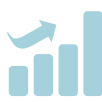


## Hitting the Bullseye: Defining the Right Technology Leader for Your Organization

Technology is evolving at a rapid pace across all corners of the global economy. Advances in areas such as cloud computing, machine learning and cybersecurity have dramatically evolved the role of the information technology organization. No longer simply a back office function, IT is now a critical part of the digital evolution where internal systems and externally facing technologies are closely integrated.

With the increasing pressure to keep up with the constant evolution of technology, we find many of our clients unsure on what type of IT leader best suits their organization. Having worked with clients from startups to large global organizations across industries, we see three profiles that can serve as useful archetypes for your “bullseye” and can be valuable in targeting the right leader.

As many of our clients find, the question is not which profile is the best, but rather, which is best for the needs and capabilities of the organization?



## IT LEADERSHIP ARCHETYPES

The needs for top IT leaders will vary in terms of the industry, size and stage of a particular organization. Additionally, titles can vary wildly across industries, which can cause confusion when organizations seek to fill a “title” versus the true needs for a role. We highlight key differences among these IT leadership archetypes in terms of capabilities, focus and desired impact for an organization below.



- » Functional leader of an IT organization and typically reports to the CFO or COO
- » Manages and leads teams effectively with an internal focus on building cross-functional relationships
- » Likely to be focused on driving results, leading smaller teams and IT projects
- » Strategic planning typically occurs on an annual basis to align with budget cycles



- » “Typical” CIO serves as the strategic leader of an IT organization and reports to the CEO, CFO or COO
- » Has high results-orientation and leads large, complex programs across functional areas of the business
- » Leads and builds technology teams
- » Has the ability to look two to three years ahead and is able to align IT with strategic business objectives



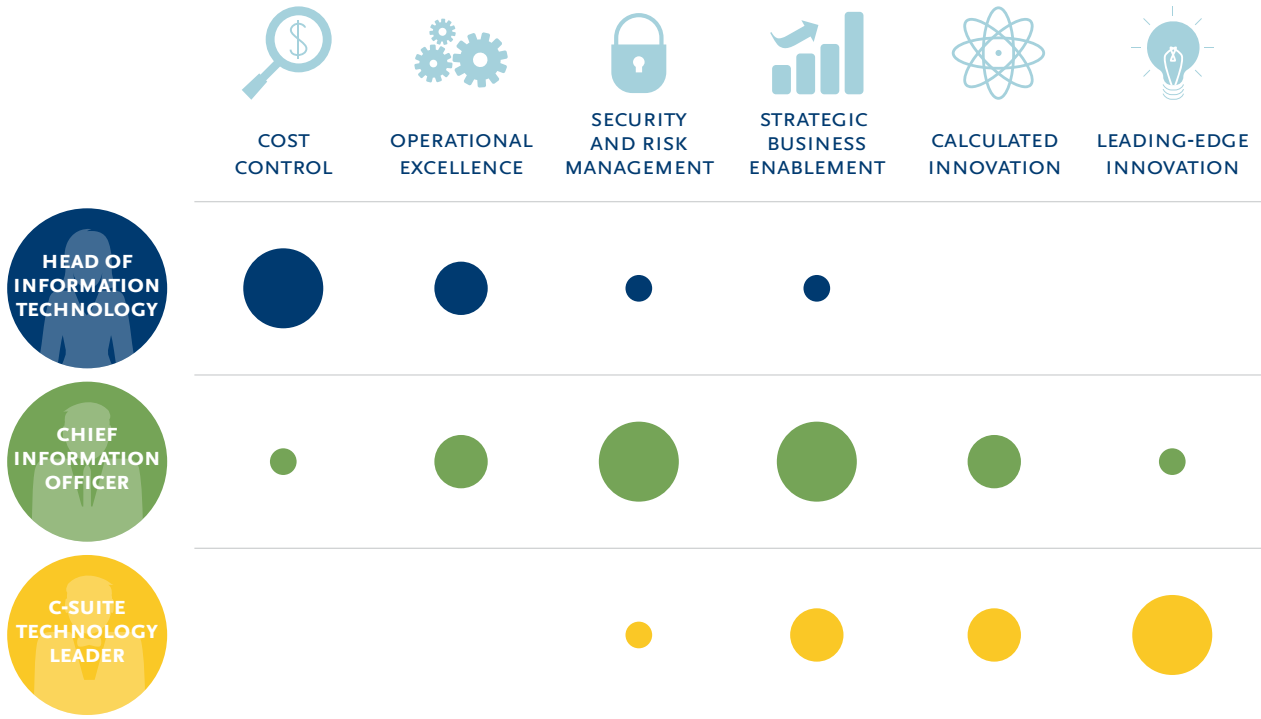
- » Senior technology leader within an organization — a blend of CIO/CTO/digital/GM
- » Typically reports to the president or CEO and has frequent board exposure
- » Builds teams and next-generation leaders
- » Has experience evaluating and integrating new and disruptive technologies
- » Looks five years ahead into the next business cycle(s)

### This role may be right for the organization when ...

- » The focus is on cost control and reliable operations
- » A high-growth, early-stage company is not ready to commit to the CIO role or a mature organization has typically not used the CIO title
- » A “normal” emphasis is placed on IT with operational and strategic balance
- » Fairly equal weight is given to innovation and the current state
- » Technology is core to the business and thus requires a strategic leader with a seat at the table
- » Significant digital transformation is critical to the future success of the company

## MATCHING THE ROLE WITH YOUR PRIORITIES

Many organizations face a spectrum of priorities related to technology, ranging from cost control to driving leading-edge innovation. IT leaders will tend to focus on these to varying degrees based upon their capabilities as well as the focus of the organization.



While it can be tempting to be drawn to the more innovative priorities along the spectrum, it’s critical to align the right IT leader profile to your organization’s needs. A head of IT can drive more value than a C-suite technology leader in an organization needing a tight focus on efficiency and cost. Alternatively, if technology is increasingly core to your business, a C-suite technology leader may be necessary for your organization. As technology continues to evolve, organizations must consider a wide range of factors to ensure that their next IT leader hits the “bullseye” and delivers the value most needed.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ed Stadolnik leads Spencer Stuart’s North American Technology Officer Practice, which focuses on senior-level executive searches in the areas of engineering, data and analytics, cybersecurity and information technology.

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