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## Editor's Comments

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## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

### LEADERSHIP AND THE CIO

One important area of IT management research has focused on the role of the IT leader. Researchers have examined characteristics, experiences, responsibilities, and relationships of CIOs. In the nineties, we observed the heightened strategic importance of the role, and by the turn of the century, many CIOs had gained a seat at the senior management table. But that was certainly not the end of the story. Some CIOs who once reported to the CEO, no longer do so. In contrast, other CIOs have taken on expanded roles in their organizations—they serve as head of shared services, head of enterprise business process, or head of operations. Few other functional heads have experienced such volatility in their role definitions. The interdependence of IT with other functions and processes has often blurred the CIO's accountabilities. And to the extent that accountabilities are not clear, we find it unsurprising that the CIO role remains a very challenging management position. *MISQE* will continue to publish articles exploring the CIO role and examples of individuals who have filled that role effectively.

This issue of *MISQE* examines the CIO role from a variety of perspectives. In the first article, David Preston, Dorothy Leidner, and Daniel Chen propose four CIO leadership profiles. Reporting on both survey and interview research, they note that the CIO's effectiveness is related to the match between the CIO's decision making authority and the CIO's strategic leadership capability. They note that some CIOs—and their organizations—are simply more comfortable with a CIO in a non-strategic role. But some CIOs are in a more strategic role than they are able to fill, and some organizations hire strategic leaders but fail to give them sufficient responsibility. Both of these mismatches limit satisfaction and value. The authors note that in an increasingly electronic world, we are likely to see growing numbers of organizations hiring CIOs with strategic leadership capability and then giving them considerable decision making authority. That's a good combination for firms trying to generate business value from IT. The authors offer some insights into how firms can move toward a more strategic CIO.

Heather Smith and Jim McKeen take a close look at a CIO helping to lead a successful business transformation effort. The CEO at Farm Credit Canada (FCC) provided strong leadership of the transformation effort. His new CIO restructured both the IT organization and the underlying technology at FCC. In a firm that had never thought of IT as an asset, the CIO's newly energized IT organization enabled the firm's transformation. One key to the transformation was FCC's vision of services oriented architecture. Business leaders started to think of both the business processes and the technology supporting them as services. This article describes the six steps that FCC took, over five years, to make IT more strategic and to start to create a firm that drives benefits from a services oriented architecture.

In the third article, Joey George and his colleagues consider an area that has not been on most CIOs' plates: e-training. The research team studied the issue of deception detection and learned that most individuals have a great deal of difficulty recognizing when someone is not being honest. This is a particular problem when the dishonest person is seeking information, because individuals who fail to recognize the deception are likely to provide confidential or personal information to people who will abuse it. George et al. found that deception detection improves with training, particularly e-training. They provide specific advice on how to implement such training effectively.

Finally, Jerry Luftman and Rajkumar Kempaiah share the findings of their annual SIM survey on key issues for CIOs. Most notably, they find that the top issue has switched, after many years, from business-IT alignment to attracting, retaining, and developing IT talent. This article highlights the changing challenges CIOs are facing. Growing awareness of, and focus on, the relationship between IT and business process has led to notable improvements in IT-business alignment, but it has also created the need for more business-savvy IT professionals. Another SIM study, led by Kate Kaiser and reported in *MISQE* in June 2006, found that IT leaders are looking for IT professionals who can address business needs. The Luftman-Kempaiah paper suggests that this is a need that will grow more acute in the near future. Future research,

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hopefully, will help CIOs identify ways to find and grow the talent they need.

To help us continue to track IT issues, we hope that CIOs will respond to this year's survey, which is currently available on the Web at [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=5ngAFO5v1r6Kr6th7Tl0tg\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=5ngAFO5v1r6Kr6th7Tl0tg_3d_3d).

Sincerely,

Jeanne W. Ross  
Editor-in-Chief