



Could CDOs Become the Next Healthcare CEOs?

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A growing number of companies are recruiting chief data officers (CDOs) to improve their competitive position, according to an annual survey of 180 CDOs from Gartner

(<http://www.gartner.com/newsroom/id/3509918>).

CDOs shape organizations' strategic and digital initiatives, suggesting that 18 percent of them could move into other C-Suite roles by 2020, predicts Gartner. Among the most likely C-Suite slots: chief executive officer (CEO), chief operating officer (COO) and chief marketing officer (CMO.)



A 2015 research report from Forrester (<https://www.forrester.com/report/Top+Performers+Appoint+Chief+Data+Officers/-/E-RES123064>) confirms the CDO hiring trend. Many CDOs function as a bridge between IT and other business functions. As more organizations come to rely on data analytics, the influence of CDOs will grow. That, in turn, could accelerate competition and collaboration with chief information officers (CIOs) and other senior information technology executives.

The Gartner survey carries multiple implications for healthcare organizations (HCOs), including the following:

Function: CDOs will work with CIOs, chief information security officers (CISOs), chief medical informatics officers (CMIOs), chief health information officers (CHIOs) and chief nursing officers (CINOs) to drive digital transformation, consumer and clinician engagement, productivity and efficiency and competitive advantage.

IP Insight: Explore, in advance, how the CDO will and should interact with other HIT executives and members of the C-Suite.

Trend: HCOs are likely to follow the lead of companies surveyed by Gartner as they fully implement, explore or plan to explore and implement data analytics functions, including creation of an office of data analytics. Only 10 percent of companies surveyed by Gartner say they have no intention of implementing a data analytics function.

IP Insight: Investigate the HCO's need for a separate data analytics office or function before recruiting a C-suite officer or senior executive.

Responsibilities: CDOs assume responsibility for oversight of analytics strategy and data management and governance. They also ensure that information and insights provided to users are reliable, valuable and actionable.

IP Insight: Determine how the HCO will tap the CDO's knowledge, skill and experience to drive clinical, business and operational performance.

Roles: CDOs will emerge as enterprise-wide architects of innovation and agents of change. Thirty-nine percent of the CDOs surveyed by Gartner envision greater involvement in revenue generation by 2020. Forty-six percent are already involved in revenue generation and more than 70 percent are engaged in new initiatives. By 2021 CDOs plan to invest 80 percent of their time on new solutions while 80 percent foresee revenue generation as a top priority.

IP Insight: Identify the CDO's evolving role in transformation, innovation, change management, business development and revenue optimization.

Partnerships: CDOs are not lone wolves. Sixty-two percent of the CDOs surveyed by Garner see the CIO as an ally or partner, while 40 percent say that they have already worked with a CIO with no problems. However, challenges may emerge. More than half of CDOs report some conflict over project funding and staffing, involvement in decision making and lack of balance in the

power structure.

IP Insight: Analyze the CDO's relationship with the CIO and other information technology executives, including the removal or management of costly, time-consuming roadblocks and barriers.

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