow as organizations prioritize innovation in their business goals. This tool supports executive leaders in identifying the innovation responsibilities and skills of highly qualified candidates for a chief innovation officer role.

When to Use

The presence of a chief innovation officer (CINO) or a similar executive leading enterprisewide innovation is growing. The 2023 Gartner Innovation Trends Survey found that 63% of respondents have an enterprisewide innovation executive such as a CINO (see Figure 1). ¹ Further, there are increasing calls for additional innovation responsibilities including value creation, exploring tech opportunities, scaling innovation capabilities and mitigating risk for the enterprise.

Figure 1: Presence of an Enterprisewide Executive Leading Innovations**Presence of an Enterprisewide Executive Leading Innovations**

Percentage of Respondents



n = 296, IT and business leaders with innovation responsibilities, excluding “not sure”

Q: Does your enterprise have a chief innovation officer or equivalent, responsible for enterprisewide innovation?

Source: 2023 Gartner Innovation Trends Survey

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This sample job description outlines the roles and responsibilities of the CINO, including governance and key relationships, team structure, role requirements and overall competencies. It is for use by executive leaders appointed with additional innovation responsibilities, those looking to appoint someone to lead enterprisewide innovation such as a CINO, and those looking to enhance their skill set towards leading innovation at this level. This tool provides an idea of how to set up the CINO, or similar, for success by keeping them accountable to the CEO and board and utilizing key relationships across the enterprise.

To truly be successful and engage Gartner’s Three Key Pillars of Innovation Leadership Framework across the organization, CINOs must be empowered by the organization through reporting structure and budget, as both foster the accountability necessary for innovation success. For more, see [A Chief Innovation Officer is Needed to Lead Innovation Effectively](#). Specifically, a CINO leads innovation at the executive level with an increasing number sitting on the executive board. In a survey focused on the CINO in the U.K., ForrestBrown found 71% of CINOs sit on the board of their company, with 28% expecting to join the board in the next year. ² A third of these CINOs are operating with a budget of £1m or over, and 58% are leading a team of six or more. ²

Our research shows that instead of establishing a solely dedicated leadership role, many organizations establish a CINO by adding innovation responsibilities to other chief executives. This includes creating roles such as chief marketing and innovation officer, chief digital and innovation officer and similar for CSO, CxO and CIO titles. The purpose of this sample job description is to keep innovation an independent role, thus lessening silos that can limit the CINO's ability to truly leverage innovation as an enterprisewide key growth tactic. Sixty-eight percent of corporate business leaders who lead, participate in or influence their company's investment and strategy decisions consider increasing innovation activity a major tactic to sustain growth. Therefore, a CINO must be given the autonomy to lead that work enterprisewide. ³

A chief innovation officer is set up to create efficiencies, break silos of innovation, and steward towards key business goals. Using this sample job description, executive leaders can attract high-quality candidates to lead enterprisewide innovation, develop relevant skills in internal team members, and empower the CINO with a path to success that demands clear measurements, accountability and transparent processes. For more, see [Lead Innovation Management Maturity to the Next Level](#).

Evidence

¹ **2023 Gartner Innovation Trends Survey.** This study was conducted to inform CIOs and executive leaders about trends in innovation cross-industry and cross-region. The research was conducted online from 15 May to 23 June 2023 among 300 respondents from North America, Europe, India, China and other parts of Asia. Qualified respondents were from companies that had recently completed or were planning within the next 12 months any one of seven innovation activities. Respondents were required to lead or be a member of a team responsible for an innovation initiative.

Disclaimer: Results of this study do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

² [Life of a CIO: New Research Provides Insights Into the Role of a Chief Innovation Officer](#), ForrestBrown.

³ 2022 Gartner Understanding Corporate Growth Strategies Survey. This survey was conducted online from 8 September through 17 October 2022 to understand how enterprises approach growth today. In total, 211 business leaders who lead, participate in or influence their company's investment and strategy decisions and have good personal knowledge or can estimate their company's financial performance (such as gross profit margin, revenue and net profits) participated. Respondents from North America (n = 68), Europe (n = 80) and East/Southeast Asia (n = 63) responded to the survey.

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