

## What Makes a Successful Chief Innovation Officer?

Because the position of Chief Innovation Officer has emerged only in the past five years, and even more widely just in the past two, many companies are still asking what best qualifies someone to fill the role.

The struggle to define a new role created to accomplish a specific agenda has numerous historical precedents – Chief Quality Officer, Chief Supply Chain Officer, Chief Risk Officer, and more. Initially, many innovation officers came from backgrounds in marketing, R&D, and strategy; and the vast majority still have a title that ties innovation to another functional accountability. But we find that leading companies now believe that innovation transcends functional expertise.

For these companies, innovation is not simply about developing new products or better ways to communicate to the market, but about transforming the way the entire organization thinks about the market and the company's place in it. They see innovation as an issue of leadership, not management. So they are less interested in a candidate's specific career path and more interested in the personal attributes and aptitudes that are likely to lead to success. In broad outline, they want an innovation officer who:



Some aspects of the role remain in flux. For example, it is not yet clear whether the position will become a training ground for potential CEOs or whether it will function primarily in an advocacy and accountability capacity. But regardless of how this question is ultimately answered, the business, people, and innovation skills that mark a successful Chief Innovation Officer have already emerged. To help you begin to evaluate whether you or someone else in your organization has the requisite skills, please review the following criteria, which serve as the basis of a scorecard that we use with candidates when interviewing for this evolving role.

## Innovation Leader – Scorecard Criteria

<b>Business Skills/Knowledge</b>	<b>Rating (1 – 5)</b>	<b>Attitude/People Skills</b>	<b>Rating (1 – 5)</b>	<b>Innovation Skills</b>	<b>Rating (1 – 5)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth understanding of business processes across many industries</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intelligent - smart, quick and analytical</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands the true meaning of innovation</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Real understanding of the company's culture</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learns continuously</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a track record of creating and successfully innovating</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International exposure; has lived and worked in different cultures</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitates change / ideas / creativity</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has failed, learned and changed</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses business process analysis methodologies, and understands their strengths and weaknesses</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong leadership skills - can lead from front and back, willing to take shots and/or let others take them</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visionary</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implements aggressive business strategies</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desire to win both individually, and for the team</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong influencing skills and ability to create buy-in</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates clear accountabilities and deliverables</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sees people for who they are, and not as commodities</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Powerful communicator, creative presenter</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Politically astute, but not a politician</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A mentor – recognizes, believes in, and promotes talent in others</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenges the status quo</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visible at high-levels globally</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A pioneer, entrepreneurial</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timeliness; is one step ahead</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knows something about a lot, and everything about a few key areas of expertise</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enthusiastic, self-motivating, high-energy level</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can connect the dots - hears and listens, looks and sees</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilient, persistent, bounces back</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fun-lover, risk-taker, curious, adventurous</li> </ul>			