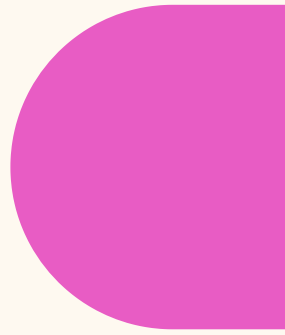
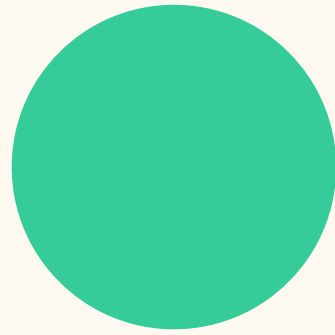
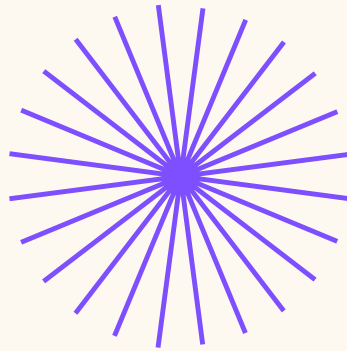


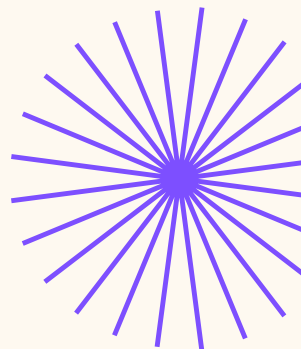
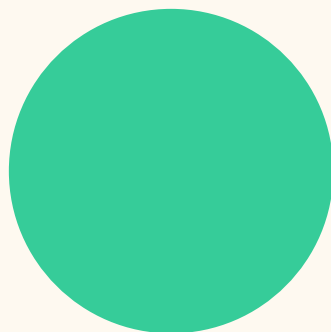
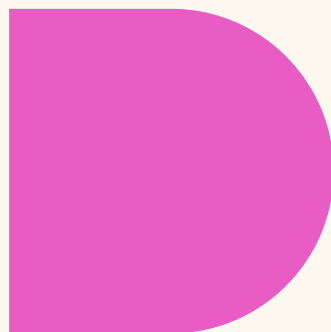
THE CMO PLAYBOOK

How to Level Up Your Marketing Leadership



Introduction

In this eBook, you'll discover just how the role of the CMO has evolved and why so many marketing leaders today grapple with challenges like imposter syndrome. Then, you'll learn four tried and true tactics to boost your own leadership skills to support your team better.

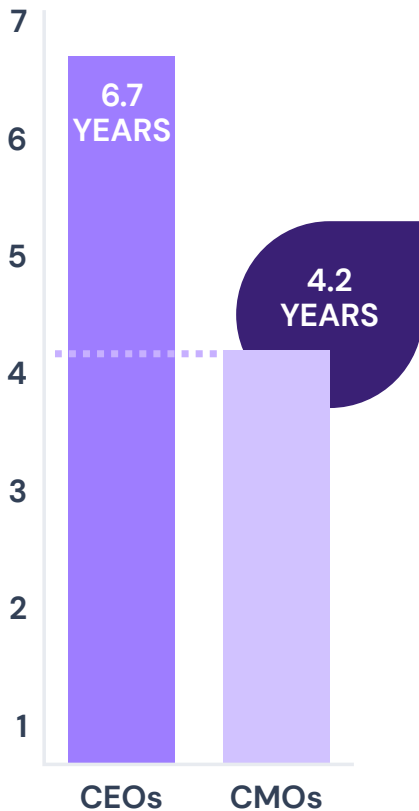




Contents



The Evolving Role of the CMO	4
CMOs Overwhelmingly Face Imposter Syndrome	6
Tactics to Overcome Imposter Syndrome as a CMO	8
Four Tips for CMOs to Improve Their Leadership Skills	10
1) Break Apart Departmental Silos	12
2) Respond to Shifting Consumer Priorities	13
3) Optimize Planning Processes	14
4) Learn to Speak the Language of Business	15
Invest in Proper Technology to Support Your Team	16
Look for a Cloud-Based Platform	16
Lean Into Artificial Intelligence (AI)	17
Keep an Eye Out for Integrations	17



Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) have one of the shortest tenures of any C-Suite executive.

According to research from Spencer Stewart, most CMOs spend an [average of 4.2 years](#) in the position — a stark contrast to CEOs, who average 6.7 years on the job.

There are a few factors causing marketing leaders to jump ship. Most CMOs have big shoes to fill, serving as strategic advisors who must balance both the CEO's demands and their company's needs.

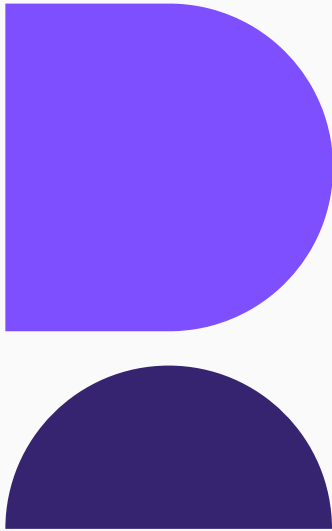
Plus, they do all these tasks while proving the value of marketing efforts to their fellow executives.

The Evolving Role of the CMO

A decade ago, CMOs were primarily responsible for, well, the brass tacks of marketing.

These days, most CMOs are less focused on specialized tasks like brand management and advertising — that's still important stuff, but it's tasks the rest of the team can handle.

Instead, marketing leaders are focused more on demonstrating the value of the team's marketing efforts and building new opportunities for strategic growth. While the team is in the weeds with tactical responsibilities, CMOs oversee these efforts while thinking more holistically about strategy.



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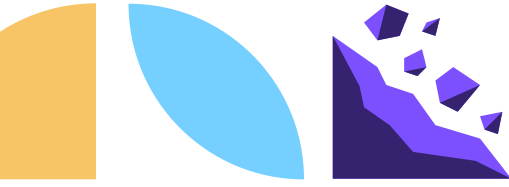
Many CMOs have [significantly improved their level of influence](#) within their organizations by knowing more about the business, marketplace, and customers than anyone else. The CMOs who know the most often have the greatest influence.”

Chris Ross, VP Analyst at Gartner

The average CMO also has to know customers better than anyone. This means that most CMOs are drivers behind the customer experience and understand every point along the customer journey, from brand awareness to becoming a loyal customer.

Operating a marketing team without a powerful [marketing performance management platform](#) is no longer optional. These tools allow marketing teams to consolidate data, build campaigns, and measure results in one centralized space.

Investing in a marketing performance management platform is a surefire way for CMOs to take control of their customer journeys to generate value behind their organization's product and push their company towards its business goals.



CMOs Overwhelmingly Face Imposter Syndrome

Imposter syndrome is defined by a feeling of unworthiness or incompetence in the face of success — it's something that many of us have experienced but rarely discuss openly.

"I got lucky."

"They can tell I'm a fraud."

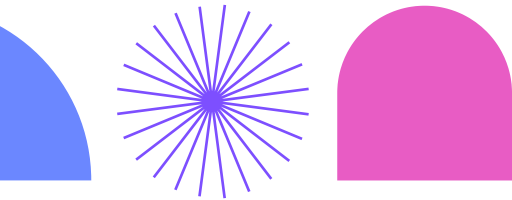
"I feel like I've lied to everyone.
I don't belong here."

If you've had these intrusive thoughts at work, you've likely experienced imposter syndrome.

You're not alone. A recent CMO Council study found that most [CMOs don't feel confident in](#) achieving their goals or driving results.

What's causing so many CMOs to feel imposter syndrome creeping in? Turns out, there's a myriad of reasons.

- ✓ Getting inaccurate data or lacking access to data.
- ✓ Pressure from a CEO or a Sales leader to generate demand immediately.
- ✓ Feeling in the dark about what is being executed by the team.
- ✓ Constantly being pulled into tactical issues that exhaust you from strategic thinking.
- ✓ Struggling to [speak the language of business](#) to your CEO, CFO, and Board.



These days, most marketing teams are comprised of hyper-specialized individuals. Many CMOs become leaders by gaining expertise in specific marketing disciplines, like demand generation, product marketing, and marketing operations.

In other words, if you're on a marketing team, there's a good chance you have a marketing specialty. When you become a CMO, you need to quickly fill in your knowledge gaps to understand all aspects of a strong marketing team, and effectively extend your purview in partnership with other areas of the business cross-functionally.

The feeling that you don't know what you're doing or that you'll never be good enough can lead to imposter syndrome — and it's a tough feeling to shake.



Easily **conquer your imposter syndrome** using a combination of self-reflection and team-building tactics.

Tactics to Overcome Imposter Syndrome as a CMO

The good news is that you can easily conquer your imposter syndrome using a combination of self-reflection and team-building tactics.

Here are a few tried-and-true ways you can work to combat imposter syndrome.



Recognize and acknowledge achievements

Develop a habit of acknowledging and celebrating both personal and team achievements. This will reinforce a positive self-image and will affirm your capabilities as a successful marketing leader.



Foster a growth mindset

View challenges more as an opportunity for growth and learning rather than an opportunity to fail. When you view a challenge as an opportunity to learn, you can open yourself up to creative solutions and possibilities that you may not have considered before.



Seek support and feedback from colleagues

Take advantage of your HR team's learning and development programs, like a mentoring experience or peer-to-peer learning opportunities. Seek out ways to build positive and supportive relationships across your organization. This way, you have trusted people to turn to for guidance, constructive feedback, and reassurance during challenging times.



Set realistic expectations

If you're crushed by the weight of expectations placed on you, maybe it's time to reevaluate. Work with your CEO to define realistic and achievable goals. This way, you can set benchmarks that acknowledge the complexities of the marketing landscape.



Focus on Continuous Learning

Prioritize personal and professional development, stay updated on industry trends, and invest in skill enhancement to foster confidence in your knowledge and expertise.



Practice Self-Compassion

Cultivate a sense of self-compassion and understanding that mistakes and setbacks are part of the learning process. Treat yourself with the same kindness and understanding you would extend to others facing similar challenges.



Emphasize Team Accomplishments

Recognize and highlight the contributions of your marketing team. This fosters a culture of collaboration and shared success.

Four Tips for CMOs to Improve Their Leadership Skills

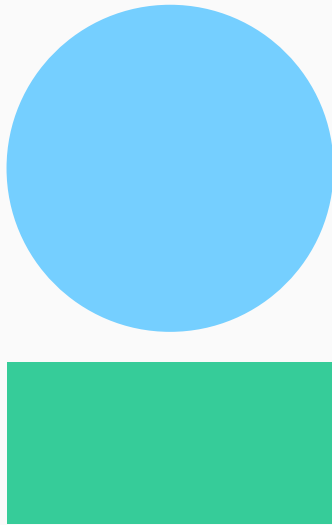
Marketing is a fast-paced world. As the landscape continues to evolve, the need for strong leadership skills is increasingly vital.

Today, it's not enough for a CMO to simply be a marketing expert. They need to be impeccable leaders. This means developing critical soft skills, like:

- ✓ Fostering collaboration among teammates
- ✓ Adapting to chaotic market changes
- ✓ Aligning marketing strategies with overall business goals
- ✓ Communicating the changing consumer trends to the C-Suite

It's a lot for one person to juggle.





“

A point of advice I'd give is to go beyond surface-level trend-spotting by analyzing the intention behind marketing strategies,” says **Rowan Tonkin**, CMO of Planful. “It's worth knowing if a particular trend aligns with my target audience's preferences. That way I can avoid marketing strategies that might be popular but ineffective for our audience.”

Rowan Tonkin, CMO of Planful

In addition to Rowan's tip, here are four key ways CMOs can boost their leadership skills to drive their teams toward success.

Break Apart
Departmental Silos



1

Respond to Shifting
Consumer Priorities

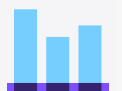


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Optimize
Planning Processes

3



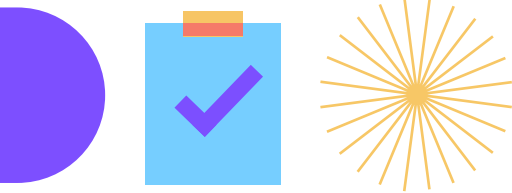
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Learn to Speak the
Language of Business

1) Break Apart Departmental Silos

As mentioned above, most marketing teams are made up of hyper-specialized people who each have their own north star. This kind of environment makes it easy to build silos across the team.

It's up to the CMO to break apart departmental silos by fostering a culture of collaboration, open communication, and innovation.



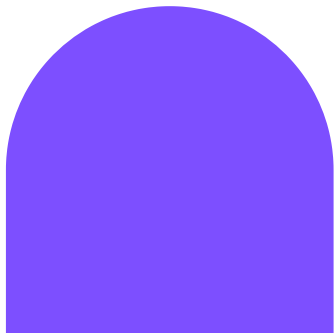
- **Encourage cross-departmental communication.** Schedule regular meetings, brainstorming sessions, and cross-departmental projects.
- **Establish shared goals and objectives.** Align departments with shared goals and objectives that promote a unified vision for the organization.
- **Implement cross-functional teams.** Build teams comprised of members from different departments to work on specific projects or initiatives.
- **Utilize technology for collaboration.** Invest in collaborative digital tools and platforms that facilitate real-time communication, document sharing, and project management across departments.
- **Promote a culture of accountability and recognition.** Create a culture that values accountability and recognizes collaborative efforts across departments.
- **Encourage regular cross-departmental feedback.** Create mechanisms for employees to provide input on interdepartmental collaboration and processes.

2) Respond to Shifting Consumer Priorities

As consumer needs and priorities continue to evolve, it's crucial for CMOs to stay ahead of the curve. A customer-centric approach can help CMOs adapt their marketing strategies to align with shifting consumer priorities and remain competitive in the marketplace.

Here are a few ways CMOs can effectively respond to shifting consumer priorities.

- **Market research.** Regularly analyze consumer data to understand evolving trends, preferences, and behaviors.
- **Embrace customer-centricity.** Understand your customer's pain points, aspirations, and motivations to create marketing campaigns.
- **Personalization.** Leverage data-driven insights to speak directly to individual consumer preferences, interests, and purchase history.
- **Encourage feedback.** Actively seek customer feedback through surveys, social media interactions, and customer service channels. Use this information to optimize your marketing strategies.
- **Build trust with consumers.** Communicate transparently about business practices, product ingredients, and company policies.

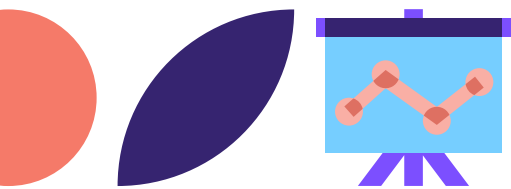


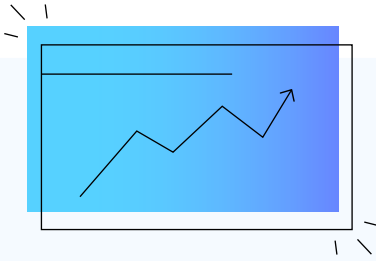
3) Optimize Planning Processes

Building a marketing plan doesn't have to be a daunting task. An effective marketing plan is a roadmap that outlines a business's specific marketing strategy and actions to achieve goals.

Here are the 9-steps we recommend to build a marketing plan that'll yield a strong return on investment (ROI).

- **Conduct a marketing audit.** Get a quick look of where you're currently at and the effectiveness of your marketing efforts.
- **Collect market research.** Learn where your organization stands against the competition.
- **Understand your audience.** Build personas to learn about your target audience's pain points, wants, and needs.
- **Develop your positioning and messaging.** Understand your organization's ability to influence consumer perception and how it is distinguished from competitors.
- **Set marketing goals** based on your organization's overall business goals.
- **Determine your budget.** Understand the exact amount you'll need to meet or exceed your goals.
- **Develop marketing campaigns** that help you make moves toward your goals.
- **Develop an implementation timeline.** Assign tasks to different team members before executing the marketing plan.
- **Evaluate and make improvements.** Understand the performance of your marketing plan and make changes accordingly.





“Your CEO doesn’t need to hear about your day-to-day. **They want to see outcomes.**”

4) Learn to Speak the Language of Business

Presenting to an executive audience means shifting your mindset from a marketing practitioner to the leader of a critical business function who reports facts in the business context.

Making that mindset shift is crucial to effectively prove the value of your marketing efforts.

- **Focus on results, not activities.** Your CEO doesn’t need to hear about your day-to-day. They want to see outcomes.
- **Show the relationship to your goals.** Even if you don’t meet your goals, tie it back to your initial KPIs.
- **Communicate value in business terms.** Board members rarely have backgrounds in marketing. Be sure to brush up on your financial literacy to discuss your team’s results.
- **Tell the truth.** Don’t cherry-pick your data to make your results look better than they are. Being honest builds trust.
- **Take the opportunity to teach.** Talking with your C-Suite colleagues is a great way to turn the tables to help them understand the language of marketing.

Invest in Proper Technology to Support Your Team

Marketing technology has exploded in the past year. In 2022 alone, there were a [reported 9,932 individual software solutions](#) geared at marketing teams — up 24% from two years prior.

Not all marketing solutions hit the same caliber of excellence your team needs to succeed. You'd think, given the vast array of resources, achieving your goals would be easier. In reality, this staggering number causes indecision among leaders and, ultimately, decision-making paralysis.

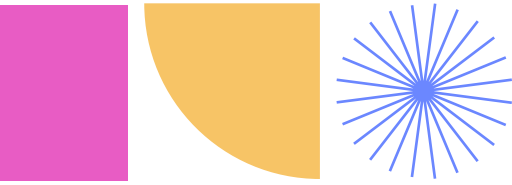
Here are a few factors to keep in mind while shopping for [marketing performance management software](#).

Look for a Cloud-Based Platform

Cloud-based technology is a modern way to keep your marketing efforts in one centralized space.

As CMO, the major benefit for you is that you can make informed decisions based on information in this space rather than toggling between your different tools.





Planful for Marketing was designed to help teams like yours eliminate surprises in their planning process. Schedule a demo to talk with a live expert about how Planful can help you reach peak marketing performance.

[Schedule a Live Demo →](#)

Lean Into Artificial Intelligence (AI)

According to Gartner, 63% of marketing leaders [plan to invest in AI within the year](#). It's important to keep in mind that AI shouldn't replace your human team members or major marketing functions.

Instead, AI automates the more repetitive tasks that consume your team's time. This way, they're released from the burden of manual work and are free to think creatively and strategically.

Keep an Eye Out for Integrations

With all the different marketing team tools available these days, creating an overly complicated tech stack is tempting.

Instead, consider an investment in technology that [integrates with your favorite tools](#), like Slack, Outlook, or Teams.



About Planful

Planful is the pioneer of financial performance management cloud software for Marketers. The Planful platform drives peak financial performance across the business and is used around the globe to consolidate planning, budgeting, and analytics into one view. Planful for Marketing enables marketers to optimize their marketing performance and true business value by ROI. Superior to traditional disconnected spreadsheets and disparate tactical marketing systems, only Planful for Marketing delivers a unified, collaborative marketing solution with process automation for improving agility, efficiency, and business value of marketing investments. Planful for Marketing provides full visibility of real-time insight for better decision making and operational marketing excellence. To learn more visit www.Planful.com/Marketing.