

The role of a Chief Product Officer

Technology and software companies often start life as a **product**, but the **transition from a one-product start-up to a functional business is a transformational and often hazardous step.**

The role of the Chief Product Officer is critical in facilitating this evolution and becomes even more important as a business scales.

As well as being responsible for the product strategy, they also join the dots between this strategy and the wider business – and can therefore ultimately be responsible for the health, sustainable value and success of the business.

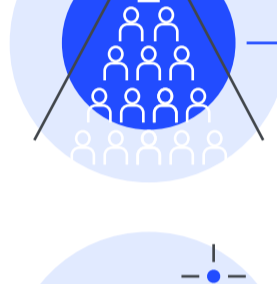
As such an important leadership function, the below sets out the key requirements and characteristics needed for this role.

The **CPO is core to the Executive team. They are visionaries and avid evangelists of the the product as well as a great leader and supervisor.**

The responsibilities of the CPO are inclusive of product vision, product strategy, product design, product development, and product marketing.

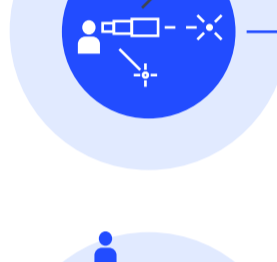
The CPO essentially oversees every element of the product from its conceptualisation to its launch and post-launch performance. The CPO is generally responsible for the building of a great product that avails a sustainable value in terms of revenue and profits for the business.

Objectives and Responsibilities of the Chief Product Officer



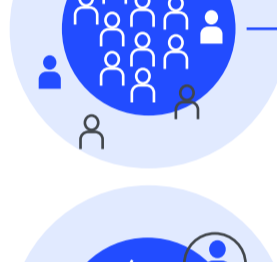
Leadership/Supervisory Role

The most prominent function of the CPO is to head all Product related departments. They play a supervisory role to the key product management officer such as the Director of Product Marketing, Director of Product Management, the Director of UX and the Head of Product Analytics.



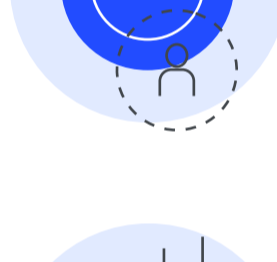
Vision and Strategy

The CPO is responsible for the formulation of the Product Marketing department's vision and also for imparting that vision in every sub-department and employee in the department. The CPO ensures that every sub-department is led by a unified and cohesive vision.



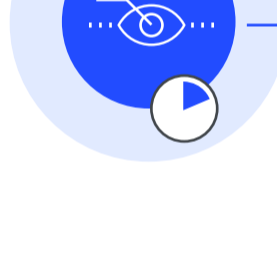
Marketing and Evangelism

The CPO is tasked with playing a lead role in marketing the product. The CPO acts as the lead evangelist for a business' product, leveraging the input of Product Marketing and Communications departments to assist them in their role.



Long-Term Culture

The CPO is responsible for the creation of a long-term business culture and Mode of Operation (MO). The CPO establishes the methodologies and procedures for conducting research, design conceptualisation, prototyping, and product marketing across the entire product marketing and management department.



Research and Analysis

The CPO is expected to critic, refine, and make further recommendations on research data conducted by the Product marketing personnel. The CPO is also responsible establishing product differentiation and execution strategies that will lead to the product's ultimate success.

4 key points that a CPO should possess...

1 — Communication

It is an absolute necessity for the CPO to possess great verbal and written communication skills.



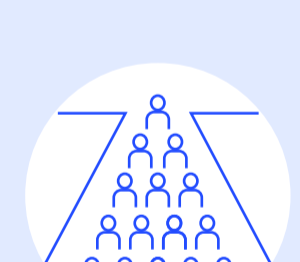
2 — Leadership Skills

The CPO must demonstrate exceptional leadership skills.

They will demonstrate an ability to effectively...

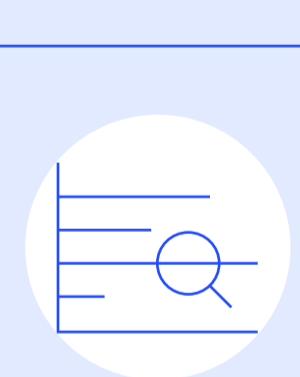
- ✓ communicate
- ✓ motivate
- ✓ inspire cross-functional teams

...with professionalism and clarity.



3 — Analytical Skills

The CPO possesses exceptional analytical skills necessary for driving successful product management departments and lead the business and product to the achievement of its financial goals.



4 — Interpersonal Skills

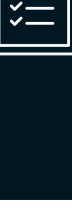
The CPO has the ability to work independently and still retain a high level of self-motivation.



How to get started

Responsibilities

- ✓ Product vision, strategy, roadmap. Short, medium and long term priorities
- ✓ Defining product life cycle alongside the product delivery schedule and prioritisation
- ✓ Representing Product at executive level.
- ✓ Assessing competition and market opportunities
- ✓ Building and developing features
- ✓ Assisting stakeholders with product decisions
- ✓ Product marketing to clients and internal teams
- ✓ Delivering and analysing metrics to informal senior decisions
- ✓ Ownership of product knowledge base
- ✓ Hiring and building out the team. Mentoring, coaching, developing and motivating them
- ✓ Building partnerships with clients and other software companies



Experience needed

- ✓ Significant senior product and team management experience within technology companies and product management
- ✓ Strong understanding of their industry.
- ✓ Creativity and drive to develop product vision and strategy
- ✓ Launched successful products to market
- ✓ Strong data analysis skills and data driven decision making
- ✓ Ability to oversee or design product specifications
- ✓ Communicate across the whole business and to the executive team
- ✓ Mentored and managed teams
- ✓ Understanding of technology architecture, SDL and has a keen interest in industry trends
- ✓ Strong strategic thinker that understands product implications across the business



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