

Guide

# Next Level CDO Leadership

SERAMOUNT  
WE EMPOWER INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES



## WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE: CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER COMPETENCIES

CDOs who are successful have a common set of competencies that allow them to collaborate and influence across functions. Leading CDOs are ambidextrous leaders who can simultaneously play the following five roles:



### **Strategic Executors**

Able to build a comprehensive D&I strategy, not just launch single programs. Alternatively, able to lead organizational change initiatives. At the same time, have strong execution skills, ideally with the ability to manage teams and budgets.



### **Data-Savvy Storytellers**

Able to inspire and educate, galvanize support and tell compelling stories. At the same time, able to take a metric-driven approach to D&I and establish KPIs and accountability mechanisms to keep the organization focused on diversity goals.



### **Influencer Champions**

A D&I champion who can influence change and positive behaviors across the organization. At the same time, able to hold leaders accountable to metrics and drive results without formal authority.



### **Savvy and Authentic Communicators**

Able to astutely communicate internally, and externally as required, on behalf of the organization. At the same time, able to ask difficult questions, accept direct feedback and demonstrate perseverance and grit through slow progress.



### **Pragmatic Disruptors**

Bold enough to question status quo and shatter biases to create equal opportunities. At the same time, wise enough to know when to slow down the pace of change and focus on core priorities.

# Pathway to CDO

Human Resources	Diversity & Inclusion	Business	Communications	Legal
<b>45%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>11%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Exposure to multiple aspects of HR, including talent management, and the ability to leverage the capabilities and support of HR</li> <li>✓ Experience directly advising business units and senior management</li> <li>✓ Larger pool of talent available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Proven track record of leading organization- or program-level D&amp;I strategy</li> <li>✓ D&amp;I thought leader and well-networked within D&amp;I conferences, platforms and events</li> <li>✓ Understands how D&amp;I initiatives can be integrated into the organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Sound understanding of company culture and business challenges; able to link D&amp;I initiatives to business results</li> <li>✓ Likely to have strong credibility internally</li> <li>✓ Often experienced in multicultural marketing or the creation of an inclusive go-to-market strategy for the company</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Strong internal communications skills which help influence and galvanize the organization</li> <li>✓ Strong external communications skills which help in becoming the voice of the organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Strong legal / employment</li> <li>✓ law / compliance background is especially useful in an industry with underrepresented women and minorities</li> <li>✓ Experience directly advising business units and management</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Depending on the view of HR within the organization, may not have ability to influence business leaders</li> <li>✗ May not know how to navigate a large, complex organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ May not have relevant industry or business experience</li> <li>✗ Management consultants may lack experience with execution, or navigating a matrixed organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Unlikely to have the knowledge of D&amp;I best practices or talent management /HR</li> <li>✗ May not have a strong diverse network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ May not know enough about talent management and HR</li> <li>✗ May appear too focused on external presentation rather than internal change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ May not know enough about talent management and HR</li> <li>✗ May be overly focused on metrics / compliance rather than cultural change</li> </ul>

# A New Cohort of CDO Leadership



**Visionary:** Deep understanding of demographic shifts, societal concerns, cultural differences and impact on the talent strategy. Thought leadership. Globally astute. Business acumen. Ability to articulate the D&I strategy, translate it to action and tie D&I investments to business outcomes. See diversity as an organization-wide strategy that offers a competitive advantage

**Disruptor:** Highly visible change agent and risk taker. Promote policies, practices, and initiatives that challenge the status quo and tackle embedded societal and workplace inequities.

**Influencer:** Involve senior leaders and galvanize the workforce around the D&I strategy. Serve as sounding board and trusted source of insight to C-Suite on societal concerns and business strategy. Expand thinking about race and bias in operations and policies. Lead positive change. Build relationships with supporters and skeptics. Influence is power.

**Innovator:** Leverage D&I as catalyst for innovation. Blaze new paths through collaboration, experimentation, and innovation. Leverage diverse perspectives to spark creativity and propel innovation. Well connected and networked with best in class D&I thought leaders. Pulse on D&I 'next' practices.

**Communicator:** Articulate the D&I strategy internally and externally. Communicate the ROI for the organization and the individual. Deliver D&I message through compelling data and persuasive testimonials. Produce frequent and culturally relevant communication to engage multiple constituent groups. Create ongoing forums to gather input and spark dialogue.

# Personality Traits of Successful CDOs



**Followership:** Forge relationship capital across differences at all levels. Build high trust relationships with business leaders and employees alike.

**Boldness:** Speak truth to power. Communicate and act in a manner that challenges biases and changes behaviors. Reputation for innovation and risk taking that produces measurable results.

**Courage:** Willingness to confront and address inequities and hot topic societal concerns. Prepared and equipped to facilitate courageous conversations across differences. Say what needs to be said despite resistance.

**Agility:** Adapt to changing conditions. Navigate and nurture networks. Collaborate in all directions across cultures and differences.

**Authenticity:**

**Perseverance:** Steadfast commitment to D&I – real change occurs over the long-term. Work to change mindsets and influence positive behaviors. Transform policies, practices, and culture. Build consensus in the face of different perspectives.

# Challenges Facing Today's CDO



**They are new to the role.** While some 47% of companies included on the S&P 500 index currently have a CDO or equivalent, 63% of them were hired or promoted into those roles in the past three years. Approximately half have a joint title, often related to human resources or corporate social responsibility.

**They don't have the power they need to make a difference.** More than half reported they don't have the resources they need to execute new programs and strategies and that they are burdened with additional corporate responsibilities outside of their inclusion work.

**They don't have the data they need to make a difference.** 69% track employee survey data, but just 28% believe that formal employee surveys drive D&I strategy, and only 35% measure employee demographic data, the most important outcome of their D&I strategy.

**Other leaders aren't on board.** All of the leaders surveyed reported that diversity and inclusion came in last on a list of eight potential business priorities for their companies. Only 27% of CDOs say business strategy is a driver of D&I strategy.



# Today's Inclusive Diversity Leader

## Global leaders

- Attract global talent, operate across boundaries, meet diverse customer needs
- Require global perspective, **cultural agility**, self-awareness, openness, and flexibility
- Depend on their capable, self-directed teams

## Innovation leaders

- View problems as challenges to be overcome
- Use technology for new products/services
- Work hard to stay in front of trends by creating new markets
- **Open to diverse points of view**

## Change leaders

- Pivot the organization in anticipation of or in response to market changes
- Swiftly change the business model and lead competitors because of adaptability and foresight
- **Master the ability to inspire and motivate people in a dynamic environment with unprecedented diverse teams**

## Growth leaders

- Thrive in new, complex, and crowded business environments
- See and understand how to reach, design for, and **serve traditionally underrepresented consumers and clients**
- Grow business under difficult circumstances that may involve a lack of resources, fierce competition, or razor-thin margins

## Inclusive leaders drive organizational growth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

