



## Seeking C-suite chemistry

How a Business Chemistry® assessment can get executives working together better

The role of chief marketing officer (CMO) is evolving. Today, a CMO can add value in the C-suite by fully understanding the working styles of their colleagues—and using that knowledge to foster collaboration and improve team outcomes.

Do you drive your colleagues toward your goals? When faced with challenges, do you engage in creative problem solving? Do you uphold high-quality standards and see to every detail? Or do you encourage team collaboration and seek consensus when making decisions? Your answers to questions like these can tell you which of the four key Business Chemistry® categories best matches your working style: Pioneer, Driver, Guardian, or Integrator.

Applying this kind of knowledge of your own approach as a CMO—and of the styles of your peers in the C-suite—can greatly increase your ability to drive the leadership team forward to the shared goal of a truly focused customer experience.

Deloitte's research on the role of CMOs shows that, more and more, they are playing a critical role among fellow executives.

Often, this comes in the form of understanding P&Ls, ROI, human resource requirements, and so on, but it also results from CMOs understanding the different Business Chemistry types in the leadership team. Sensitivity to varying workstyles in the C-suite can translate into a more cohesive approach and a greater emphasis on building a strong customer focus.

When you understand how others' workstyles are similar to or different from your own approach, you can forge stronger working relationships, more effectively tap into team strengths, and ultimately accomplish more together. At Deloitte, we developed the Business Chemistry framework to help us understand each individual's working style. The framework is based on research, analytics, and data to help professionals not only understand their own workstyle, but easily identify and work with other types in the workplace. Using this knowledge to strengthen the way members of a C-suite operate together can help CMOs add significant value to the company's leadership.

## The chemistry set

Business Chemistry uses an online assessment based on traits and preferences observed in a business context. The system brings a data-driven approach to observing individuals' differences. Each Business Chemistry type has distinct likes and dislikes that can be managed and navigated in a work context. The framework is focused on assessing how individuals interact in diverse business scenarios rather than measuring introspective aspects of an individual's personality. It can help users recognize the preferences and styles of others, through the measurement of observable business-relevant traits, without needing to have them complete an assessment.

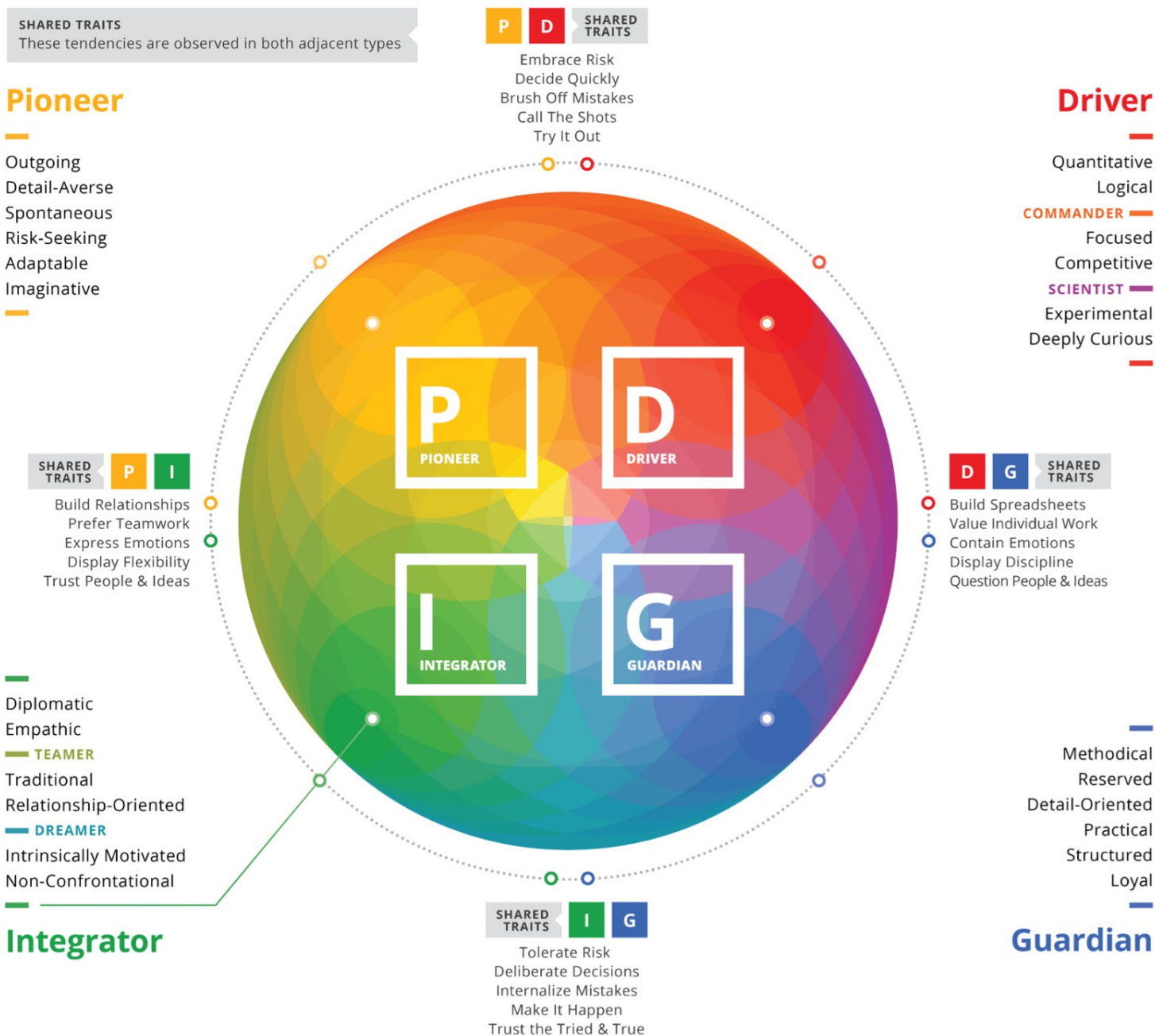
Since its inception, Business Chemistry has been administered to more than 320,000 professionals around the world. By analyzing the resulting data, we have developed valuable insights to help you learn how individuals on your teams and in your C-suite prefer to work. This can help you build better workplace relationships. It can help you tweak your style to provide colleagues with more of what they want and need to be successful collaborators in working toward your customer goals.



## The four types

The Business Chemistry framework describes four primary types: Pioneer, Guardian, Driver, and Integrator. For some individuals, more than one type may feel accurate. Most people have some characteristics of all four types but deeply identify with one or two.

It's helpful to know what Business Chemistry type (or types) describe you best—so you can know your own preferences and spot potential pitfalls. Recognizing which type you are can also help you determine how you can best interact with others to achieve shared goals.





### Pioneers seek possibilities.

They tend to be high energy, spontaneous, and adaptable. They prefer big-picture thinking over details and generally are bold, imaginative, and creative. Pioneers tend to have a high tolerance for ambiguity and risk, and they dislike too much structure, repetition, or limitation.

### Guardians seek stability.

Guardians are marked by their methodical nature. They enjoy structure and discipline, details, and loyalty. They deliver high-quality work that is well thought out. They are likely to be conventional, hierarchical, and disciplined and to speak slowly to properly convey their thoughts. They tend to be risk-averse and respond well to concrete facts, proven principles, and established practices. They can be turned off by disorder and uncertainty.

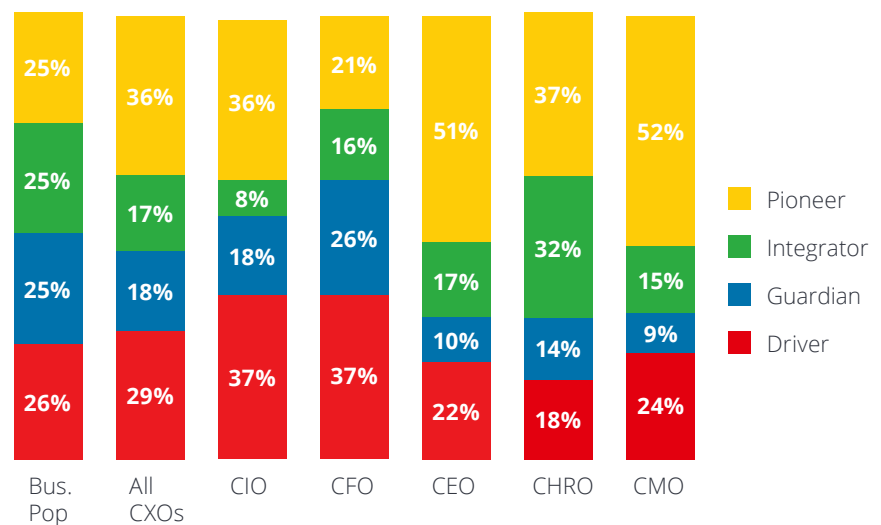
### Drivers seek challenge.

Drivers tend to be technical, logical, and quantitatively focused. They are dominant and highly competitive, with strong opinions. They value strong analysis backed up by logic and facts and are good at looking for patterns and synthesizing complicated information. Drivers appreciate when others get to the point. They dislike small talk, indirectness, and indecisiveness.

### Integrators seek connection.

The strengths of Integrators are the tendency to seek consensus, the empathy they show, and their high tolerance for ambiguity. They value connections with others and strive to be helpful. They generally are traditional, trusting, and dutiful. They make their decisions by carefully obtaining input from others. Integrators value friendships and enjoy getting to know others on a personal level. They tend to dislike aggressive confrontation, interruptions, and arrogance.

Figure 1. Business Chemistry types by job title



## Business Chemistry in the C-suite

Our research shows that all four Business Chemistry types are found in the C-suite—but not in equal amounts. While the C-suite, as a whole, appears to have a greater number of Pioneers than other types, in certain functions we see higher concentrations of Drivers, Guardians, and Integrators (see figure 1).

In our research, nearly 75 percent of CEOs reported themselves as either Pioneers or Drivers. The CIO role has roughly equal proportions of Drivers and Pioneers, and the CFO role has more Drivers and more Guardians than it does Pioneers. The CHRO role has the most Integrators, although Pioneers still represent a higher proportion in this role.

In our sample, the CMO role was primarily filled by Pioneers and Drivers. This corresponds to the traditional role of CMOs as creative and experimental members of the C-Suite who strive to deliver growth and meet challenges. The fit of individuals in particular leadership roles can be influenced by additional factors such as function, organization size, industry, and gender.

Compared to our overall CXO sample, our CMO sample had a greater representation of women, large organizations with more than \$10 billion, and individuals who came from the industries of technology, media, and telecommunications, life sciences and health care, and consumer and industrial products.

## How CMOs can utilize Business Chemistry

Recognizing the Business Chemistry type of the individual members of your C-suite can unlock your ability to relate to each one in the most productive fashion. Learning to approach conversations in a way that takes into account each executive's Business Chemistry type can improve the efforts of the entire leadership team.

### Consider the following:

- To maximize a **Pioneer's** contribution, give space and time for thinking aloud. Try structuring meetings with a Pioneer to include time to stand up, move around the room, and brainstorm on white boards. You might even think about playing music before the meeting begins or walking to a meeting location outside the office. Try not to push details, especially when the Pioneer is in brainstorming mode. If you must engage a Pioneer on details, be sure to explain their importance as they relate to the Pioneer's vision.
- To maximize a **Guardian's** ability to contribute in a team setting, it helps to provide materials in advance of meetings. You might also communicate to Guardians when and where you'd like them to contribute, so they can prepare their remarks. Stay on track and try not to stray from the agenda. Keep emotions in check and don't put Guardians on the spot. Demonstrate that you value their attention to detail and process, but don't get stuck in the weeds.
- When working with a **Driver**, be prepared to jump right into the work conversation. For many Drivers, small talk feels like a waste of time. Try not to let a Driver's work-first style make you feel undervalued, and don't let it intimidate you. A Driver will enjoy interacting with you if you can stand your ground and defend your opinions, even if the Driver doesn't agree with you.
- To maximize an **Integrator's** role in your department or on a team, make projects collaborative, ask open-ended questions, and listen. Plan to give the Integrator enough time not to feel rushed. Establish ground rules, help ensure the Integrator feels respected, and be sure to connect the Integrator's work to the mission or ultimate goal.



Knowing how to interact with other members of the C-suite can be a valuable tool to succeed in the evolving and increasingly complex role of CMO. It can help you deliver on the customer experience you envision for the business. CMOs are responsible for coordinating marketing efforts targeted at the customer, a critical component in driving the overall customer experience strategy. But CMOs—and the entire company—benefit when they have the tools to successfully collaborate with an integrated leadership team.

Because marketing is often the first touchpoint for customer interaction with a brand, CMOs need the tools to bring along their C-suite peers to keep the customer top of mind. Understanding the dynamics of their fellow executives through the lens of Business Chemistry makes navigating those interactions easier and more effective. It can empower CMOs to lead an organization to success.

#### Links:

Business Chemistry® book: <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/practical-magic-for-crafting-powerful-work-relationships.html>

Harvard Business Review article: <https://hbr.org/2017/03/the-new-science-of-team-chemistry>

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