

The New Seat in the C-Suite

We have all watched the C-suite grow in the past few decades, giving specialized departments a greater voice at the highest level in corporations. The Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) is one of the latest creations and, we anticipate, one of most useful in the coming years as sales, public relations, marketing and the like are all represented in one chair at the executive table.

The Chief Commercial Officer may be new to the C-suite and the business world, but what is not new is the reason for the addition; the need to reach customers and ultimately increase profits. A common thread for the companies who have added this title to its organizational chart is the decision to globally expand its business to increase market share. The CCO is one leader overseeing multiple business functions, and this presents the perfect situation for his or her vision to be shared and implemented with more people, and at a quicker pace. The CCO holds an optimum position to affect change and is becoming the “missing” link to completing a new streamlined executive management team. This ability is crucial in the current economy.

What qualifies one to be a CCO? Our research into the backgrounds of many of the current CCO's has unearthed some common threads. The executives in the position of CCO have mastered key business areas and arrive at this title with many accomplishments to their name. There are many areas of expertise that these professionals possess, from marketing and sales to operations and service. All have successfully led a division or large scale initiative for a new brand or product, as most possess industry related experience. Additionally, the CCO currently exists in a broad range of industries, but the Telecommunications, Energy, Air Transportation and Pharmaceutical industries lead the pack.

This critical position provides opportunities on several levels regarding talent management for organizations. The CCO is a coveted job for a senior manager to be promoted from within, but also creates the perfect scenario to attract an external candidate. A few of our key findings:

- About 50% of the companies who employ a CCO have promoted the person from within to this position
- There are more CCO's in companies based outside of the US
- Many of the companies with CCO's are currently expanding into the Asian market
- Of the 71 CCO's we researched, only three were female

What does this mean for the Human Resources professional? It is an opportunity to expand the role of the current successful executive in an organization. It is an opportunity to place a woman in the C-suite in a field where they are currently under-represented. The CCO is also an opportunity to speak with the CEO and bring to his/her attention a new role which could streamline the organization and provide a singular voice to many departments previously considered disparate. For the HR professional, this is another opportunity to shine

JLA Partners' green papers provide information for our clients to use as they deem beneficial. However, this remains the proprietary property of JLA Partners and may not be copied or reproduced without our permission. To request permission, visit www.jlapartners.com.