Table of Contents

Introduction

- "I just don't understand what my CIO is talking about."

- "I don't have them report to me because what they have to say is confusing and doesn't help me run the business."

- "IT costs me a bunch of money and I can't tell if I'm getting value for this investment or not."

If you've said these things (or even thought them), you're not alone. CEOs want to better understand their Chief Information Officer (CIO), the IT function, and how IT can add more value to the business.

This book provides CEOs advice and insight about the Information Technology (IT) function of their company. A better understanding of the information in this book will enable you to feel confident that you have selected the right CIO and that you are getting the most from your CIO. Additionally, you will better understand the challenges and solutions being discussed with your CIO. But most importantly, this book will enable you to have confidence in your CIO or determine you need a different CIO.

With the rapid pace of change in technology, IT is a critical success factor for all companies. Yet, it seems that too often the IT initiatives are behind schedule, over budget, and do not deliver the expected business value.

If the IT department is not delivering the results needed, look to the CIO. A CEO once told me, "they fire the general not the soldiers". The issues within any IT department start and end with the Chief Information Officer (CIO). No matter what title your IT leader has, they are accountable for IT's results.

All IT initiatives ultimately address business problems and the CIO retains final responsibility for the success or failure of these initiatives. Through their direct actions and relationships, CIOs should ensure the success of these business-critical projects.

After reading CEO's Secrets to IT Success, you will:

- Fully understand what CIOs bring to the business
- Discover how to identify the best CIO for your company
- Learn the secrets to having a successful IT function

How To Use This Book

This book is all about IT, which is a topic many CEOs are reluctant to dig into and understand. Whether you have a terrific understanding of IT or are a novice, you can learn from this book. It will also serve as a reference for you as your company grows.

The book has many conventions to make it easy to figure out "What's in it for me?" Look for these symbols throughout the book.

- Introductory case study – Each chapter begins with a story. Though the names and industries have been changed, each of these is a real-life scenario. These stories set the stage for a situation CEOs encounter that will be explored in that chapter. You may find yourself thinking, "that sounds like me" when you read these case studies.

- Box around text – These are summaries for various sections of the text. These will be particularly useful to help you figure out what parts of the book are most appropriate for your current IT concerns.

Dollar Sign – These symbols are present when the concepts presented in the book will grow your revenue and/or save your company money. Even if you don't fully understand them, you should talk with your CIO about these concepts to be sure you are leveraging technology effectively.

Clock – If you implement the ideas notated by a clock, your IT department will save time and be more efficient. Knowing that "time is money" means you should discuss these items with your CIO to see how they can apply to your company.

Megaphone – Throughout the book the megaphone represents information that will help you communicate with your CIO. There may be definitions of technical items in laymen's terms or ideas for having a productive conversation with your CIO.

Shaking Hands – They say, "The customer is always right." This is definitely true where IT is concerned. When you see the shaking hands icon you will know this information is about relationship building you should expect from your CIO.

Steaming Cup of Coffee – This icon lets you know that although this topic is technical in nature, you should get a refill on the coffee and read it anyway. This knowledge will enable you to ask the right questions to get to the bottom of an IT issue.

Top Secret – Each chapter ends with secrets for the CEO. These items are the things you should take away from the chapter even if nothing else applies. These concepts are universal to all companies.

If you and your IT department exhibit all of the conventions above, you will enjoy an effective IT function.