



The Role of the Chief Information Officer in Information Technology

When people think of Information Technology they think of computers and software. Information Technology is comprised of much more than just the computers used. A **Chief Information Officer** has a big role when it comes to supporting the department.

Information Technology consists of the strategic direction of a business when it comes to processing any kind of data. This includes communication activities within the business. All computerized and manual systems which a company relies on are a part of IT. These systems include data centers, technical support teams, production, operations, scheduling functions, security, help desks, communication for voice and data, computer programs and systems, and much more.

These activities are usually broken down into many sections like operations, production, security, help desk, and more. However, they all fall under the Information Technology department. The Chief Information Officer is responsible for overseeing all of these departments. This person's primary responsibility is to ensure all of the departments flow well together to ensure the vision and mission of the company are achieved through synergistic efforts.

The CIO is at the top of the management chain and interacts with all of the **high level executive** management team. This position will be responsible for all development, implementation, and maintenance of any of the systems the business relies on. All decisions made for projects, roll-outs, and implementations will be made by the CIO.

The functions of the Chief Information Officer are not limited. This position will require a person to establish guidelines and programs proven to be effective for the Information Technology department; including management and staff. He or she will need to be capable of planning, organizing, coordinating, and directing the activities for all of the data processing centers. The CIO will offer projections for planning and budgeting with short-term and long-term goals of the business related to IT. All major developments and research projects will not be passed without the approval of the CIO.

Policies are also a big part of the CIO's responsibilities. Any policy set forth that the staff must follow will be provided by the CIO. These policies include but are not limited to ensuring privacy of data and applications, security of the data processing facilities, systems maintenance, **help desk** and support policies, and more. All guidelines will be established by the CIO to ensure effective **database management** and utilization throughout the company.

The Chief Information Officer will be relied upon by other division and department heads on the IT needs of the organization. If there are problems the CIO will need to help remedy situations that may arise.

Information Technology is evolving continuously. The Chief Information Officer needs to be constantly aware of the changing technologies and prepared for these changes. This person should be able to demonstrate constant efforts to improve the operations of the company. Turnaround times should be decreased as well as work processes streamlined. Customer service departments need to be seamless and provide total quality. It is the responsibility of the CIO to ensure these functions are intact.

The Chief Information Officer's knowledge should not be limited. This position requires knowledge of the full principles, techniques, and applications of data processing systems for the business. This person should be solid with computer systems design, programming, operations, hardware, software, technical support, and all planning functions. Organization management is very important for all of the data processing systems to run smoothly. The CIO should be well versed with organization management and have the knowledge of how to control complex computer systems and facilities. The CIO should also know about public administration and the principles of how the business



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interrelates. One of the most important aspects of a CIO is being able to practice IT principles with the management and staff and be able to supervise accordingly.

This type of knowledge usually comes from a bachelor's degree in business administration or Information Technology. Some companies may accept management experience in a large scale Information Technology department as the equivalent.

The Chief Information Officer needs to be able to function in many ways physically. This position requires excellent supervisory skills and responsibilities. A plan needs to be established for using the staff and technical resources. This person needs to be able to work well and interrelate with other staff members. The CIO will be responsible for presentations, public speaking, one on one talking, and many other ways of effectively communicating with people. Written documents for RFPs and other things need to be organized clearly and properly. This will require the CIO to have good communication skills along with knowledge of proper grammar and punctuation.

Because the Chief Information Officer is responsible for everything that occurs throughout the data processing and resource use of a business they must be able to review and check the work of all products produced throughout the business. He or she must ensure that nothing but top quality is being produced and that all business standards are being met.

The Chief Information Officer is an executive position that requires a professional appearance. This may require wearing a suit everyday and other professional attire. You must hold yourself well and be very personable with the people who work with your department and throughout the company. You must be able to get along with everyone you interact with in person, over the phone, through email, and any other way.

The Information Technology department is the backbone of any industry and any business. It consists of many different functions and everything that includes data processing through manual and computerized functions. The Chief Information Officer is responsible for ensuring all data processing things run smoothly and comply with all guidelines. The ultimate goal is to ensure the vision and the mission of the company is achieved through the work of the employees and the systems. The CIO is an executive position and responsible for all of the planning for important decisions related to the IT department. This position is senior management and needs to be able to provide excellence with supervision and team building efforts.

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