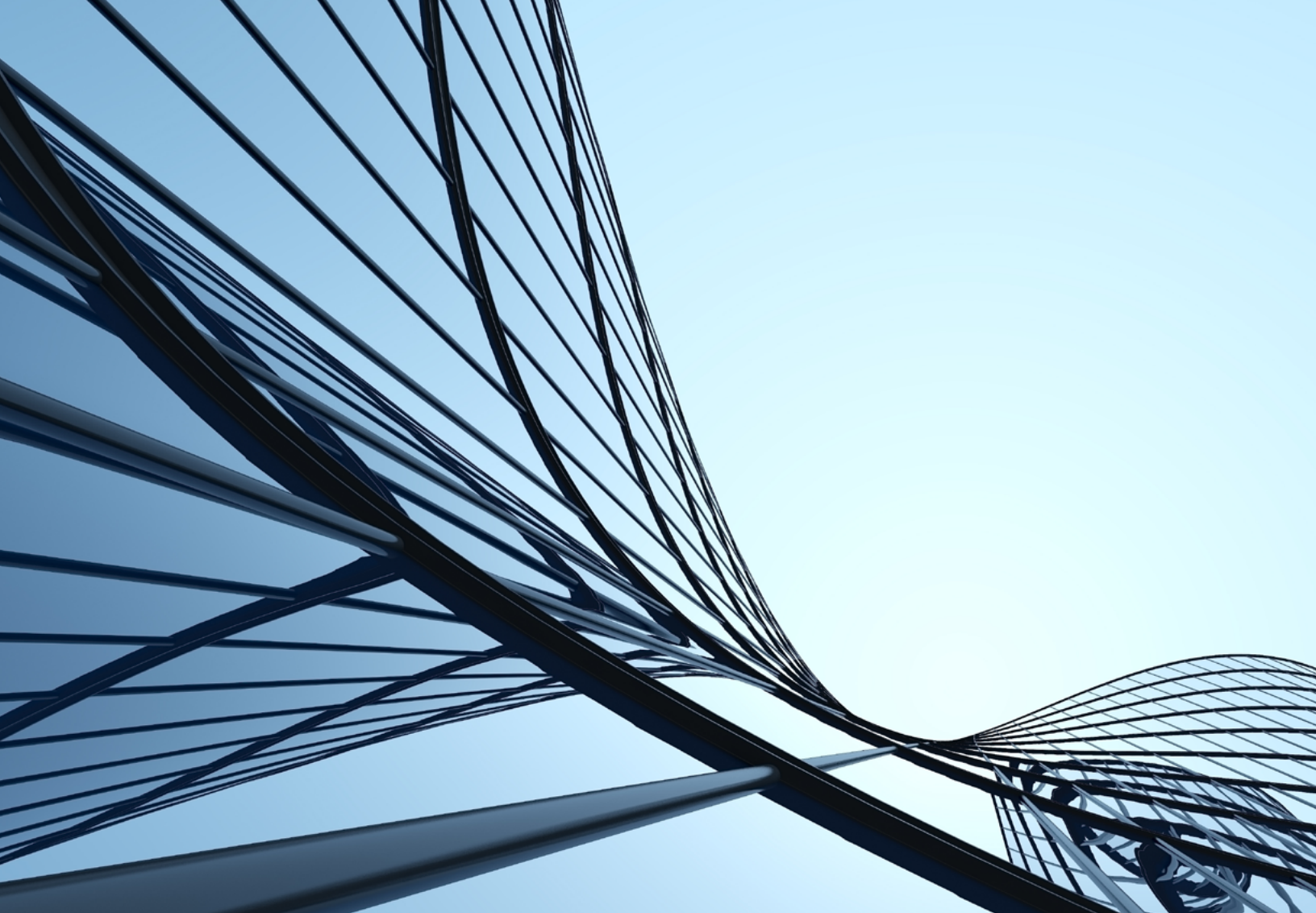


Architects of Change: Technology Leadership in the FTSE 100



FTSE 100 technology leadership is entering a new era. Having already moved beyond the legacy remit of infrastructure and digital transformation delivery, today's top tech officers are stepping into the role of strategic business leaders. They are expected to help define the organization's future direction, unlock new sources of growth through [AI](#) and data, and shape product roadmaps that sit closer than ever to the P&L.

To better understand this, Russell Reynolds Associates recently analyzed the backgrounds, career paths, and remits of top technology officers across FTSE 100 companies. Complementing this analysis, we leveraged insights from our most recent [Global Leadership Monitor](#), a global survey of more than 3,000 board members, C-suite executives, and next-generation leaders, to understand what's top of mind for leaders globally.

Our research highlights several key trends shaping how FTSE 100 companies are hiring and positioning their top technology leaders:



Broader strategic remit

As technology reshapes industries, top tech leaders are stepping into expanded roles, influencing innovation, product strategy, and enterprise transformation.



Greater leadership presence

Executive committee participation is rising – especially among recent appointments, of whom 66% sit on the leadership team – signaling tighter integration of technology leadership into enterprise decision-making.



Evolving titles and remits

Nearly one-third of tech leaders now hold hybrid or cross-functional roles spanning innovation, strategy, product, or commercial domains, reflecting a shift beyond traditional IT.



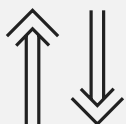
Preference for sector familiarity

69% of leaders were hired from the same sector, and 58% had previously held a top technology role. External first-time hires remain rare at just 11%.



Women making progress, but underrepresented

Women hold 24% of top tech roles, are more likely to be external hires, and typically bring prior leadership credentials.



Compared to the Fortune 500

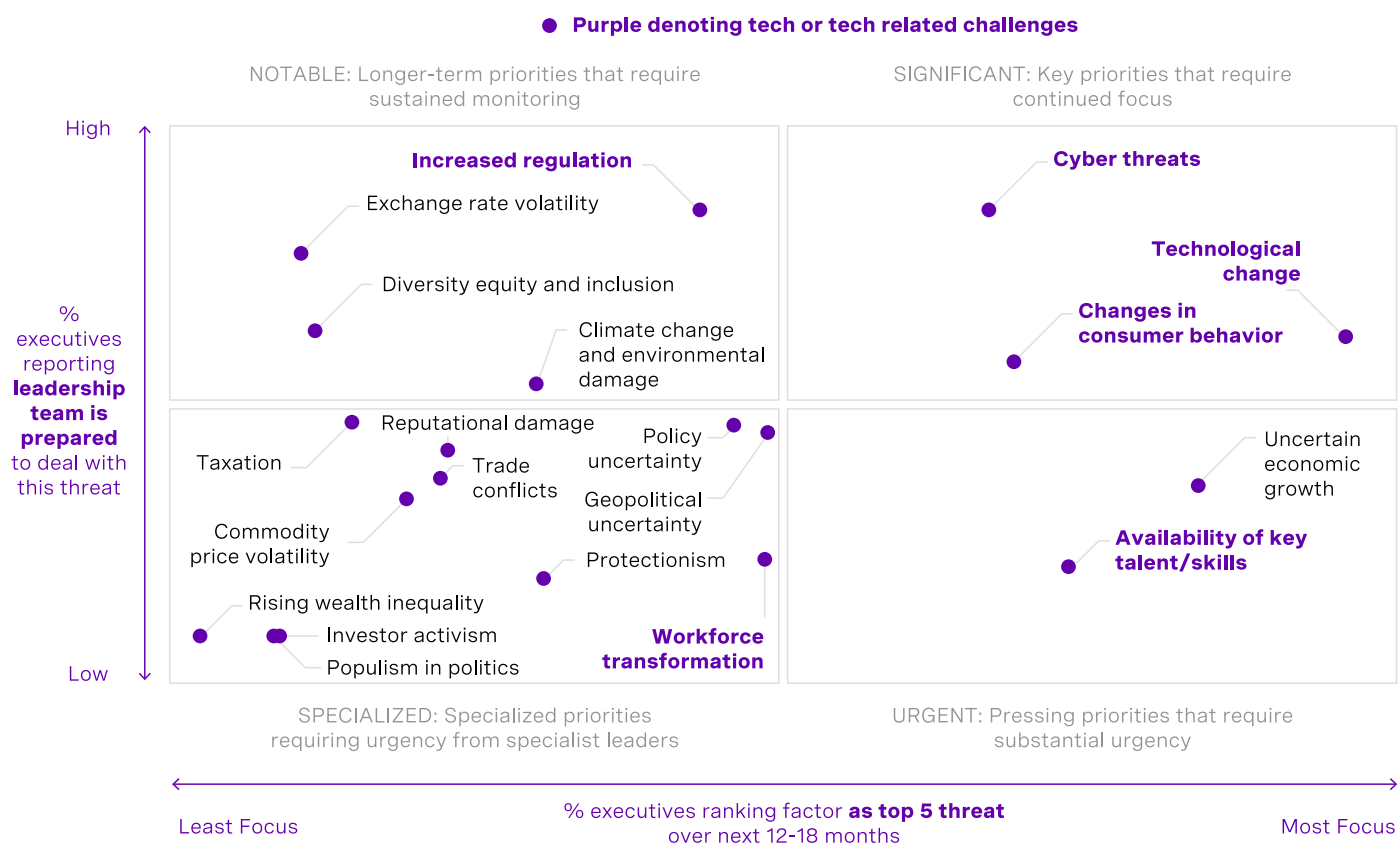
FTSE 100 firms show a stronger bias towards experienced, industry-aligned candidates than their global peers, and have a higher proportion of women leaders.

Inside the tech officer mindset: What's keeping them up at night?

Drawing on insights from Russell Reynolds Associates' H1 2025 [Global Leadership Monitor](#), we explored the challenges FTSE 100 technology leaders anticipate over the next 12-18 months—and how prepared they feel to meet them.

Top concerns include rapid technological change (66%), uncertain economic growth (57%), and the availability of key talent and skills (50%) (Figure 1). While most leaders feel confident managing technology-specific risks—76% report readiness to tackle cyber threats, and 53% feel prepared for technological change—their confidence drops sharply on broader organizational issues. Only 14% feel ready to navigate workforce transformation, and just 13% believe their organizations are equipped to secure the talent they need.

Figure 1: Tech officers' top challenges & their preparedness to face them



Source: Russell Reynolds Associates H1 2025 Global Leadership Monitor, n=75 Technology Leaders

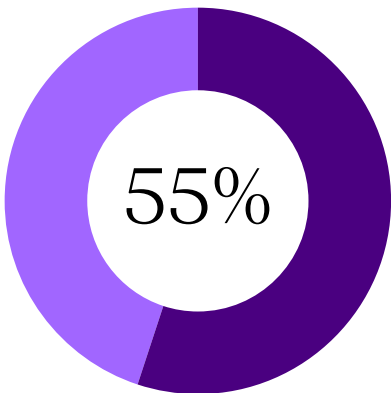
Broader strategic remit

This confidence gap highlights the expanding remit of today's technology leaders. They are no longer confined to running IT or driving isolated transformations—they are expected to act as enterprise-wide partners: customer champions, enablers of P&L growth, and catalysts for innovation. **Organizations increasingly recognize that transformation is not a siloed initiative, but a full-scale reinvention of how value is created and delivered.**

Our Global Leadership Monitor reinforces this shift. More than half (55%) of leaders across functions report that their organizations have implemented internal digital or technological advancements in the past five years, while 45% have developed new customer-facing tools (Figure 2). The most effective technology officers are now shaping how their businesses compete, grow, and evolve.

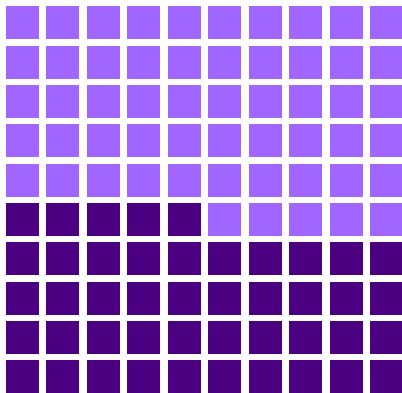
Figure 2: Most organizations are advancing digitally, both internally and externally

Internal Innovation



of leaders indicated that their organizations **have implemented digital or technological advancements internally** in the last 5 years

Customer-Facing Innovation



45%

of leaders indicated that their organizations **have developed new digital or technological tools for customers** in the last 5 years

Source: RRA 2025 H1 Global Leadership Monitor, Base N = 2,796 global executives



The FTSE 100 technology leadership landscape

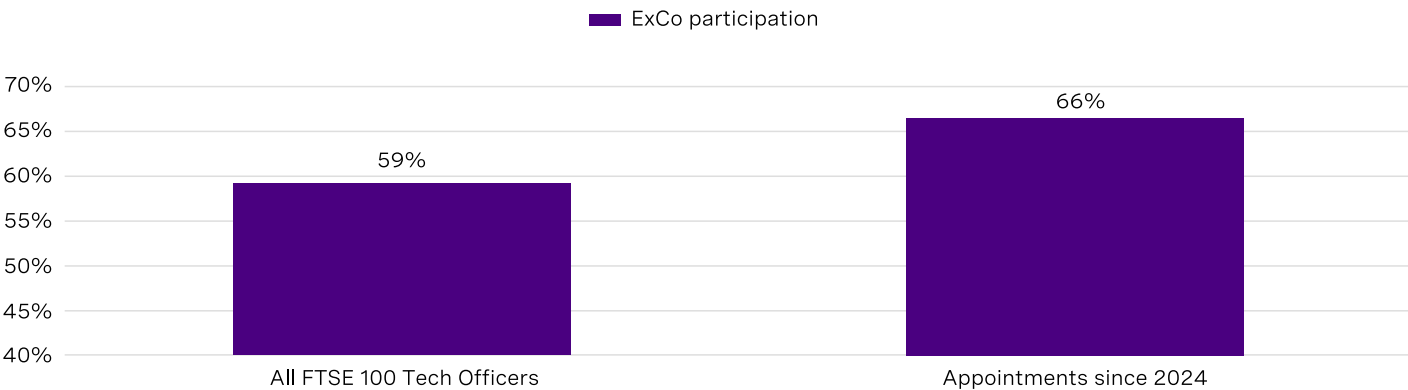
Greater leadership presence

FTSE 100 companies are increasingly elevating technology leaders to the heart of enterprise decision-making. Today, 59% of top tech officers hold seats on their company's executive committee, rising to 66% among leaders appointed since 2024 (Figure 3).

This mirrors a broader global shift. In the Fortune 500, 76% of recent appointees sit on the executive committee, reflecting the same recognition that technology is now inseparable from business strategy. As digital transformation matures and competitive advantage hinges on AI, cybersecurity, data-driven insights, and software-enabled growth, leadership teams are ensuring their technology leaders have a direct voice at the table.

The direction of travel is clear: technology is a leadership-level priority, a trend that will only accelerate as industries become more digitally connected and innovation-driven.

Figure 3. Technology officers on the executive committee: Overall presence vs. recent appointments



Source: RRA analysis of technology officers in 2025 FTSE 100 companies, N = 91



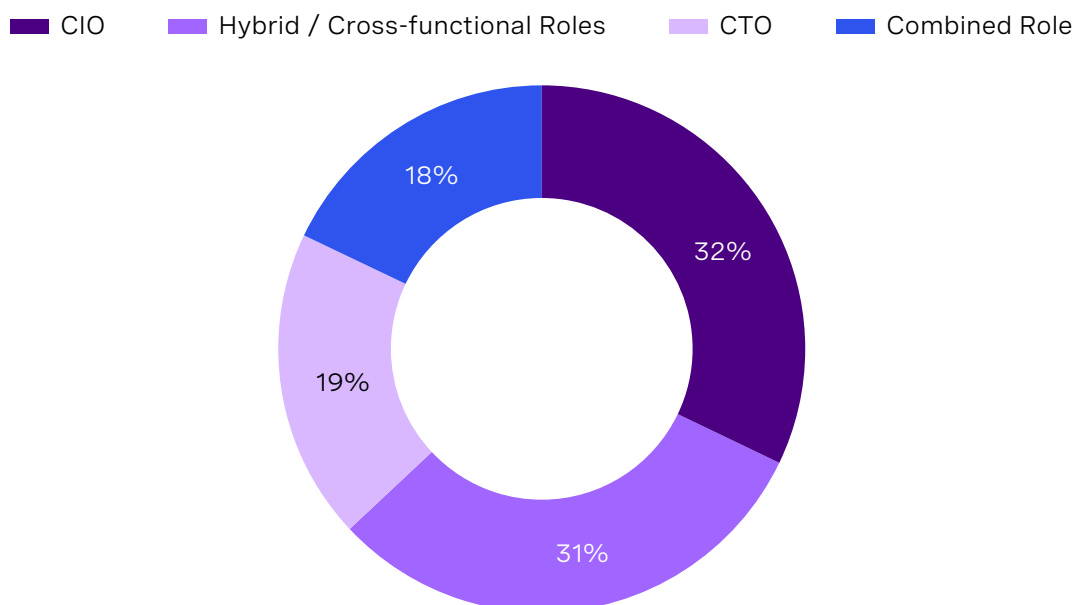
Evolving titles and remits

The remit of FTSE 100 technology leaders has expanded well beyond traditional IT, and their titles are shifting to reflect this broader influence. Nearly one-third (31%) now hold hybrid or cross-functional roles spanning operations, strategy, product, commercial, or innovation (Figure 4).

Traditional titles are becoming less dominant. Chief information officer (CIO) roles now account for just 32% of appointments, while chief technology officers (CTO) account for 19%, and dual titles such as chief digital & information officer account for 18%. This evolution signals that digital, data, and transformation are no longer optional add-ons—they are core to the technology mandate.

Companies are deliberately using titles to signal enterprise-wide innovation and transformation, both to internal stakeholders and the market. The title evolution reinforces a reality: today's technology leaders are growth enablers and strategic partners, not just custodians of IT.

Figure 4. Breakdown of tech executive titles in the FTSE 100



Source: RRA analysis of top technology officers in the 2025 FTSE 100, N = 91

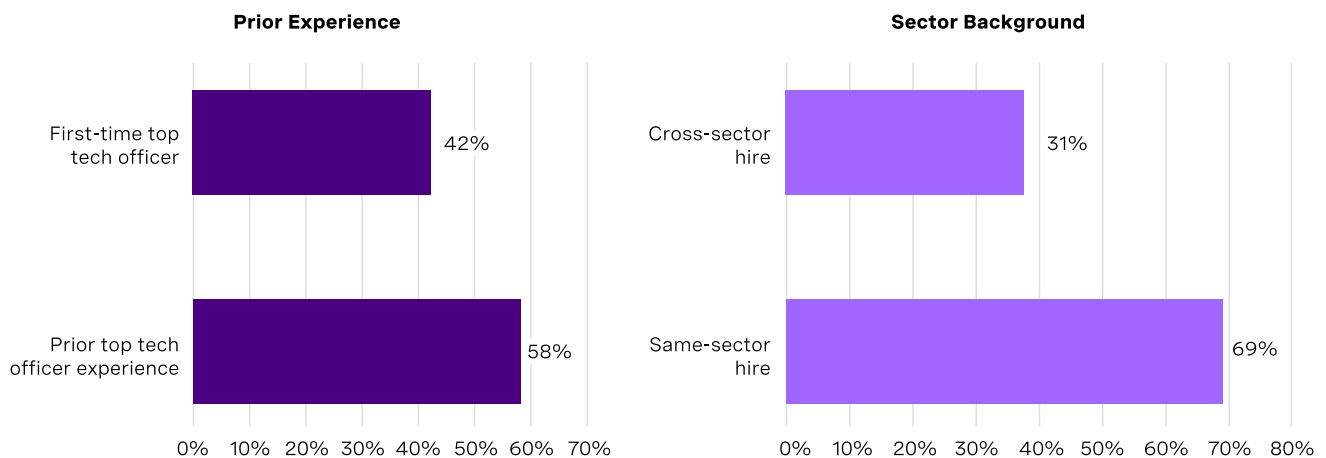


Preference for sector familiarity

As the remit of FTSE 100 technology leaders expands, companies still show a strong preference for experienced, sector-aligned talent. Nearly seven in ten (69%) tech officers were hired from the same industry, and 58% had previously held a top technology role such as CIO or CTO (Figure 5).

This pattern reflects a continued emphasis on institutional knowledge and the ability to navigate sector-specific complexity—particularly in highly regulated industries such as financial services and industrials. Hiring from outside the industry remains the exception, rather than the norm.

Figure 5. Hiring patterns by experience and sector background

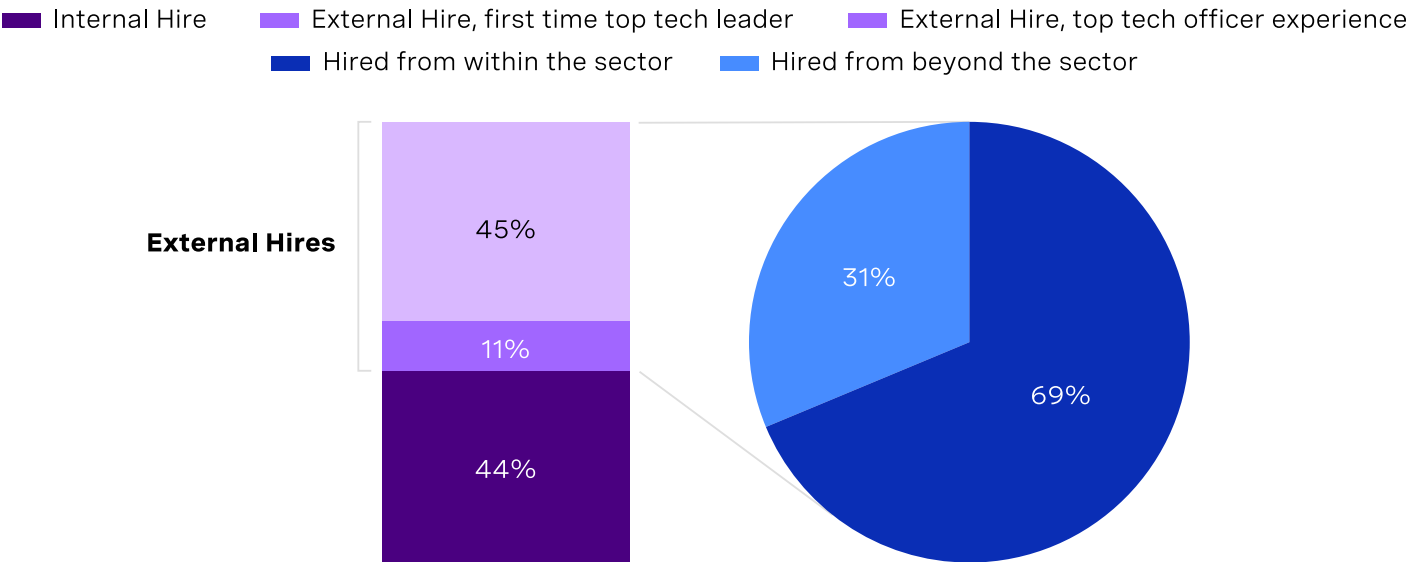


Source: RRA analysis of top technology officers in the 2025 FTSE 100, N = 91



External appointments follow the same trend, as 56% of FTSE 100 tech leaders were hired externally, but the vast majority still brought prior top-tech experience and came from within the same sector. Only 11% of all appointments were external first-time top technology officers (Figure 6), underscoring companies' preference for leaders who can immediately deliver impact in familiar operating environments.

Figure 6. Technology officer appointments: Internal vs. external hires



Source: RRA analysis of top technology officers in the 2025 FTSE 100, N = 91

Current tenure further reflects the recency of appointments. Female tech officers average 2.0 years in role, compared to 4.1 years for men (Figure 8). As more women enter these positions, ensuring long-term support and retention will be critical to closing the experience and tenure gap.

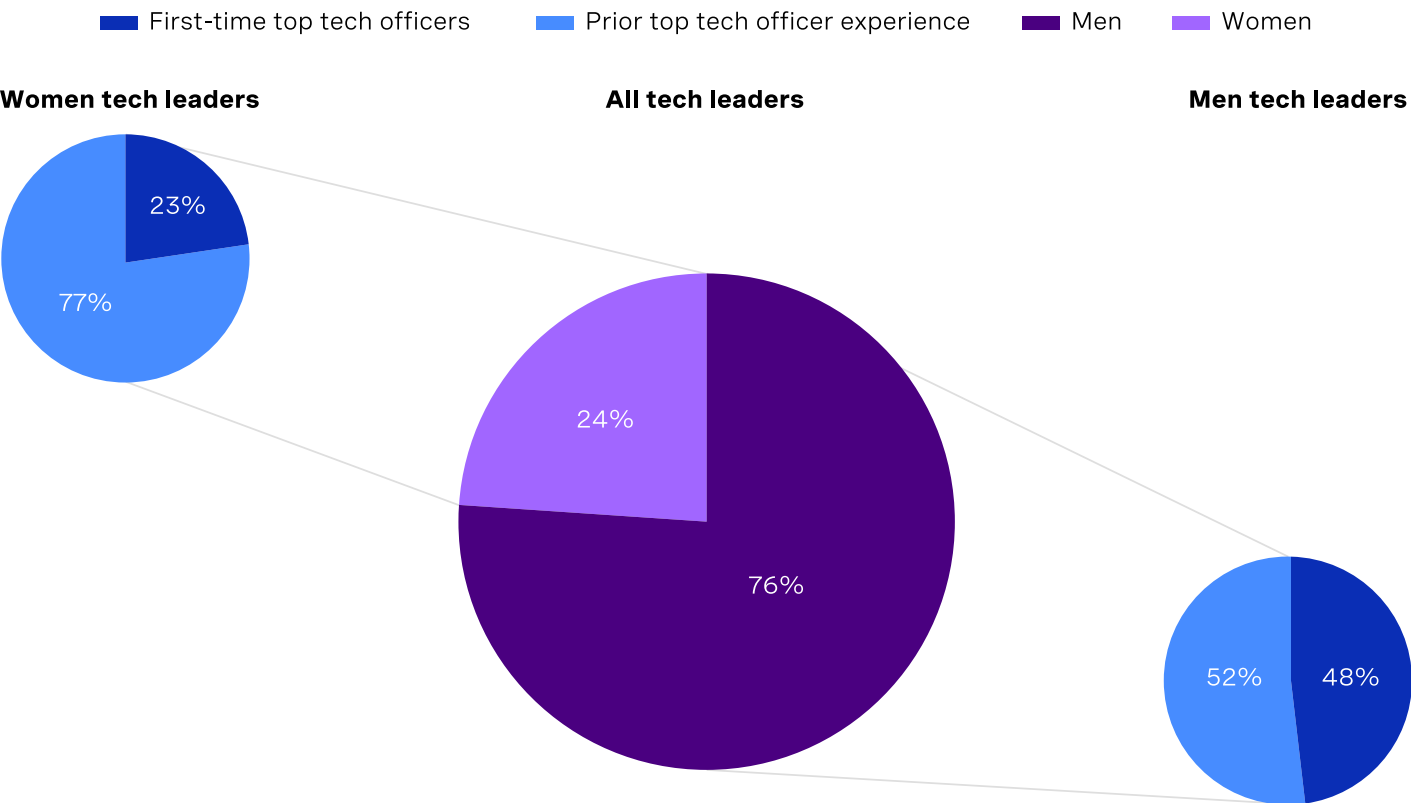


Women making progress, but underrepresented

Women are increasingly entering top technology roles in the FTSE 100, but representation and tenure gaps remain significant. Women now hold 24% of top tech positions, and nearly three-quarters (73%) of these appointments have occurred since 2023—signaling recent, but still fragile, progress.

Women are also more likely to be hired externally than men (68% vs. 52%) and tend to arrive with more established credentials—77% had prior top technology leadership experience, compared with 52% of male peers (Figure 7). These patterns suggest that women face a higher bar for entry, with proven track records often a prerequisite.

Figure 7. Gender dynamics in tech leadership appointments: Prior experience

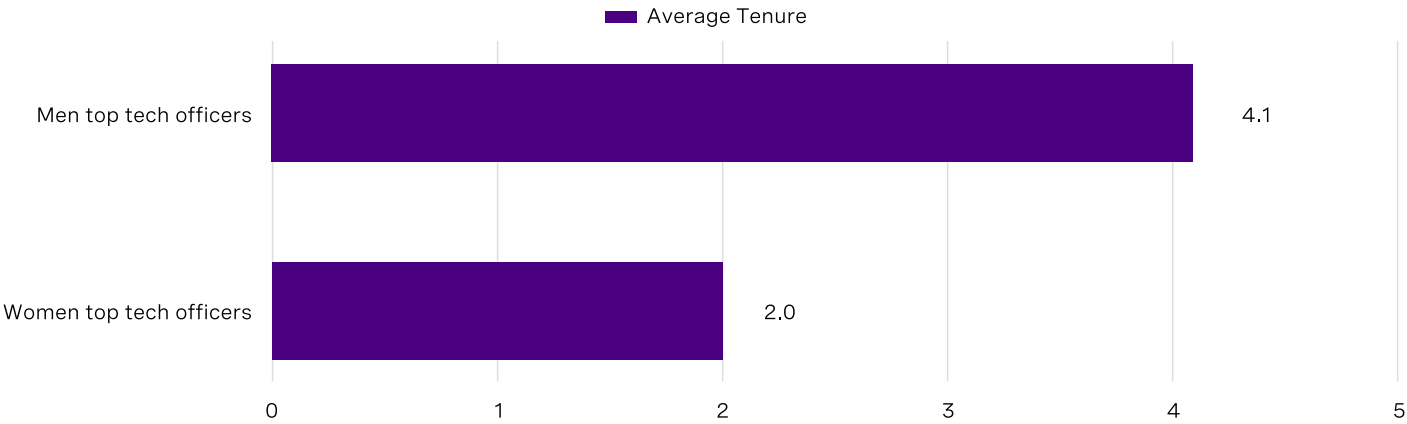


Source: RRA analysis of top technology officers in the 2025 FTSE 100, N = 91



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Figure 8. Current tenure of FTSE 100 tech officers by gender



Source: RRA analysis of top technology officers in the 2025 FTSE 100, N = 91

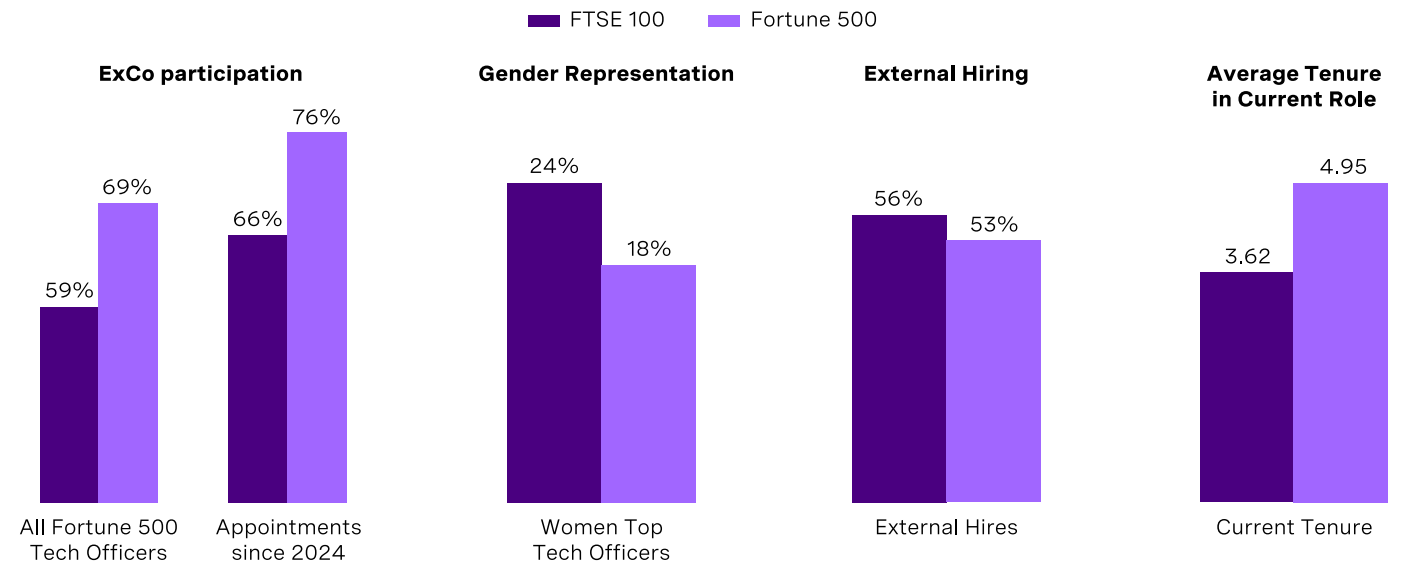
Comparing FTSE 100 and Fortune 500 technology leadership

While the role of the top technology officer is evolving in both the FTSE 100 and the Fortune 500, differences in hiring patterns, diversity, and executive integration reveal distinct market dynamics (Figure 9).

- **Executive committee participation:** 59% of FTSE 100 tech leaders hold executive committee seats, compared with 69% in the Fortune 500. Among recent appointments, FTSE participation rises to 66%, signaling progress toward global norms.
- **Gender representation:** Women hold 24% of top FTSE 100 tech roles, modestly higher than 18% in the Fortune 500. With many appointments made in the last two years, organizations have an opportunity to support this newer cohort to enable long-term success.
- **External hiring and prior experience:** FTSE 100 companies remain more conservative, drawing 69% of hires from the same sector and 58% from leaders with prior top-tech experience, versus 58% and 53% respectively in the Fortune 500.
- **Tenure:** FTSE 100 tech officers average 3.6 years in role, shorter than their Fortune 500 counterparts, reflecting a recent wave of leadership change in the UK market.

Overall, FTSE 100 companies favor highly experienced, sector-aligned leaders, while Fortune 500 firms show a slightly greater appetite for cross-industry or first-time top-tech appointments.

Figure 9. Key differences in top technology officer appointments: FTSE 100 vs. Fortune 500



Source: RRA analysis of top technology officers in the 2025 FTSE 100, N = 91 and top technology officers in the Fortune 500, N = 498

For boards and organizations: Elevate with vision

- 01 **Rethink readiness.** Move beyond traditional definitions of “qualified.” Consider step up candidates, cross industry talent, and non traditional backgrounds to expand the leadership pipeline.

- 02 **Integrate technology into board level strategy.** Ensure tech leadership is not only visible but embedded in discussions on innovation, product, strategy, and customer priorities, strengthening alignment across digital growth, cybersecurity, and culture.

- 03 **Invest in sustained leadership success.** Close tenure gaps by supporting diverse appointments with long term development, sponsorship, and clear pathways for impact.

- 04 **Expand the talent pool deliberately.** Casting a wider net for candidates accelerates innovation and positions tech leaders as true strategic growth partners, not just functional heads.

For technology officers: Lead beyond the function

- 01 **Position yourself as a strategic business leader,** not just an innovation driver. The most impactful tech officers frame their remit around enterprise strategy, growth enablement, and P&L influence.

- 02 **Build board fluency** – especially in AI and data ethics. Boards are increasingly asking for structured oversight, ethical frameworks, and proactive engagement on issues such as AI governance.

- 03 **Be intentional about culture and retention.** With female tech officers currently averaging just two years in role, and high churn among newly appointed leaders globally, organization-sponsored development and inclusion efforts are critical for longer term leadership continuity.



Authors

Mathilde Andrews is a senior researcher for Russell Reynolds Associates' Tech Officers Practice. She is based in London.

George Head leads Russell Reynolds Associates' Technology Sector Knowledge team. He is based in London.

Art Hopkins leads Russell Reynolds Associates' Technology Officers practice. He is based in Atlanta.

Tristan Jervis leads Russell Reynolds Associates' Technology Sector. He is based in London.

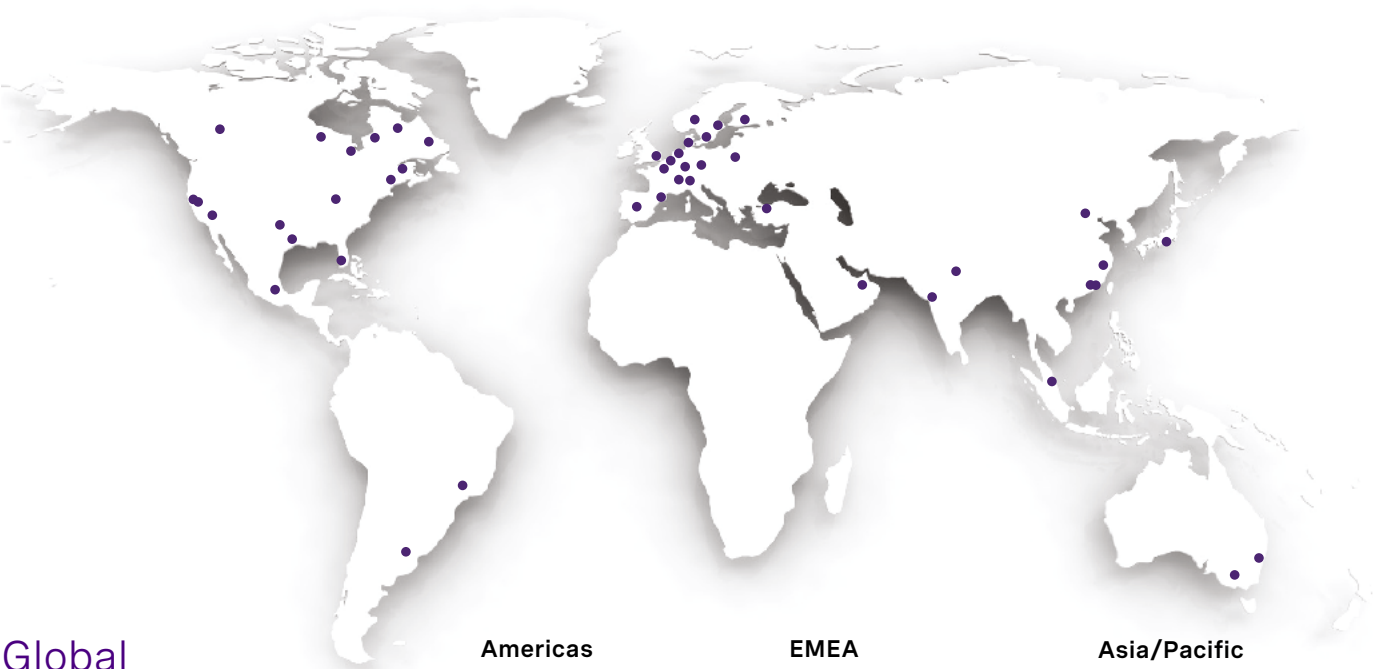
Harriet Wood leads Russell Reynolds Associates' Technology Officers practice in EMEA. She is based in London.

Suya Xiong leads Russell Reynolds Associates' Technology Officers Knowledge team. She is based in Boston.

About Russell Reynolds Associates

Russell Reynolds Associates is a global leadership advisory firm. Our 500+ consultants in 47 offices work with public, private, and nonprofit organizations across all industries and regions. We help our clients build teams of transformational leaders who can meet today's challenges and anticipate the digital, economic, sustainability, and political trends that are reshaping the global business environment. From helping boards with their structure, culture, and effectiveness to identifying, assessing and defining the best leadership for organizations, our teams bring their decades of expertise to help clients address their most complex leadership issues. We exist to improve the way the world is led

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