

UMUC Business and Executive Programs Podcasts
Executive CIO Education in Global World

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Interviewee: Joi Grieg, Deputy Chief Technology Officer, IBM US Federal Team

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Spencer: Welcome to Executive CIO Education in the Global World, a weekly podcast that features highlights of the Executive Chief Information Officer Program and discussion of how the program prepares executives for technology leadership in today's global business environment. I'm Pat Spencer, Manager of the Executive Programs Online Team Coaching Program, your host for the day.

Our guest today is Joi Grieg, Deputy Chief Technology Officer, IBM US Federal Team. The topic for today's show is The Importance of the CIO Certificate in the Business World. We will be discussing how this certificate program helps prospective Chief Information Officers learn how to leverage technology strategically, to create competitive advantage for their organizations.

Joi, why might someone in industry find value in earning the CIO Certificate?

Grieg: Well, Pat, it's a relatively quick, only a 12-month program, giving Chief Information Officers or CIOs, Chief Technology Officers, CTOs we shorten it to, Senior Information Technology Management, staff, planners, or consultants who may need or want to recommend technology, a very strong education quickly. It teaches them about the competencies and leadership capability needed to be successful.

The Federal Government when it put together the Clinger-Cohen Act, put together an integrated framework of technology and they update it biannually. So this is the only thing in the industry that really works on the competencies for success. It covers everything from design, development, acquisition, implementation, planning, and maintenance of an organization's information technology structure. Just recently they updated it to include IT portfolio management, an even more important area today, records management, software acquisition approaches for like a services-oriented architecture, security standards, which are increasingly important, and an emphasis on earned value management, privacy and information sharing. It also highlighted leadership skills, both reports work and a coaching program that for my class included the Hogan Assessment. And there was teamwork throughout the courses, coaching, and would you believe we even continue to have monthly breakfasts with my class?

The technical areas were quite important, and this is regardless of whether you're in industry, government or nonprofit. The technology foundation includes aligning it with business and mission needs, strategy formulation and the role of CIOs and others in using technology to deliver value. It talked about the CIO and CTO leading the exploitation and support of technology and innovation, including the study of leadership, things like decision-making strategies, systems thinking, teamwork and knowledge

management, and how do you leverage the human capital within this? Change and the process of change is explored. Information Security. This is growing. The complexity of threats and even the inadvertent thing of employees -- because most of this is inside, as we were just chatting about -- inadvertently erase something. How do you recover from that? Also finance, understanding what the right things are to do and how they can be justified is probably ever important, even especially today. Also the cost of sustaining what you have is discussed.

Most importantly – you have to understand, I'm project management professional – project, program and portfolio management and ethics. Historically, information technology has been implemented in silos. We built a sales or a grant management program by itself. It might interface a bit with the financial system, but they didn't work well together. With the movement to shared services and services-oriented architecture, the need to move to a broader view of the enterprise and technology is critical for success.

I would also add that the instructors and other students are topnotch. Bottom-line, if you're in technology or need to leverage technology, this is a great way to grow your capabilities quickly.

Spencer: Thank you for sharing wonderful, concrete details about the value of the CIO Certificate Program. Can you tell us how taking the CIO Certificate has assisted you in your role, and has it assisted you in your work with government-based CIOs and other IT professionals?

Grieg: Well, first let me explain what my role is. As part of the IBM Federal Team and a Deputy Chief Technology Officer, I'm responsible for supporting federal clients across the Civilian, Homeland, National Security, and Justice Client Teams, and the integrators that support those accounts, as well as the federally funded research development centers such as the Mitre Corporation. As a technology and futurist, I work to ensure IBM is viewed as the top technology provider and innovator. I also help my product divisions ensure that we are at that level. I'm also the Chair of the Industry Advisory Council's Emerging Technology Shared Interest Group.

So, in my IBM role, clearly understanding the government Clinger-Cohen responsibilities, is critical, as well as knowing what the current state of technology and innovation is. It has provided me with great insight into how to position IBM solutions. Additionally, I have deepened my understanding of technology in the broadest sense. With so much going on, one tends to be expert in smaller area and not keep current broadly. This is critical for my ability to be a consultant to my customers.

What most surprised me was the management insight. Prior to this course, I think I tended to think my role was only about technology. As Steve Knode mentioned in his podcast, this role used to be mostly technical. The CIO role is now a key decision maker in the organization on using technology for strategic advantage in the marketplace or our nation. Now leadership, innovation, the challenges of change are equally important to technology. I am far more sought after by my clients and across my IBM and

integrator teams as a result of this program. When I step back to my industry leadership role, I've extended my network significantly through the instructors, my fellow students and the support, suggestions and contacts they all have. The training I had on excellent practices, research and all the program areas enable me to sit at the table with federal CIOs and CTOs comfortably, and invite them to participate side by side with me and industry.

Spencer: Would you share with us what made the CIO Certificate Program at UMUC really effective for you, and was it worth your pursuit?

Grieg: Absolutely. The thing I liked most was that it was pretty much completely online. Occasionally an instructor would offer us an in-person meeting, if we were local. But I've got a complex work role, I have industry association roles, I have a family with three children. So doing this off the premise, basically online, made it possible. Not having to drive to a class or be somewhere a given day really helped. There were lectures. I mean we did meet on Mondays at 7, basically webinars. However, if you couldn't be there live, you could listen to it after the fact. That really allowed me to do my job well, do my industry roles, and be with my family where I needed to be.

Additionally, it used technology very, very well. It helped me understand, and I think all of us in the class, how to make a virtual workplace. This is more and more important as we have to attract multiple generations to our workplace, lessen our carbon footprint, and work effectively across the ecosystem. Things aren't done today within one company, one agency, or one nonprofit. It's really how we work together. And so moving forward, using technology in this way, it's going to get better.

The quality of the professors in the class, who you really got to know well through these team projects -- excellent. For most of my cohort, it was most of the coursework to get their Masters. They had to basically take four three credit course afterwards to get a Masters. I already had one. So it absolutely was worth it.

Spencer: It's always nice to have a perspective on how one can manage work, life, and education. Who besides those in industry participated in the program and how did they benefit?

Grieg: Well, outside of industry in my class, we had government and a nonprofit, an association. It was actually about 45% industry, 45% government, and 10% outside of that. Some of the government and association people had never worked in the commercial sector. They began to understand better what industry could do, the pressures we work under, and how to work better with us. Others were able to really think if they would consider industry as part of their career in future lives. For others, especially our government brethren, it increased their satisfaction with their career choices. They weren't really pleased understanding our pressures. Within industry, we also got to see how different companies approached a variety of areas. These were not things you typically talk about. But for all of us, I think we learned about excellent practices each other were using, and we brought those home to wherever we were. And

knowing someone who had actually run a program like that or used that technology, gave each of us a significant leg up.

Spencer: And finally, what other benefits do you personally expect?

Grieg: I've actually been in industry for more than 25 years. I've been considering moving to government. As a result of this program, I'm much better prepared to succeed there and potentially go in at the Senior Executive service level. Probably more importantly, I've made friends. I am still in touch with many of my professors and fellow students. I have had the opportunity, as I mentioned earlier, to lunch with them monthly, and actually, I get there about every other month and it's always a different thing and we're in touch by email and by phone as well. We've learned to share industry associations. We now meet up at something like an Affirm lunch, which is actually run by the government. I know I have a network that is there for me, be it challenges in my job today in industry, transitions in the future, or just someone to bounce ideas off of.

I'd encourage everyone to seriously consider this program, if they are or aspire to be a CIO, CTO, Technology Management, including staff and planners, or a consultant in industry, government, nonprofit, or even their own business. It will provide a robust education to assist you in having a strategic vision and leadership for business and mission success.

Spencer: This is Pat Spencer and I'd like to thank Joi Grieg for helping us understand the Chief Information Officer Certificate Program, and most of all, its importance to industry and government. Thank you, listeners, for joining Executive Education in the Global World.

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