

CXO - Take the networking challenge. Gambit's Gareth Wong introduces his peer-to-peer group

CXO is an acronym of the titles of senior directors & decision makers who hold key powers, responsibilities and challenges for their company. These roles usually involve making hard decisions (and accepting the consequences or rewards which accompany them), and range across: Executive chairman; chief executive officer (CEO); chief financial officer (CFO), director of mergers & acquisitions (M&A), chief information officer (CIO) / chief technology officer (CTO), managing director (MD) of a business unit within a multi-national firm, or managing partners of Advisors/Venture Capitalists, or partner of a private equity firm, or hedge fund. Power comes with responsibilities, and this often means people in these positions can occasionally feel isolated, and sometimes yearn for a sounding board with their peers (although ideally not from the same sector.)

Surely not another networking group?

This is exactly why our founding group of

executives decided to form CXO: there are just too many sponsor-driven events, conferences, seminars etc.

There are a few great events in each sector, but inevitably some are not as well-organised as others, which means the greater percentage of vendors at most of those below-par events increasingly target the same group of executives at the top of their sector.

A good number of senior executives speak at these major events, but 90% of CXOs prefer not to remain at an event after their own speaking slot, as they prefer not to make time to be 'sold' to. This problem is a structural issue though, as quite understandably, most of the people who have spent a good sum of money for conference tickets want their entry fee to be justifiable and worthwhile.

By contrast, the CXO Network only connects candidates who are qualified and at the very top layer of executives within their sector, ensuring truly peer-to-peer networking.

Is it industry specific?

CXO has also found that there are already many major or private events serving a specific or vertical market, and in many cases a huge oversupply.

In addition, most people within a sector already know each other well, as they see each other at the sort of events mentioned above.

Furthermore, for most sectors, senior executives are generally rather guarded when they meet with their industry peers, especially their senior executives, as they have to be thinking 'ahead' of their competitors, not sharing potential trade secrets with them.

Therefore, CXO Network's lunches are designed to operate between linked, but dissimilar peer groups (i.e. chief executives of businesses with an average £3m-£30m profit.) Companies can bring together CEOs of similar size companies from other sectors, so that through an hour of lunch, they can establish rapport and also potentially share the