

Discussion Guide

The CIO as Strategic Business Partner: Leading Change and Driving Results April 19–20, 2006

The role of the IT organization, and with it that of the CIO and his/her leadership team, is changing at nearly the same pace as technology itself. Through the boom and bust cycle of the past few years, IT organizations have been embraced as saviors and treated as pariahs who needed to just cut costs. Lately, most of the CIOs we meet are working hard to reposition their organization as a true business partner within their enterprise. Achieving this means developing an IT leadership team capable of influencing business decisions, engaging in strategy development, leading change effectively and constantly developing the organization, all while maintaining the network, deploying new technology, driving costs down and maintaining a secure environment.

This workshop is intended to further the dialogue about what this really means for IT organizations in major corporations. We will accomplish this through a combination of collegial dialogue and group work. We have established the following goals for the workshop:

- Define the changing role of IT in the corporation;
- Identify the capabilities that forward-looking IT organizations must have to be successful in the next 3-5 years and what it will take to build these capabilities;
- Share best practices, experience and advice with colleagues.

Session 1: The Changing Role of IT in the Corporation

In a roundtable discussion, we will examine the changing role of the corporate IT organization, seeking to outline what the role will look like 3-5 years from now, on what dimensions and in what direction the role is changing, and why. *Please consider the following questions and come prepared to share and discuss your perspective.*

- In what ways / on what dimensions will the IT organization have changed?
- How would you describe the changes using a From → To description?
- Why is this change occurring? Is the primary driver internal or external to the corporation—and what is it?

Session 2: Getting There: The Capabilities Needed

Working in smaller table groups and reporting out to the whole group, we will discuss the broad clusters of capabilities IT organizations must have to get to where they need to be given the changing role. *Please consider the following questions and come prepared to share your answers and discuss them.*

- What are the capabilities we need to build to be able to meet these challenges?
- What natural groupings/buckets do they fall into?

Session 3: Defining and Building the Capabilities: How Do We Get There from Here?

Presumably, our work in session 2 will yield a few critical “buckets” of capabilities we need to build. Working in smaller table groups and reporting out to the whole group, we will further define the capabilities within the buckets and outline the steps needed to build these capabilities. *Please come prepared to share actions taken or contemplated in building capabilities, best practices you’ve developed or seen, and barriers or critical issues to be aware of.*

Session 4: Driving Change in Your Own Organization: Refining Your Agenda

This far into the workshop, we hope each of you will have been stimulated by something you’ve encountered or heard—a best practice, an anecdote of a failure you can avoid, etc. In “coaching” pairs or trios with another CIO(s), each of you will have the opportunity to articulate your priorities and challenges around building your IT organizations capabilities for the future and get some feedback from your partner(s). *Please come having thought a bit about your priorities and what you might value another CIO’s perspective on, given where you are with your organization.*

Session 5: The One Question You Wanted to Ask: A “Go-Around”

We will wrap up the day in a roundtable discussion offering participants a chance to ask a question they would value the input of others on. *Please come having a question or two in mind, preferably (but not necessarily) related to the topic, that you’d like the collective perspective of your colleagues on.*