

# Salestalk

Brought to you by Michael Wylie Associates Issue 20

## Welcome from Mike Wylie

Has the world turned upside down? The weather seems to be more unpredictable, with more extremes, and England's international football and rugby has become uninspiring and boring, while cricket has turned round and become exciting and entertaining – wasn't it great to win the Ashes (sorry my Australian friends!).

Business seems to be changing rapidly as well. With HP acquiring Peregrine, SSA buying Epiphany, Oracle purchasing Siebel and several other mergers already announced, there is bound to be more staff movement in the marketplace. One thing will remain the same – what is a negative for one person will be a positive for another. Fortunately for us, we are in the positive business and will do our best over the coming months to turn your world into somewhere that is stimulating and your career into one where you can win your matches and, with a good team, take the whole series.

To contribute or comment on how we can improve the magazine please email me – [mike@itsales.co.uk](mailto:mike@itsales.co.uk)

## Events

Upcoming shows for the diary

- Storage Expo – 12-13 October at Olympia
- Softworld Acc. and Finance – 12-13 October at the NEC
- Online Information 29 Nov-1 Dec at Olympia
- Enterprise Networks – 30 Nov-1 Dec, Renaissance Hotel
- Direct Marketing – 25-26 October at Earls Court
- Technology for Marketing – 7-8 Feb 2006 at Olympia

# KNOW YOUR CIO

The IT director/CIO is becoming a very special type of person in many organisations. What should you look out for when dealing with them?

A recent letter in Computing bemoaned the fact that these days we IT vendors spend a lot of time courting business decision makers, leaving an organisation's technologists out of the loop until some pretty big decisions are made – and projects then have to be patched up with work-arounds later. Perhaps in the quest to reach the cheque signers we do run the risk of not taking a proper business approach with the IT director, or CIO (chief information officer), especially where they are not at that magic 'C-level'. So what's the latest thinking on approaching and dealing with a CIO?

Today's CIOs, particularly in larger organisations, really are now those mythical 'hybrid' managers first mooted in the 1980s. In other words, they are people who understand business processes and how to apply IT – and are constantly on the look out for driving value through their organisations. According to David Sibley, who runs consultancy People Achieving, and who was at Computercenter, a CIO today is likely to have an MBA and worked in consultancy companies such as Accenture before making the move to an end user.

'They are a new type of person – unlike the operations-driven IT managers of old, they are analytical, with strong business vision and goals, and are extremely well organised, and know how to run teams. But they are very distrustful of vendors (and some consultancies). You need to be very well prepared to get anywhere in a meeting with them.'

C-level training firm Executive Conversation has also looked at today's CIO, noting how you can unpick their issues by matching their roles with the overall issues of the CEO/CFO. This means, say,



Career builder: what has the CIO done – and where is he going?

developing metrics for accelerating end user access to information to become more competitive, or cutting system admin time to save costs. That's clearly the way to get a value proposition in shape but, as an outsider, to get to this point your preparation has to be meticulous. Not only is the world becoming ever more complex – organisations are

### CIO PRIORITIES 2005

- Delivering projects that enable business growth
- Linking business and IT strategies/plans
- Demonstrating the business value of IT
- Applying metrics to IT organisation/services

now networks of alliances and outsourcers, placing great demands on IT – but there is also likely to be a wide variability in the 'fit' of an solution.

Sibley has some tips:

- Above all research the firm's offerings, customers, competitors and language – preparation could be 10 hours for an hour long meeting
- CIOs need to keep up with the pace of change – they are increasingly networking with peers (eg the CIO Connect group) because they feel vulnerable with vendors. They'll also use these forums to test out business cases. Honesty and great listening skills are essential
- Understand their difficult position between the CEO/CFO and the organisation and a need to ensure decisions are right – such as delivering security
- They are career builders and like big projects, but are increasingly staying to see these projects through from start to end. Their reputations depend on delivery
- They often bring a close team with them from previous roles – these people are great ways in
- Try to avoid taking your firms' political or product agenda into meetings – that distrust runs deep and they have no time for people with little value.

You should, adds Sibley, take time to understand the personality types of CIOs – they tend to be introverted, analytical types – whereas salespeople are often the opposite – and despite what the media say, they are not as young as you might think – mid-30s to early 50s – and their top interests are much more likely to be family and gardening than playing golf. [www.peopleachieving.com](http://www.peopleachieving.com)  
[www.conversation.com](http://www.conversation.com)

BY MARC BEISHON

All email and website references in this newsletter are clickable.



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