



CHIEF DATA OFFICER EXCHANGE



26th - 27th March
Hilton London Syon Park



THE CDO'S PLAYBOOK: INTERVIEW WITH PETER JACKSON

In 2018 we had the pleasure of sitting down with Peter Jackson, who was then the first ever Chief Data Officer at Southern Water, and is now the Director of Group Data Sciences at Legal & General as well as the co-author of 'The Chief Data Officer's Playbook'. Peter found time to talk to us about some of his insights, experiences and ideas around the world of Data.

Peter will be joining us at this year's Chief Data Officer Exchange in London where he'll be delivering a Fireside Chat along with Caroline Carruthers on 'Exploring the C-Suite Dynamic to Elevate Data on the Corporate Agenda and Ensure Positive Engagement and Collaboration'.



Peter Jackson
Director of Group Data Sciences
Legal & General

What skillset would you say is required for a Chief Data Officer to be successful in their role?

I think that Chief Data Officers come from four backgrounds. They either come from governance, from technology, data science or strategy. So I think a Chief Data Officer needs to have a blend, to some extent, of all of those, and if they're lacking in any one of those they need to recruit a team that's complimentary to where they're weak.

I think the other skills they need are:

- ✔ *The ability to communicate really well, to communicate the vision and the strategy of the journey that the organisation's going to go on with data.*
- ✔ *The ability to build relationships, both at board level and right the way down to the frontline, the people who are actually looking after the data and handling the data.*
- ✔ *They need to be a specialist in data. A Chief Financial Officer is a specialist in finance. A Chief Data Officer should be a specialist in data.*
- ✔ *A passion for data. You've got to be talking about it the whole time. We're the new kid on the block. So they'll be full of energy, and constantly on message with the story.*
- ✔ *Executive sponsorship. That's not a skillset, but you need executive sponsorship because data officers are going to make changes in organisations and the operating model.*
- ✔ *And you need a good bit of luck as well.*

What is your biggest piece of advice for a fellow Chief Data Officer when delivering a future-proof data strategy?

The strategy's got to come in two flavours. You need to do what we would call an immediate data strategy. You need to address those burning issues, the immediate business value that you can add in an immediate data strategy, but without any regret spend; without any regret tasks. So, that has to fit with the longer-term strategy for the organisation.

So being able to build a tactical, strategic approach in tandem is something you need to get in there to be enduring. And you need to build a really good team and have the right skillsets in that team to deliver what the business needs from its data.

And then finally, aligning the data strategy with the business objectives. If there's any misalignment between those two it won't endure. It won't last.

What is the biggest challenge you're addressing, this year?

We're going through a big transformation at the moment and it's classically people, technology, and process. We've done, to a large extent, the people piece. We understood what skillsets we have in the organisation, and we've brought them into one place, and we've recruited where we need to.

So, the biggest challenge now is probably turning towards technology, getting the right storage compute analytical power that we need to deliver the insight to the business.

What would you say is the biggest buzzword in the data sphere at the moment?

That's a good question. I think we're all over Big Data. I think that was the buzzword for a couple of years and I think we're over that now. We realise that Big Data is just data.

I think the biggest buzzword is artificial intelligence and machine learning. I think a lot of organisations are really wanting to understand what they are, and why they're different, and how it could impact their business processes. So I think we're going to hear a lot more about AI and ML.

To hear more from Peter Jackson, join him and 80 other senior data leaders at the Chief Data Officer Exchange in London's Syon Park on the 26th - 27th March.

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