

How to become a chief executive

The role of a chief executive is demanding and subject to a great deal of scrutiny, and this in itself may deter some individuals from considering it as a career option. Many ask, are the rewards of holding such a high profile role really worth the risks? Really the answer to that question comes down to personal aspirations, and what makes you as an individual 'tick'. But if you do decide that becoming a chief executive of either a public or private company is important to you, here's a few key pointers to help you on your way.

Job experiences: It is always helpful to have a wide range of experience in previous managerial roles, with clear evidence that these roles have been senior

Support structures: If your CV can demonstrate that you have thought about your personal development, that you have worked hard to develop yourself as a person as well as a professional then you'll certainly have some added value and unique selling points that many others won't be able to match. Evidence that you have taken secondments, coaching, mentoring and have involved yourself in personal and professional networking groups will all help to enhance your CV.

Visibility: Think about how you identify and maximise the opportunities that are presented to you. Projects and assignments that stretch and challenge your comfort zone are well worth pursuing, and they can offer vital insight and access to senior management and networks.

Formal and Informal Opportunities: This can include experiences and opportunities such as work shadowing other, more senior individuals, sabbaticals and volunteering to undertake managerial work in the community or other areas of your chosen industry.

Critical Decisions: Think about whether or not you really are 'ready' to take on such a senior role. And if you aren't, how can you prepare yourself so that you are actively working towards reaching this period of 'readiness'? Such readiness is grounded in a degree of patience, flexibility, accumulation of work experiences, development and self confidence in your capability to undertake the role.

Once you reach the level of chief executive, success is dependent upon ability as well as approach. Think about your;

Authenticity: Being transparent, grounded; demonstrating integrity and honesty

Self: Understand your personal motivations, your strengths and weaknesses

Thought processes: Ensure that you can and do think strategically and conceptually

Relationships: Manage and sustain a diverse number of relationships. Being an excellent communicator can help you connect with a wide range of people and audiences