

## Chapter 2

# Locating Appropriate Executive Sponsorship and the Information Governance Cadillac as Catalysts for a Successful IG Program

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### **ABSTRACT**

*There are many important facets to consider when establishing an information governance (IG) program. Many of these facets include ensuring you have executive sponsorship to support your new IG program, locating a large need in the organization to justify your IG program creation (AKA the grand Cadillac, discussed later in this chapter), securing adequate funding and staff, creating an IG program charter and strategic plan, recruiting organization-wide support through tiered steering committees, procuring efficient technologies, obtaining appropriate IG related education and training, and considering current industry-wide IG trends. However, the two most important aspects one must have in place to initially begin the building and sustainment of an IG program are high level executive sponsorship and a shiny Cadillac or large need in the organization that an IG program can help meet. The first and foremost important facet is the executive sponsor.*

### **APPROPRIATE EXECUTIVE SPONSOR FOR AN INFORMATION GOVERNANCE PROGRAM**

There are many important facets to consider when establishing an Information Governance (IG) Program. Many of these facets include ensuring you have executive sponsorship to support your new IG Program, locating a large need in the organization to justify your IG Program creation (AKA the grand Cadillac discussed later in this chapter), securing adequate funding and staff, creating an IG Program charter

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-0472-3.ch002

and strategic plan, recruiting organization-wide support through tiered steering committees, procuring efficient technologies, obtaining appropriate IG related education and training, and considering current industry-wide IG trends. However, the two most important aspects one must have in place to initially begin the building and sustainment of an IG program are high level executive sponsorship and a shiny Cadillac or large need in the organization that an IG Program can help meet (Smallwood, 2014). The first and foremost important facet is the executive sponsor. If an IG lead (the individual responsible for setting up and IG program) or an IG group does not have a CIO, CEO, Legal Counsel, or some other high-level executive sponsor to clear logistical barriers, help force culture change in an organization, and ensure monetary, strategic priority, and personnel precedence; then the likelihood of success is almost nil. Therefore, before any staff, money, time, goodwill, or any other resource is given to build an IG program, a high-level executive such as a General Counsel, a CIO, CEO, CTO... must first commit to the creation of and long-term support and maintenance of an IG Program. It is the IG Lead's responsibility to locate and gain commitment from an executive sponsor (Goodman, Phillips, & Stamper, 2022).

To have executive support, the IG Lead must first locate the correct executive to serve as the IG sponsor. Having conversations with the CIOs, CEOs, CTOs, General Counsel... is the first step to determine which of these individuals is the correct person to serve as a sponsor. It is always advantageous and sometimes serendipitous if one of these executives already understands the value and benefits of an IG program. These benefits consist of a reduction of legal risk, a reduction in costs, and an optimization of information and data storage, use, and implementation (Smallwood, 2014). If one attempting to commence an IG program is aware that a specific executive is cognizant of the IG program benefits and is already supportive of such an implementation, then that is the executive the IG lead needs to commence conversations with to gain high-level executive support (Saldanha, 2019). If the IG Lead is not initially able to identify such and IG executive sponsor, then the IG Lead needs to quickly locate one.

## **BRING A CONCRETE EXAMPLE OF AN IG BENEFIT**

So, who is the best executive sponsor? The IG lead is the person who is ultimately responsible for the creation and continued operation of and IG program. This person might serve as a Certified Information Governance Officer or a Director or Deputy Director of Information Governance (Smallwood, 2014). It is the responsibility of the IG lead to locate and receive an official commitment from an executive that they will serve as an IG executive sponsor. If the IG lead is uncertain who the best executive is to sponsor the IG program, conversations with executives are imperative. Before meeting with executives, the IG lead should first gather and concisely prepare written and oral examples that convey the value of IG programs. This value must concisely convey that IG reduces legal risk, cost, and increases value for an organization. This value can be in optimizing current products or services, discovering new products or services that manifest success for an organization, or that prevent is decrease the odds of litigation, or costs for an organization (Laney, 2018).

Gathering and organizing specific examples of IG value creation one can share with potential IG sponsors is helpful. For example, an IG Lead might locate a case study that displays how an organization without an IG program has lost millions of dollars as a result. A good example might be when a company lost millions due to not being able to logistically track where their inventory was complete or incomplete. Had this organization had an effective IG program, they could have tracked at which distributor locations their inventory was being altered and causing completeness or incompleteness. Because they

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