

Five Tips for Designing an Executive Team

Large and fast-growing companies such as Amazon, Apple, Google, and Netflix have invented new organizations and new ways of doing business. Their organizational structures and new approaches to business are reflected in the executive business titles that collectively define their organizational structures.

These same titles are also promulgating within the 75,000+ company organizational charts that we follow.

Please find here a list of the [100 most popular executive titles](#) that we have identified.

These 100 executive titles can be divided into three categories: 60 classic roles, 20 grower roles, and 20 fixer roles.



Classics (not Statics)

Sixty roles (such as Chief Financial Officer, Chief Sales Officer, or Chief People Officer) have been common in the most successful large companies for decades.

Yet, even if seasoned corporate executives are familiar with these classic roles, the contours of these jobs have been evolving over the last five years in over half the companies that we follow.

How do we know this? Even if they (e.g., the three black titles below) have kept the same business titles for most of their direct reports (grey titles), some of their direct reports (blue titles) have business titles that were either non-existent five years ago or historically much deeper in the organization. Reason: Their functional priorities are evolving.

Chief People Officer	Chief Sales Officer	Chief Marketing Officer
Recruiting	Key Accounts	Product
Administration	Channel	Advertizing
Compensation	Area	PR
Culture	Customer Success	Digital
Diversity	Revenue	Analytics

The title Chief People Officer historically had Vice President Recruiting, Vice President Compensations and Benefits or Vice President Administration reporting to them. But now, new roles such as Vice President, Culture and Vice President, Diversity are appearing with increasing frequency.

Chief Sales Officer historically had Vice President, Key Accounts, Vice President, Channel or Vice President, Area reporting to them. Now, new roles such as Vice President, Customer Success or Vice President, Revenue are appearing with increasing frequency.

Growers

Twenty roles (such as Vice President, Digital, Vice President Information Security or Vice President, Revenue) are gaining traction at the top of organizational charts and appear to have staying power as mainstays in large organizations.

Growers
VP Digital
VP Data
VP Information Security

How do we know this? In monitoring and keeping track of organizational charts in the world's largest corporations, we notice that these executives are increasingly replaced by more experienced people and not demoted to lower levels in the organizational charts.

No longer is a Vice President, Digital only about social media presence, website refactoring or mobile application development. Today it is about eCommerce, digital transformation and often about business survival itself.

Fixers

Twenty other roles have emerged across at the top of organizational charts. These positions are mostly focused on fixing challenging priorities to cross a pass. When these missions are completed, the executives are assigned to broader tasks or switch to different roles.

Growers
VP Digital
VP Data
VP Information Security

When the company needs a deep restructuring, the Chief Executive Officer will name a Vice President, Transformation reporting directly to him to act quickly across the company to achieve this objective. Yet when the transformation is complete, there is no longer much need for such a senior position.

In such cases, the function and title would generally vanish at the top of the organizational chart and the incumbent would be assigned to another senior role. Fixer examples include Vice President, Integration, Vice President, Mergers and Acquisitions, or Vice President, Diversity.

Some "fixer" or "grower" roles have been traditionally common in some industries for over twenty years (e.g. Vice President, Risk in Insurance). The evolution in these positions is that these executives are now in demand in many more industries.

Organizational Design: Protect, Conquer and Inspire

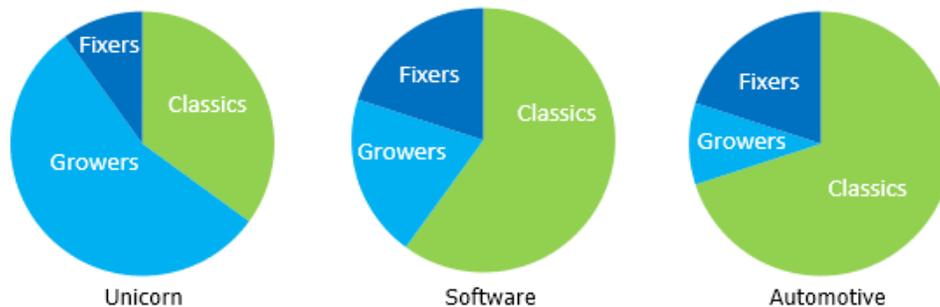
Tip #1: The structure of an executive team is a key decision for a Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors. First, it is about organizing the focus and functions of the seven executives that typically report to the Chief Executive Officer (N-1 to the CEO).

Tip #2: It is about the focus of the typically five executives reporting to each of the seven N-1 executives reporting to the CEO. In addition to being the forty highest compensated executives in a company, they also are typically the most accountable to deliver with their designated functions and objectives.

Tip #3: The organizational structure of a company is shared with employees of a company and its external stakeholders so that a company's structure can be more widely understood and can function more successfully. In a fast-moving world with so many opportunities, it has never been more important to know what the focus of these forty top executives.

Tip #4: The organizational structure ultimately reflects what a company seeks to protect and conquer. It also prints the CEO's style of leadership.

Tip #5: Spotting the portion of non-classic executive roles in a company organizational chart helps to understand how a company is different from its peers. Below are three typical examples: a unicorn company, a Global Fortune 500 software company and a Global Fortune 500 automotive company:



Having a Chief Financial Officer is expected. Having a Vice President Diversity or Vice President Growth tells a lot about the what a company is seeking to protect or conquer.

This is why great organization designers are great leaders.