CONFESSIONS OF A SUCCESSFUL CIO
How the Best CIOs Tackle Their Toughest Business Challenges

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Foreword by SUSAN CRAMM

WILEY
Additional praise for *Confessions of a Successful CIO: How the Best CIOs Tackle Their Toughest Business Challenges*

“Everyone knows we learn best by experience. But not everyone has the opportunity to have so many experiences. The best of us learn from other people’s experiences, in addition to our own. This collection of stories of leadership moments faced by giants in our field is a great opportunity to grow.”

— June Drewry, Director of the Society for Information Management’s Leadership Development Institute and former Global CIO, Chubb, Aon, and Lincoln National

“I enjoyed reading the CIO confessions; real, insightful, and inspiring stories of leadership, across the challenging and broad spectrum of business, people, process, and technology aspects of today’s CIO responsibilities in forward-thinking corporations. Each story provides relevant approaches and examples of personal behavior for successful, and in some cases bold, leadership at the complex intersection of technology and business. The practical and no-nonsense story-telling triggers reflection and comparisons with similar situations any CIO will encounter and is helpful to formulate the right style and approach, or validate the chosen path to sustainable business value creation and personal success.”

— Roland Paanakker, former CIO, Nike Inc.

“In *Confessions of a Successful CIO*, the authors present tremendous insights into the philosophy and approaches of a set of truly world-class CIOs. Their stories are incredibly insightful, following their journeys through challenging, big-bet situations that they converted into major opportunities to support the transformation of their organizations. The stories so poignantly illustrate the critical leadership approaches that these CIOs employed to achieve amazing results. These stories provide any current or aspiring CIO with incredible examples of how to truly achieve the full potential of IT in their organizations.”

— Steve Morin, CIO, Bright Horizon

“*Confessions of a Successful CIO* is a compilation of genuine and inspirational stories sure to motivate IT leaders in pursuit of achieving transformational successes. The influential CIOs profiled in this book tell their stories with such authenticity; you will feel invigorated and challenged to pursue excellence in your own career.”

— Mary Gendron, Senior Vice President and CIO, Celestica

“*Confessions of a Successful CIO* is filled with a ton of insightful leadership lessons and real, actionable advice necessary for the modern-day CIO to be successful, as told through the stories of top-flight CIO leaders. A must-read for those already in the role—and certainly for those who aspire to be IT leaders.”

— Stuart Kippelman, CIO, Covanta Energy

“Each story provides ‘real world’ experiences, along with leadership wisdom and a boost of energy, for what all IT organizations are trying to do today—create value. This is a great reminder that the role of CIO is not for the faint of heart, but with courage and leadership great things can and do happen.”

— Dede Ramoneda, Group Vice President and CIO, First Citizens Bank
“The job of a CIO is becoming increasingly demanding and challenging, no matter what vertical industry you may be a part of. In this book, we have the opportunity to read the stories told by some of the most exemplary CIOs out there, who not only faced up to the demands and challenges but created excitingly innovative approaches to high-stakes situations that would likely make or break their careers. If you are a CIO, this book will both inspire you and challenge you to new ways of thinking.”
—David L. Miller, Vice Chancellor and CIO, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

“Confessions of Successful CIO shares mini-epic stories to visualize real time, tough business problems and how persevering high-powered CIOs solve issues to reach business goals. As an IT executive, placing the art of IT over the science of IT demystifies how we all can reach the best outcomes with our customers and business value.”
—Ben Berry, Chief Technology Officer, City of Portland

“Roberts and Watson have done a terrific job capturing these virtues with inspirational lessons from some of the top CIOs in the business. Taking advantage of the knowledge and wisdom collected within is like a baseball player getting batting tips from 10 of the best hitters in the game!”
—Jay Ferro, CIO, American Cancer Society

“The testimonials are great, packed with insights that are highly transferable across industries. The method of transferring these insights through the stories of life experiences makes them memorable and actionable with immediate applicability and impact.”
—James Swanson, CIO, Monsanto

“The natural, story-type flow about these CIOs is easy to consume, and readers can really relate to their stories and principles. At times it seemed like a mirror to some of my own experiences and very good net/simplification of the principles of a CIO role in today’s world: people and leadership first, truly engaging in the business, and driving transformational changes to the portfolio that clearly impact revenue, costs, and client retention.”
—Mike Gioja, CIO/Senior Vice President IT, Product Management & Development, Paychex

“When it comes to pragmatic advice, this book is it! Confessions of a Successful CIO focuses on translating the experiences of successful CIOs into attributes of success. A more traditional CIO can get caught up in the focus of the Big Four: Social, Mobile, Cloud, and Big Data. This book, however, appropriately places the focus on the leadership required and the roles needed to organize and utilize technology for competitive advantage. It takes bold leadership to recognize the power of technology to enable business results. The collection of experiences presented in this book provides insight for CIOs and other executives to adopt in their personal quest to bring transformative change to the customer experience, operational capability, and shareholder results. Readers will find the necessary tools to navigate the C-suite, the courage to make a difference, and the inspiration to focus on what matters most.”
—Victor Fetter, CIO and Managing Director, LPL Financial

“The lessons detailed by the various CIOs caused me to think of several similar and daunting challenges in my own career as a CIO. Once again, the lessons learned are valuable and they should be repeated: work closely with your clients, focus on the bottom-line of the organization, and always move toward ‘how am I going to contribute to team success?’ This book inspires me to reenergize myself and the team through exemplary leadership and contribution to organizational success. If I don’t contribute significantly as a leader, someone else surely will (and, that’s bad).”
—Scott Culbertson, Vice President/CIO, UGI Utilities
CONFESSIONS OF A SUCCESSFUL CIO
Founded in 1807, John Wiley & Sons is the oldest independent publishing company in the United States. With offices in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, Wiley is globally committed to developing and marketing print and electronic products and services for our customers’ professional and personal knowledge and understanding.

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Unleashing the Power of IT: Bringing People, Business, and Technology Together, Second Edition by Dan Roberts
The U.S. Technology Skills Gap: What Every Technology Executive Must Know to Save America’s Future by Gary J. Beach
To the men and women of our armed forces, active or veteran. And to organizations such as Workforce Opportunity Services (WOS) and Darkhorse Benefits, who are committed to helping our veterans build strong corporate careers, leveraging their unique values and competencies in the private sector—and, once again, building an even stronger America.
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FOREWORD

I love this book. It’s informative, inspirational, and memorable. Each chapter reads like a mini suspense novel, complete with heroes, villains, and cliffhangers. It’s not really a book, but a compilation of stories about leaders who have transformed their companies with technology. As a reader, I felt like I was in the inside circle, privy to information usually shared over a drink.

The leaders profiled within did more than they thought they could in situations that are more challenging than most. We learn from their mistakes and successes, and are emboldened by their courage and discipline. The narrative format allows us to record the stories neatly away in our memories, allowing us to hit “replay” when we need them the most.

Leading with technology is, first and foremost, about leadership. While there is no one-size-fits-all road to success, great leaders, like the ones profiled within this book, are marked by a unique set of qualities: passion and drive to make a positive difference, the ability to engage others to chart the future and define the path, and the paradoxical ability to maintain optimism and perseverance through difficult circumstances.

With courageous and disciplined leadership as the foundation, the other factor that distinguishes these leaders is a level of technology smarts that is only born from experience. Technology-smart leaders know how to identify (in the words of one of the CIOs profiled here) the “art of the possible” amid the complex assortment of desired outcomes, existing capabilities and complexities, and various resources—technical and organizational—that can be applied to the transformational journey.

As described within, the art of the possible entails placing big bets and buying down risks by emphasizing people over process. This is an important message, one that is largely missing from the left-brain-oriented literature that dominates the technology press. Do a tag cloud on this book, and words like business, team, and people will dominate,