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Chief Data and Analytics Officer Role Evolution

As the position of the data and analytics function matures, so too does its senior most leader. Gartner Peer Community's Chief Data and Analytics Officer (CDAO) cohort is primarily responsible for generating value through the organization's data and analytics assets and ecosystem. What is impacting this role and how is it evolving?

One-Minute Insights:

While the CDAO title is not uncommon, chief data officer (CDO) remains the most widely used title for the senior data and analytics role

Changing data ecosystems and customer expectations are impacting the CDAO or equivalent role

Most CDAO or equivalent roles have evolved over the past year and gained more influence

The top challenges these leaders face are also evolving, with many pointing to complex data infrastructures and cybersecurity threats in 2023

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Data collection: Dec 4 - 2023 - Mar 22, 2023 Respondents: 327 IT and data and analytics leaders

The actual title of the CDAO or equivalent role varies, as does the reporting structure

For most, the title of the senior data and analytics leadership role is the CDO (45%). But 27% are using the CDAO title.



The senior data and analytics leadership role is defined as "a leadership role primarily responsible for value creation through the organization's data and analytics assets and ecosystem. Whether a chief data officer or equivalent." Respondents who did not have such a role were eliminated from the survey.

43% of respondents say their senior data and analytics leader reports to the CIO, while 22% say they report to the CEO



> **"I think the CDO role is still evolving[.] Management also does not really know the work [and] expectations from the role."**
>
> - C-suite, hardware industry, 1,000 - 5,000 employees

> **"Data and Analytics role is becoming an integrated part of the business over [the] few past years. Earlier, it was used to just [do] reporting, fancy dashboards. There was resistance in budget for new tools. Now business has started unlocking the true value of analytics."**
>
> - Director, healthcare industry, 5,000 - 9,999 employees

The data ecosystem and customer expectations have significant impacts on the CDAO role

25% of respondents believe that the **changing data ecosystem** has had the **biggest impact** on the **senior data and analytics leadership role** over the past year. 23% indicate the greatest impact on this role is **customer expectations**.



More than two-thirds (**64%**) of respondents believe that their **senior data and analytics leader** should use the next year to **focus on the organization's data architecture and ecosystem.**



Data and analytics both **38%**, followed by **business value** (34%), data 19%, None of these 4%, Other 2%

> **"The need for better decision support and actionable insights at the customer level is driving the need for more maturity in the data analytics function."**
>
> - C-suite, healthcare industry, 10,000+ employees

> **"Data management and analytics tools are evolving rapidly. Especially when organizations are moving data from on premise to cloud services, there [is a] lack of expertise in the teams managing data."**
>
> - Director, manufacturing industry, 1,000 - 5,000 employees

Most say the CDAO or equivalent role at their organization has evolved over the last year and gained more influence on business decisions

81% of respondents agree that the role of their **senior data and analytics leader** has evolved over the past year.



82% say their **senior data and analytics leader has more influence on business decisions** compared to a year ago.



> **"Information is more critical to the decision makers so the role should expand and be allocated more resources."**
>
> - Director, educational services industry, 1,000 - 5,000 employees

> **"The role is constantly evolving and requires both leadership and peer support to be successful."**
>
> - Director, professional services industry, 5,000 - 10,000 employees

Complex data infrastructure and cybersecurity threats are top challenges in 2023, which have changed compared to a year ago

61% of respondents think that **complex data infrastructure** is one of the top challenges for their senior data and analytics leader in 2023. 50% believe that **cybersecurity threats** will pose a **major challenge**.

Business will views and data analytics as a cost center 19%, Lack of focus from business leaders 18%, Poor data quality 8%, Limited budget 8%, Complex or changing data regulations 7%, Budget limitations 4%, Business still views data and analytics as a service provider 4%, None of these 1%, Other 1%

86% say the top challenges that their data and analytics leadership role faces have changed compared to a year ago, with 14% saying they are significantly different.

> **"The focus has been shifting toward security/privacy of data."**
>
> Director, professional services industry, 10,000+ employees

> **"The senior data and analytics leadership role is evolving to become more strategic, collaborative, tech-savvy, and focused on ethics and governance."**
>
> - Director, finance industry, 10,000+ employees

> **"Data and the technology for leveraging the value of data are exploding in importance and complexity, particularly with the potential of AI."**
>
> - Director, retail industry, 10,000+ employees

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Respondent Breakdown

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Source: Gartner Peer Community, Chief Data and Analytics Officer Role Evolution survey

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