How to use cybersecurity to generate business value

Digital transformation has ensured that cybersecurity is one of the biggest issues currently facing CIOs. In the future, cybersecurity is only going to become more of a priority as the business world becomes increasingly digital and cyber threats grow in number and in sophistication. But to succeed on cybersecurity, CIOs must prepare themselves for the developing threats and issues, and must develop a proactive people-centered strategy.

Perhaps the biggest cybersecurity issue for CIOs is how they can use it to develop themselves and their roles to increase their influence across the organization. Handled successfully, cybersecurity can give CIOs the chance to raise their profile in the C-suite, giving them greater influence and a more strategic role – a change that will both benefit their own careers and help strengthen the security of their organizations.

How to become a cybersecure CIO

Most CIOs know that cybersecurity is going to be an increasing part of what they do. Technological advances in business, and the frightening pace at which cyber threats are developing, mean that few CIOs can be unaware of how much their role could change in the coming years.

But, by seizing the opportunities that cybersecurity presents, CIOs can raise their profile in the C-suite and increase their level of engagement across the business – two of the main aims of many aspirational CIOs.

To make the most of what cybersecurity has to offer – and to avoid falling victim to the many threats it poses – CIOs must think carefully about how they are going to prepare themselves to face the issues involved.

How to use cybersecurity for your personal development

In the past few years, CIOs have seen a number of big developments in cybersecurity. New cyber threats have arisen, such as political cyber attacks and the theft of customer data. This means that CIOs are going to be judged more and more on their performance on cybersecurity.
Businesses from all sectors are increasing their online presence and their digital exposure. This will drive innovation, but will also leave companies more vulnerable to cyber attack. But rather than being just a risk, cybersecurity could be central to the development of a successful CIO’s career. Here’s what CIOs need to do to make it happen:

- Realize how high the stakes are – cybersecurity is a make-or-break issue
- Focus on your organization’s people – they are your main defense
- Make sure you control your organization’s cloud presence
- Use the cloud’s potential for improving security
- Make the most of cybersecurity to strengthen your business relationships

Read more: cioblog.ey.com/2014/01/06/how-to-use-cybersecurity-for-your-personal-development/

How to use the cloud to become the voice of progress, not resistance

Today’s CIO can’t just be someone who flags up risks. CIOs must be seen by their organizations as someone willing to find solutions. CIOs must show that they aren’t risk averse, and that they are positive drivers of change – and the cloud is a perfect opportunity for them to do just that. Many CIOs may feel uncomfortable passing control of their IT infrastructure and data to a third party, since one of the first principles of IT security is to take control of your environment. But the cloud offers too many business advantages to be ignored. And there are many compelling reasons why now is the time for CIOs to take the lead on their organizations’ cloud strategy.

Here are just a few of them:

- CIOs who don’t secure the cloud services their colleagues want risk being bypassed.
- If CIOs don’t take control, a company’s cloud presence could become dangerously fragmented.
- Cloud service providers can now offer best practice approaches on security.
- Cloud services can give CIOs more time to focus on the strategic side of their role.
- Using the cloud well can drive up a CIO’s profile.

Read more: cioblog.ey.com/2014/01/27/change-mindsets/

How to use cybersecurity to change mindsets across your organization

Cybersecurity is more of a people issue than a technology issue. So, one of the key ways that CIOs must drive security is through changing the mindsets of their people. Such change management may not be something with which many CIOs are comfortable. But engaging on cybersecurity can allow a CIO to reach out across the business, inspiring better and safer behaviors. Here’s how:

- Make sure you understand how old behaviors fell short
- Set a good example within your own function
- Tailor the change package to suit different functions
- Acknowledge those who put new behaviors into practice
- Make the most of similar projects within your organization
- Use cybersecurity to build new relationships

Read more: cioblog.ey.com/2014/01/20/voice-of-progress/

Why cybersecurity offers as many opportunities as threats

With regular stories in the news about major data breaches and their aftereffects, few CIOs can still be unaware of the scale of the challenge posed by cyber threats. And with business across the world becoming increasingly digital, these threats are going to become a large part of what a CIO’s job is about.

But far from being all negative, cybersecurity could prove to be the making of many CIOs. It offers CIOs the chance, in the coming years, to lead on some of the biggest changes that businesses will undergo. And, because it is an issue more about people than about technology, cybersecurity will give CIOs a platform from which to engage and influence across business functions and across the C-suite – something the recent EY study The DNA of the CIO suggested they should already be targeting.

So, while the extent and rapid development of cyber threats may be something that will keep CIOs up at night, cybersecurity may turn out to present the kind of opportunities they were dreaming about.

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