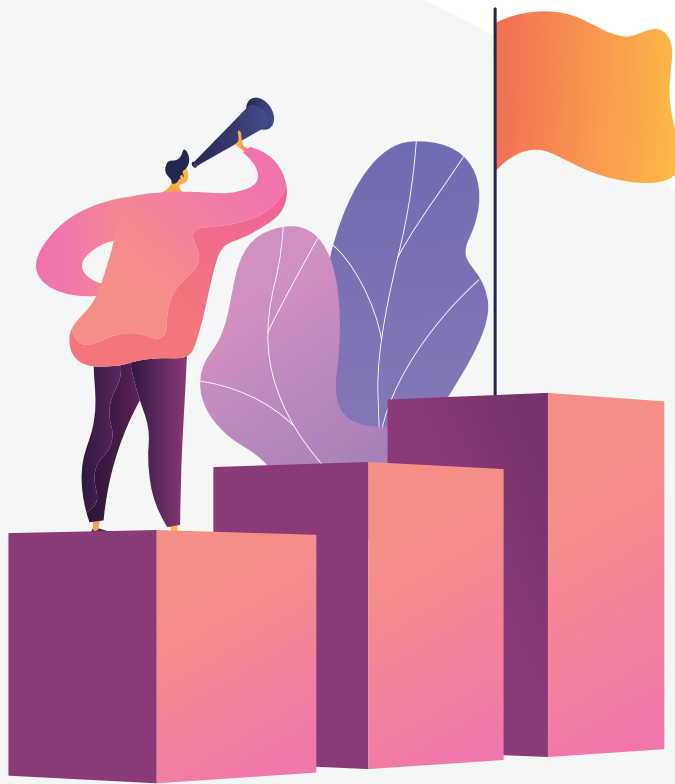


THE CIO's GUIDE TO Thriving



Table of Contents



Introduction	3
------------------------------	---

Chapter 1: Developing Sustainable Digital Transformation and Growth	5
---	---

A Flexible and Scalable Infrastructure
that Drives Digital Progress

Developing a Data Culture

Applying the System Development
Lifecycle Methodology (SDLC)

Chapter 2: Taking Your Budget to the Next Level	12
---	----

Preparing for Disruption

Utilizing Automation and AI to Cut Costs

Optimizing Costs by Addressing Talent Scarcity

Chapter 3: Preparing for Long-Term Success	20
--	----

The Building Blocks of a Successful Strategy

Defining a Strategy that Builds Over Time

Tracking Performance with Defined KPIs

Communicating IT Value across the Board and C-Suite

Conclusion	27
----------------------------	----

About ProArch	28
-------------------------------	----

Introduction

Today, every organization realizes just how crucial it is to be able to pivot its approach, strategy, and technology in response to new challenges. According to [Gartner](#), the typical organization has gone through five major changes in the past three years, and nearly 75 percent expect to multiply their change initiatives in the years ahead. However, many of these changes struggle to gain enterprise-wide success: Half of change initiatives outright fail, and only 34 percent are clearly successful.

For these reasons and more, CIOs are facing greater adversity than ever. They must continuously drive innovation in an ever-changing landscape of disruption and threats—all while containing or cutting costs due to global economic instability. The pressure to deliver is high, and it will only continue to grow as CIOs adopt responsibilities.

Between economic uncertainty, shifts in work culture, and a global pandemic, many companies have been forced to focus their energy on surviving rather than thriving. Resilience is desirable to many CIOs struggling in such a disruptive environment, allowing organizations to survive regardless of the challenges that affect them. However, it isn't ideal, as it levels out, inhibiting enterprises from innovation and growth.

The concept of antifragility, on the other hand, offers organizations the opportunity to go beyond survival to improve despite disruption. As author [Nassim Nicholas Taleb](#) says, “antifragility is beyond resilience or robustness. The resilient resists shocks and stays the same; the antifragile gets better.”

Antifragility empowers organizations to not only face challenges without falling apart but emerge stronger than before. As CIO, it's up to you to drive this mindset throughout your organization, empowering your teams to get out of their comfort zone and attain growth in turbulent times.

This ebook gives every CIO the foundation to drive more meaningful change.

In this ebook, we will explore exactly how CIOs can adopt the antifragility mindset to accomplish their goals and priorities. We will dive into the following topics and more:

- **Contributing to the growth of the company with IT**
- **Optimizing IT costs**
- **Developing healthy relationships with other CXOs**
- **Attaining long-term success with performance management and measurement**

Whether you read this ebook from cover to cover or jump into the chapter that most interests you, it will offer invaluable tips and tricks that provide the foundation you need to thrive well into the future.

Although challenges are bound to arise as you develop your antifragility plan, this ebook and ProArch are here to offer the support you need. We are confident that, with the right mindset and determination, you can find success in the most challenging times.

A Letter from ProArch's vCIO

Michael Montagliano



As a vCIO, I assist companies that are facing an array of unprecedented challenges that have forced them to evolve quickly and efficiently to keep their organizations moving forward. Together, we have survived unpredictable developments, working on the fly to develop solutions to unprecedented challenges. **Now, it's time for us to outshine survival to attain antifragility and continuous improvement—no matter what comes our way.**

With over 20 years of IT experience—including working in various sales, technical, and management roles—I have gained expertise in every step of the journey. Being a vCIO and spending much of my career working with company leaders, I aim to provide vision and leadership strategies to organizations across a variety of industries.

With this ebook, I hope to offer all CIOs the guidance they need to not only survive difficult experiences but thrive in everything they do. **Welcome to the start of your antifragility journey!**

Best,

Michael

Michael Montagliano

Chief Information Security Officer, ProArch

CHAPTER 1:

Developing Sustainable Digital Transformation and Growth

Jordan is a well-received CIO at a large-scale enterprise with years of experience under his belt. He has successfully driven digital transformation initiatives at his organization multiple times and has always been able to take the time to ensure sufficient change management. Lately, however, he has felt a shift in the way his organization is adopting change.

Just two years ago, the organization was able to capitalize on new opportunities quickly and efficiently. Now, Jordan has noticed an acceleration gap growing. His teams are burnt out, and the enterprise is not adapting at the rate it has been—or needs to. To continue contributing to growth, he and the rest of his team must learn how to close that gap and keep up with the pace of their competition.

Although challenging, Jordan's experience is not unique. According to research from [Workday](#), 52 percent of leaders say there is a growing divide between where their business is and where it needs to be. On top of that, 58 percent of them report that the pace of digital transformation has already slowed or will slow in the future.

To thrive and develop resilience, Jordan and CIOs like him must put an antifragility plan in place that sustainably contributes to growth and flexibility. And they must do so while avoiding burnout and continuously delivering excellent experiences for their employees.

In this chapter, we will explore three crucial elements of sustainable growth through the lens of antifragility: a flexible and scalable infrastructure, excellent data governance, and a comprehensive system development lifecycle plan (SDLC). Let's dive in.

52%

Fifty-two percent of leaders say there is a growing divide between where their business is and where it needs to be.

WORKDAY

A Flexible and Scalable Infrastructure Drives Digital Progress



CIOs must develop a 360-degree outlook in order to foster a culture that adopts best practices across the enterprise—and that starts with instilling a flexible foundation. Your IT infrastructure needs to be scalable and supportive of digital transformation. It must also guarantee the following values:

1 Flexibility to Shifts in Demand:

There will always be shifts in demand from both the workforce and the market, and organizations must have the infrastructure to respond quickly to these shifts to remain competitive. Make it a priority to learn about the end-to-end demands on infrastructure, as well as how each process contributes to the design of enterprise architecture early on. Use this information to make the most productive choices about platforms, applications, vendors, etc. to upgrade your solutions. This will allow you to scale up or down based on real-time demands and informed metrics.

PRO TIP

Virtual desktop infrastructure solutions provide a secure cloud framework that offers flexibility for your workforce—no matter where they are. With [Azure Virtual Desktop](#), for example, leaders can scale as demand shifts (in a positive or negative direction), keep costs controlled, and meet employee needs.

2 Support of Talent Expansion:

The ability to meet your organization's goals hinges on the long-term consideration of your resources—especially when expanding to other locations or through acquisitions. Do you have the right people with the right skills in the right place? Ask yourself:

1. **What skills are needed to achieve organizational initiatives?**
2. **Where can automation be utilized to free up resources?**
3. **What skills are needed in-house? What can be outsourced?**

First, inventory the IT talent at your organization and establish how the current staff works. Build a skills matrix, determine where gaps exist, and establish a training plan that will help fill them. Finally, evaluate needs across departments—and capture relevant data—to ensure sufficient infrastructure and resource capacity planning.



PRO TIP

If your team is lean, consider exploring experts outside of your organization to help with specific needs. One-time projects and short timelines may require outsourcing, so avoid hiring for a specific skill set if it's not a good investment. Vendors can help you achieve the results you're looking for.

3 Innovation and Experimentation:

You must also ensure your infrastructure is aligned with and supports innovation at the departmental level. This will guarantee you have your sights set on improvement, prevent you from closing the enterprise off from transformational ideas, and ensure growth despite unforeseeable roadblocks or shifts in expectations. At the end of the day, you want your talent to prioritize experimentation in the face of any change.

Innovation requires both a stable structure to operate in and time allocated to experimentation. It's not just creating great ideas—it's the process of evaluating, incubating, prioritizing, and executing ideas in alignment with corporate strategy. By instilling an innovative mindset in your team, you'll have the foundation to grow despite any uncertainty.



PRO TIP

Innovation relies on buy-in from across the organization, so don't keep it within IT. One way to ensure you have full support is to develop a manageable, agile methodology for your go-to-market strategy to continuously realign throughout the process. Don't forget to ask for ideas and feedback from outside of your department.

4 Improvements to the User and Customer Experience:

Whatever technology you implement, you're going to hear about the problems users are having—even if it's just a few seconds of slower performance. On the opposite end of the spectrum, providing excellent experiences for your users will result in significant benefits for your organization's infrastructure.

For example, greater experiences lead to higher employee engagement. According to Forrester, this directly translates to greater customer satisfaction, as companies with the most engaged employees have **81 percent** higher customer satisfaction.



PRO TIP

Consider implementing system and user acceptance testing to ensure all tech fills your users' needs. With system acceptance testing, you can use key metrics to ensure that your system meets all of your set requirements before rolling it out to the entire enterprise. Then, user acceptance testing will make sure their experience is at least maintained and, hopefully, even improved.



As organizations continue to adapt to a state of continuous change, leaders will need to reduce their traditional footprint by shifting to modern infrastructure. Start with the goal or objective that the organization is trying to achieve, then identify the technology that will get you there. A business outcome should define all IT projects.



Developing a Data Culture

Many enterprises are collecting so much data that they lack sufficient visibility and/or don't know how to effectively measure against compliance standards—let alone move past compliance to achieve improved data quality, avoid costs, and make well-informed decisions. According to [Gartner](#), 42 percent of data and analytics leaders do not assess, measure, or monitor their data and analytics governance.

If this sounds like you, and your data is not secure, private, accurate, and usable, your data is likely owning you rather than the other way around.

A motivated and synergetic environment is key to facilitating growth with excellent data governance. To achieve a state of cooperation, one of the most powerful roles you need to fulfill as CIO is the reliable collaborator.

Not only do you need to communicate value for sufficient buy-in, but you must also be able to cooperate with your CISO and CDO to proactively ensure all data governance is seamless. Poor identification of roles will lead to no accountability, as well as potentially leave stakeholders out of the process, so be sure to identify these responsibilities early in the process.

Aligning with Your CISO:

Data security is one of the most important components of data governance, which makes working with your CISO essential. The CISO will provide a deep understanding of threats and risks, empowering you to implement the right solutions to [strengthen your cybersecurity](#) and protect your enterprise. Define roles and expectations early in the process to ensure efficiency and collaboration as well as give proper credit where it's due.

Aligning with Your CDO:

Although you define the strategy and make the key decisions, your CDO is there to help you. Work with them to identify possible tools and define a strategy to understand your data by type, use case, location, and data cleansing policies. Then, take your data and tie it into relevant business KPIs, such as sales metrics or close rates. A proper structure will provide the foundation needed to understand how your data is—and should be—leveraged.

Data is at the heart of your organization, and its integrity must be upheld. Facilitate open communication with an emphasis on shared vision, priorities, and methodologies across departments. Through this collaborative environment, you'll be able to ensure exceptional data governance throughout every stage of your business as you scale.

Applying the System Development Lifecycle Methodology (SDLC)

Implementing new technology projects efficiently is a vital function of a competitive enterprise. However, CIOs realize that managing so many moving parts with a long list of collaborators can become overwhelming quickly.

One process, [System Development Lifecycle \(SDLC\)](#), can help you consolidate these disparate workstreams, bringing together all key stakeholders during an implementation before moving into production.

Extensive planning and coordination are essential to achieving a successful business outcome. Without an SDLC process, projects can become challenged easily, with many either running over time or over budget. Integrating an SDLC methodology into your approach from the beginning ensures all critical stakeholders have a voice during implementation, proactively avoiding some of the most common roadblocks to implementation.

Forty-two percent of data and analytics leaders **do not assess, measure, or monitor their data and analytics governance.**

GARTNER RESEARCH



This comprehensive procedure includes the following key considerations:

- Project initiation
- Business requirement gathering and solutions
- Project management
- Budget planning, formulation, execution, and evaluation
- Solution implementation
- System and user acceptance testing
- Alignment and impact on current architecture
- Security risk assessment, requirements, testing, and remediation
- Transfer to operations and support

Today, IT and business initiatives are inextricably linked. As we've explored in this chapter, the five following tips are essential to effectively aligning these goals and facilitating enterprise-wide growth:

- 1 Establish an adaptive infrastructure.
- 2 Align across departments to drive innovative initiatives.
- 3 Provide structure to your data governance plan with your CISO and CDO.
- 4 Protect the integrity of your data with powerful tools and a collaborative environment.
- 5 Apply a system development lifecycle methodology to ensure extensive planning throughout every step of the process.

Key Takeaways: Effectively Managing IT to Facilitate Growth

With a growth-centric and flexible infrastructure, data governance, and road mapping, you'll have the foundation you need to drive unprecedented growth and remain competitive. However, that's not all you'll need to thrive in a state of constant uncertainty.

Keep reading to dive into the next chapter: [Taking Your Budget to the Next Level](#).



CHAPTER 2:

Taking Your Budget to the Next Level

On top of developing sufficient infrastructure and data governance, Jordan must also find a way to optimize his budget while delivering outstanding results. Infrastructure, governance, and remote work are just a sliver of his costs. With increased spending also going into cybersecurity, cloud, and AI, he must ensure each of his investments is worthwhile. And while Jordan's budget hasn't decreased, he needs to be prepared in case budget cuts do arise.

The need to deliver consistent results presents high stakes for Jordan and his team. Not only must he maintain a budget that addresses the change his organization has already experienced, but he must also continue accelerating growth despite any challenges. And of course, there are challenges:

Scarce and expensive talent and ongoing supply chain issues have made it more difficult than ever to gain sufficient and affordable resources, as well as added pressure to prove time to value.

So, how can Jordan and CIOs like him ensure they're within their required IT budget and maintain antifragility without abandoning essential capabilities? Let's explore the essentials of developing a healthy IT budget poised to handle change, as well as how you can address common challenges like talent scarcity without exceeding budgetary requirements.

Preparing for Disruption

IT budgets vary significantly based on an organization's industry and desired outcomes; however, any budget that supports your antifragility plan will have a dynamic, agile, and adaptive approach.

Before diving in, reinforce your SDLC and change management processes, and remember that you aren't bound to your plan for eternity. Change will be your only constant, so get ready for it. Here are a few ways to prepare

Resources that can help you compare your budget and expectations:

Gartner

nielsen

FORRESTER

LinkedIn



PEER GROUPS

*Remember to lean on others for support and advice.
You don't have to know everything from the get-go!*

Leverage Information from Organizations Like Yours

First, create a plan that allows you to continuously tune into industry leaders, research, and other relevant resources. You don't need to reinvent the wheel and run blind tests until something sticks. Instead, make it a priority to talk to your peers and research companies like yours and those you aspire to be. Look for enterprises of the same size, industry, and goals.

If you're diving into unfamiliar territory, awareness of the typical budget can help. For instance, on average, large enterprise companies usually spend 4 to 7 percent of their revenue on IT. However, this varies quite a bit **depending on the industry**: High-tech companies typically fall in the 2.6 to 4.7 percent range, while financial services budget averages land anywhere between 4.4 to 11.4 percent. If you're in a different industry, like education, for example, and have a smaller team, your IT spend will look and feel much different. Don't compare your apples to another organization's oranges.



Align with Your CFO to Fill in the Gaps

On top of aligning with other industry experts, you need to **foster relationships across your own company** and utilize its leaders. That means collaborating with your CFO to make sure budgetary expectations are aligned—and approved.

How do you convince your CFO just how important your initiatives are? When talking to any financial leader in your organization, try to adopt their language. Demonstrate the ROI of your desired investments through terminology they often use, always expressing your ideas in terms of financial justification.

By keeping this perspective at the top of your mind, you'll be able to proactively address financial concerns before they're brought up by the CFO, as well as gain their trust and support. After you've gained the green light from your CFO on a project budget, don't leave the collaboration behind.

It's always better to overcommunicate than run into issues later. **Integrate these four best practices into your processes →**



Meet regularly

Aim to meet at least once a month to revisit initiatives and progress, realigning as necessary. Should any unforeseen change arise, schedule a meeting with the CFO to review and brief them on what's going on.



Reframe expectations for digital transformation success:

Initiatives should reflect both monetary and nonmonetary value. Don't focus so much on monetary success that you forget about better reflections of success like user engagement.



Use a common set of KPIs:

Reporting on the performance of initiatives hinges upon common ground. What are signs of success you can both agree on? Prioritize KPIs that reflect that impact.



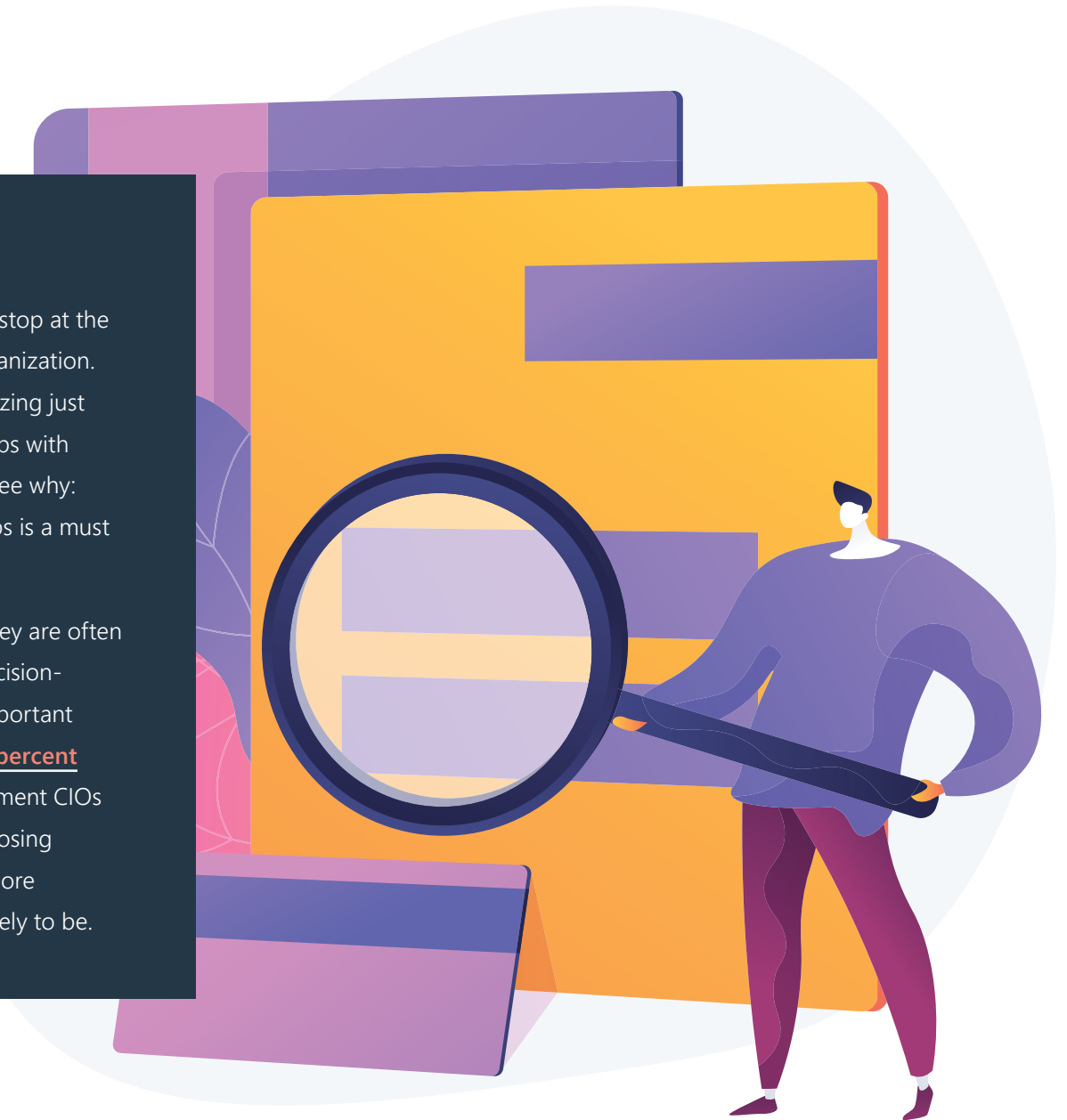
Provide full visibility into spending:

Both you and the CFO should have a clear understanding of how your digital initiatives are contributing to enterprise-wide value. You must have sufficient transparency into your cost structure to accomplish this.

Gain Visibility Across Teams

Additionally, insights into your budget can't stop at the CFO; they must offer visibility across the organization. According to Zylo, today's CIOs are emphasizing just how crucial it is to foster working partnerships with leaders across their companies. It's easy to see why: Maintaining and improving your relationships is a must for a budget's long-term success.

When IT is considered a business partner, they are often allowed greater visibility and influence in decision-making and spending. This is particularly important considering IT departments owned only 27 percent of SaaS spending in 2022. The more involvement CIOs have in approving or denying solutions, choosing vendors, and aligning tools and costs, the more successful teams—and your budget—are likely to be.



Utilizing Automation and AI to Cut Costs

Not only must you prepare your budget for disruption, but you also need to make it as lean as possible. With automation and AI, you can optimize costs while maintaining efficiency.

Seventy-three percent of IT leaders say automation success saves employees 11–50 percent of the time they previously spent on manual tasks, and 57 percent of them report that it has saved departments up to 11–50 percent on costs by cutting these processes.

In fact, automation is best served when it's not used to replace staff but rather to supplement their processes and minimize repetitive, manual tasks, freeing them up to focus on what they do best: strategic initiatives.

Keep in mind that AI can be used in anything from outsourcing security alerts to your Security Operations Center to automating a single time-consuming reporting process. Not only will you save time and resources you've spent on manual tasks, but you'll also be more equipped to cut investments that aren't serving your organization's goals.

CASE STUDY

Automation Saves Hundreds of Work Hours

An energy company that buys and sells energy wanted to better harness data to improve financial forecasting.

The Problem:

Their broker commission reporting process was slow and manual and only showed a point in time. They had blind spots in their data as it was kept siloed and not managed properly.

The Solution:

ProArch deployed a **Data Platform** that connected data sources and fully automated the commission reporting process from end-to-end.

The Benefits:

Commissions are reliably calculated daily with low touch validation. The internal team saved 100s of hours that is now redeployed to more pressing initiatives and data quality has improved.

[READ THE FULL STORY →](#)

Optimizing Costs by Addressing Talent Scarcity

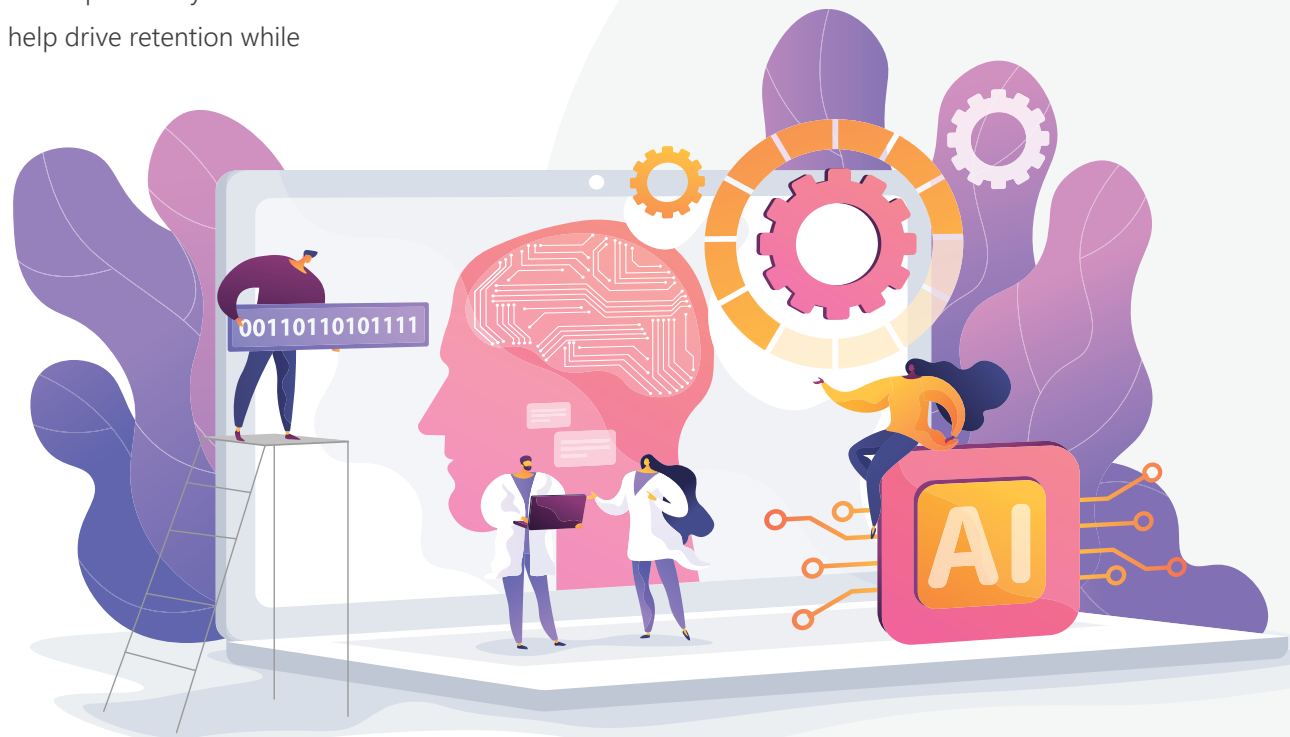
While AI can help you cut costs, it cannot replace your team. The talent at your organization is the core of your antifragility plan: Don't leave them behind.

Retaining great employees has been especially challenging over the last few years. Talent attrition was one of the major concerns for CIOs in 2022, with **64 percent** of them identifying it as a significant challenge to overcome. This, alongside the scarcity issue plaguing IT, has created a competitive environment with sky-high salaries that wreak havoc on IT's budgets. As CIO, that responsibility falls on your shoulders. Here's what you can do to help drive retention while optimizing your budget.

Explore the Needs of Your Employees and Where Tech Fits into the Equation

To give your employees exceptional experiences, you first need to understand their needs and desires. Does your team value amazing remote work experiences and need the latest technology at home, or do they place greater value on in-office perks? What are their most common pain points and stressors?

While it's unlikely that needs, expectations, and challenges will span your entire team's demographics, as CIO, you can affordably provide technology that supports as many of those values as possible, therefore driving IT retention.



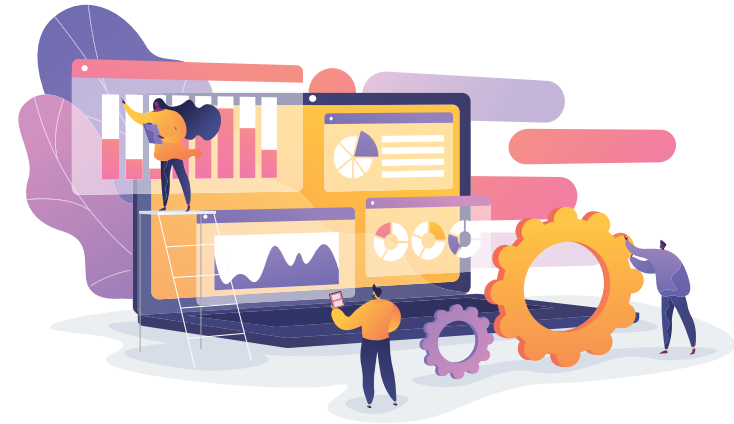
Here are a few survey questions that can help determine the most important values across IT:

1. What initially drew you to our team? What makes you want to stay here?
2. What do you think is missing from our core values?
3. How would you rate our flexible work policy? Why?
4. Rate each of our benefits in terms of importance to you. What benefits do you feel are missing?
5. How would you rate overall satisfaction with your position on a scale of 1–10? Why?
6. What stresses you inside and outside of work?

Investing in your people will be one of the biggest chunks of your budget. However, providing them with well-informed resources will save you time, money, and resources on recruitment and training in the long run. You'll also be able to fully utilize your talent, further optimizing costs.

Know When to Supplement Work with External Partners

Outsourcing capabilities is another excellent way to get work done within your budget while driving an amazing experience for your staff. When considering bringing in a partner, weigh the pros and cons and the costs of buying versus building support. Here's how.



First, gain a complete understanding of your team's capabilities and how to maintain them. Be sure to analyze current skills as well as the cost of maintaining them. Then, decide if it's more worthwhile and cost-effective to develop them within the company or invest in a partner. In cases where hiring an internal resource will stretch your budget, it's essential to look into your options.

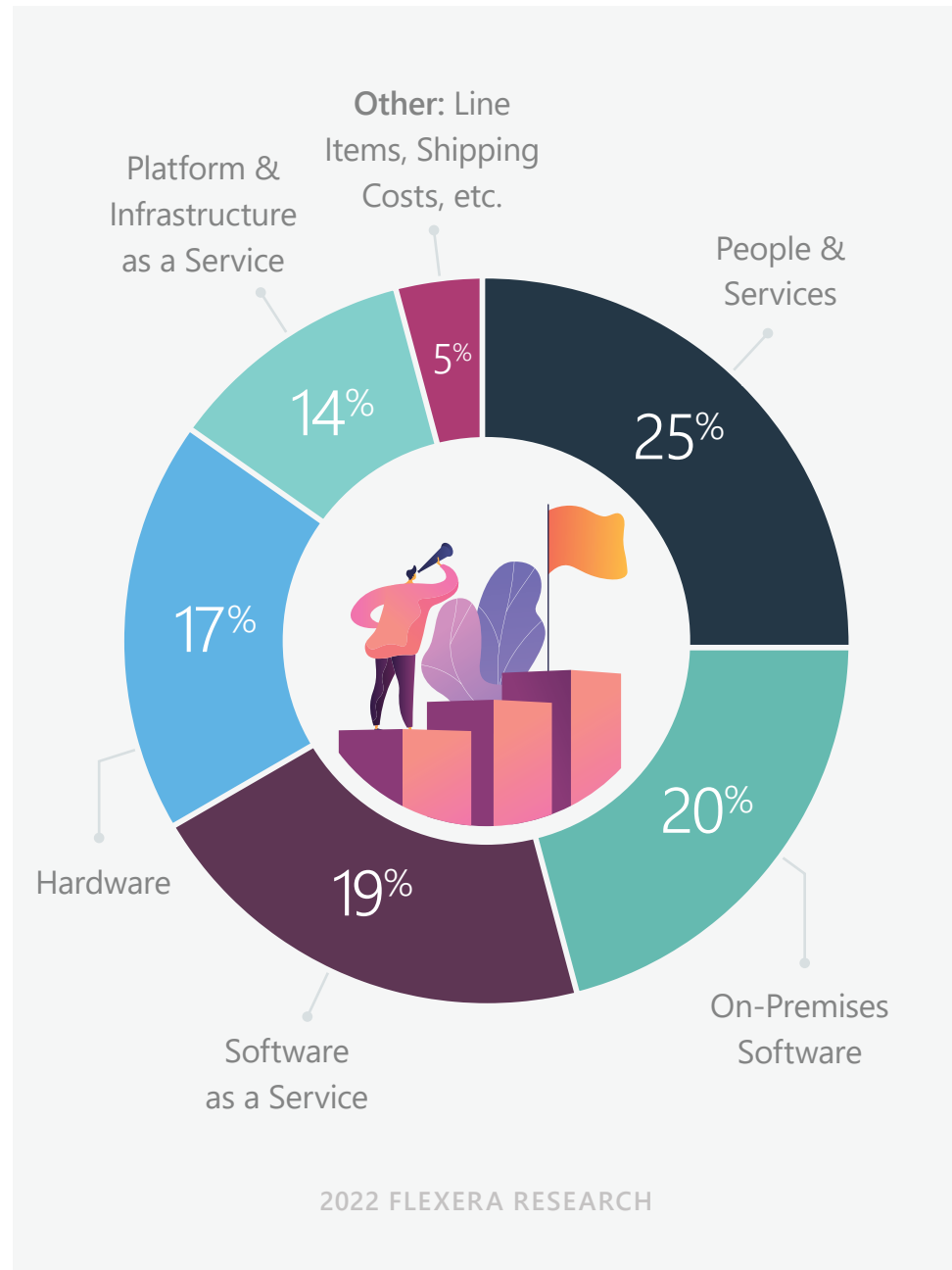
If your project only requires short-term expertise, for example, it may be more affordable to outsource an expert to help—especially if you don't see your organization requiring such specific expertise beyond implementation. For example, by working with a partner like ProArch, you can access all the benefits of internal expertise with greater control and a fraction of the cost.

Key Takeaways: The Fundamentals of a First-Rate Budget

While your budget could look wildly different based on your organization's needs, the following is a high-level view of the most noteworthy considerations you should consider, as well as their percentage breakdowns based on [2022 data](#):

By building the basics of your budget to respond to disruption, aligning with your CFO and across the organization, and utilizing automation, you'll be able to not only optimize your costs but also address any challenges—like talent scarcity—that could get in the way.

That's not all you need to thrive despite change and uncertainty. In our final chapter, we'll explore the building blocks of a successful IT strategy. Keep reading to dive into [Preparing for Long-Term Success](#).



CHAPTER 3:

Preparing for Long-Term Success

Perhaps the most challenging requirement Jordan must meet as CIO is preparing for long-term success—especially when he has no idea what the future holds. While he has developed a flexible infrastructure and defined his budget, he must also follow through on his plan in order to achieve the organization's desired outcomes. That means gaining sufficient support for his investments from both the C-suite and the board.

However, it's not easy to continuously communicate the value of his plan—and Jordan isn't the only CIO who finds it challenging. As a whole, **63 percent** of CIOs struggle to communicate IT's value, and only 7 percent report being consistently successful in demonstrating IT's business value. For example, like many of his colleagues, Jordan focuses on technology and operational metrics that, while valuable, fail to relate back to business outcomes.

Although it may be challenging, there are things Jordan can do to consistently gain support from other leaders and prepare for success in years to come. In this chapter, we will explore how CIOs can develop a strong strategy, continuously measure performance, communicate value, define initiatives, and work collaboratively with the C-suite to achieve lasting wins and the support they need to thrive long into the foreseeable future.



Sixty-three percent of CIOs
struggle to communicate IT's value

GARTNER RESEARCH

The Building Blocks of a Successful Strategy

Thriving is about more than just creating an IT strategy; it's about following through on it. Here are four key questions to ask yourself to ensure your strategy has been well-defined and will provide value in the long term.

At the end of the day, a CIO's first consideration must be supporting the company's goals. Use these four questions to ensure you consistently do so at every step of the process.

1 Are we doing the right things?

First, ensure your IT strategy is aligned with your corporate vision, consistent with business principles, and contributing to strategic objectives. Your strategy should provide optimal value at an affordable cost and an acceptable level of risk. Use this first question as an opportunity to reflect on the actions you should take to achieve your desired outcomes.

2 Are we doing things the right way?

Often, departments don't talk to each other or know the other's processes. As CIO, it's your responsibility to have this visibility and ensure the actions you take are aligned with existing architectures and initiatives. Are your goals consistent with architectural principles? Do technologies plug in appropriately and prioritize your goals? These architecture questions will help you consolidate disparate systems, bringing together all key stakeholders.

3 Are we getting things done?

Next, make sure you have sufficient technical and business resources to accomplish your objectives. They should deliver the required capabilities, as well as the organizational changes required to leverage these changes. Decide which tasks will be handled internally and which you will outsource, and make sure you have effective delivery and change management processes in place.

4 Are we seeing desired benefits?

Finally, you must identify a clear and shared understanding of expected benefits and accountability for realizing said benefits. Compile relevant metrics and develop an effective benefits realization process across the full economic lifecycle of an investment. As you define and measure these benefits, don't forget to keep the original intent of the strategy in mind.

Defining a Strategy that Builds Over Time

Your strategy must be tightly aligned with your vision for you to deliver long-term results. When you're able to achieve harmony between your values and roadmap, you'll consistently invest in the tools, processes, and talent that empower you to achieve desired outcomes—no matter what roadblocks arise.

Start with reviewing the corporate strategic plan and values. Use them as your foundation for the rest of your strategy. Then, make sure you have outlined the following considerations to ensure your strategy is competitive and aligns with overall values:

- **Clear, long-term objectives and goals**
- **Opportunities, risks, and challenges**
- **Innovative investments**
- **Competition within your market(s)**
- **Periodic testing and review processes**
- **Stakeholders**

Keeping these requirements top of mind no matter what arises ensures innovative developments build upon your previous infrastructure rather than upend it. With the right values and plan, each short-term decision will promote your long-term success.



Tracking Performance with Defined KPIs

Key performance indicators (KPIs) are essential to achieving long-term success. Without tracking your performance, how will you know which initiatives are successful? How will you justify your investments to stakeholders?

Here are **essential KPIs that CIOs need to report on** and use to measure their performance →

Using metrics across disparate departments and processes ensures you are accurately measuring enterprise performance and reporting on leadership's values.



OPERATIONAL MEASURES

Enterprise-level IT performance metrics, including:

- Project success rate
- SLA hit rate
- First contact resolution rate
- Tickets per period
- Staff retention rate
- Number of tasks automated



SYSTEM MEASURES

Ensure all IT systems, including hardware and applications, are operating as they should with metrics surrounding:

- Total IT assets
- System availability / uptime
- Server availability / uptime
- Cloud utilization



FINANCIAL MEASURES

Evaluate the financial performance of IT projects and bridge the gap between perceived value and actual value with metrics like:

- IT spend vs. budget
- IT budget as a % of revenue
- Cost containment / cost avoidance
- Operating cash flow
- IT ROI & contribution to growth



SECURITY MEASURES

High-level IT security's cost-efficiency and staff productivity benchmarks across industries and years, including:

- Time to detect / time to remediate incidents
- OS patching cadence
- Risky third parties engaged
- Phishing reporting rates



Communicating IT Value across the Board and C-Suite

As we've discussed, reporting on progress and receiving buy-in from the board and executives are essential to success. If you can't explain how and why investments will be used to achieve desired outcomes, you'll fail to receive sufficient funding or support. Here are some best practices that will help you ensure the **value of your plan is well-communicated**.

Learn the Language of Business

Metrics and data are essential to proving the efficacy of your plan; however, they're not all you need to wow the board and C-suite. By using strong and relevant business language, you can relate all ideas back to the board in terms and ideas they understand best, making it easy for them to see why they want to support your plans.

Streamline Information into a One- or Two-Page Summary

Not only should your ideas be presented in clear language that's easy for IT and non-IT leaders to understand, but they should also be concise and to the point. You should do the hard work for the board so they can look at a quick summary and understand business value quickly.

Don't Assume Anything

As CIO, you need to be well-informed and understand every aspect of your case. Develop a clear process for research and learn the details of the industries and personas you're speaking to. Don't make any statements you can't back up with research or metrics, and only speak to the things you know. If there are any holes in your knowledge, fill them before meeting with the board so you feel comfortable and prepared.

Address All Relevant Perspectives in the Room

Before you present your case, you need to become familiar with the variety of perspectives that will be present in the room. Identify the hardest person to convince and sell to them. By understanding the most challenging arguments that will be made against your ideas, you'll be prepared to address any and all objections.

Using the RACI Model for Full C-Suite Support

Along with the tips above, the RACI model helps teams communicate effectively to receive support and clarify needs. This system provides a clear template for group roles and responsibilities.

With a clear project management model like this one, everyone knows exactly who is responsible for what. The clearer and smoother your workflows are across the board, the easier it will be to achieve success for years to come.

BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE RACI MODEL

1. Titles are noted across the top of the page (IT, HR, project manager, etc.).
2. Relevant tasks or responsibilities are noted on the left side.
3. The cells inside the chart are filled in based on the following RACI criteria:

R

The person who is **responsible** for the work. *Each row must have only one R.*

A

The person who is **accountable** for the work or decision being made. This letter should only be used when a key decision or task is at hand. *Some rows may not require an A.*

C

Anyone who needs to be **consulted** before a decision is made or a task is completed. *There can be as many Cs as necessary in each row.*

I

Anyone who needs to be **informed** when a decision is made or a task is completed. *Like C, there can be as many as appropriate in each row.*



Here are **FIVE TIPS** that are essential to achieving adequate support, collaboration, and continuous improvement:

- 1** Develop a well-defined, relevant, and goal-centric strategy.
- 2** Align strategy with organizational values.
- 3** Track performance with defined KPIs across departments and requirements.
- 4** Use business language to communicate IT value to the board and C-suite.
- 5** Utilize the RACI model to define roles and responsibilities.



Key Takeaways: Prioritizing Collaboration across the Enterprise for Lasting Success

Collaboration at each organization will look different, but the need for enterprise-wide support is consistent across industries. As we've discussed in this chapter, you'll need buy-in from all executives to achieve long-term success.

Working with the board doesn't have to feel like an unlikely feat. Using the tips discussed here, you can ensure each member of the C-suite is accountable for their own expertise and comfortable relying on their peers. The result? Collaboration and long-term success far into the future.

Conclusion

With the concept of antifragility at the core of your strategy, you can develop a plan that enables you to prosper under any stressor and turn disruption into a positive, productive experience for your team.

If you'd like additional support, ProArch can help you get started. At ProArch, we are committed to helping you develop and maintain a long-term antifragility plan that empowers you to prosper throughout any change.

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Contact us today to learn more about how we can help your entire team develop an antifragility plan and achieve your desired business outcomes.

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