

ChiefofStaff
.network



2022 Chief of Staff
Compensation Report



● Introduction

The Chief of Staff role continues to gain more prestige and prominence, appearing in companies of all sizes and industries. Due to this variability as well as the disparate backgrounds and responsibilities of Chiefs of Staff, compensation is as difficult to benchmark as ever.

Our goal for conducting this survey is to assist current and future Chiefs of Staff in understanding their market value and advocating for themselves. Our research considered the specific factors that heavily impact Chief of Staff compensation, including years of experience, CoS level, company stage/size, gender, location, and more. Previous compensation data is available in our [2019](#), [2020](#), and [2021](#) Reports.

This report provides one view of the survey data, but there are many alternative ways to slice and pivot it. The raw data of this survey is available to Pro members of the [Chief of Staff Network](#). Apply [here!](#)

● What is a Chief of Staff?

At the Chief of Staff Network, we broadly define a Chief of Staff as the primary strategic operator reporting directly to a C-Level Executive. As the role continues to take root in organizations of different sizes, Chiefs of Staff are also emerging as key operators outside the C-suite, reporting at the VP level or below.

The Chief of Staff has a unique relationship with their Principal as the facilitator of the Principal's key objectives. The role is rarely an administrative function, rather focusing on operational, strategic, and cross-functional execution. Chiefs of Staff take on diverse responsibilities that depend on their previous career experiences, leadership capabilities, and the priorities of their Principal. These are also potential factors that impact compensation on a case-by-case basis.

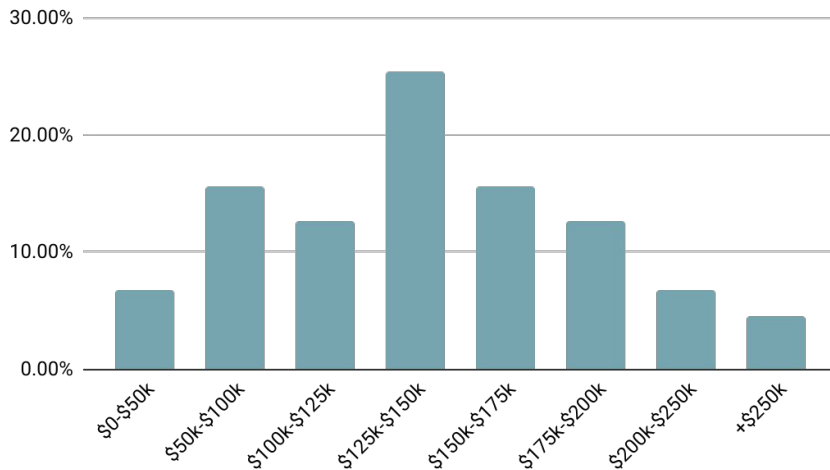
● Chiefs of Staff by Level

As noted, Chiefs of Staff come from a variety of professional backgrounds and bring different amounts of experience and skills to the table. The "Chief" in CoS can be deceptive as not every CoS is working at the executive level. Despite sharing the same title, CoS operate with varying amounts of influence & ownership and therefore at different levels within their companies.

With this in mind, the Chief of Staff Network conducted independent research to establish a [Leveling Framework](#) characterizing the dimensions of growth and advancement criteria across five common CoS role archetypes. Survey participants were asked to review the Leveling Framework and self-select into one level. Additionally, we collected number of years of professional experience noting that the two (experience and level) are not always the same.

Chiefs of Cash

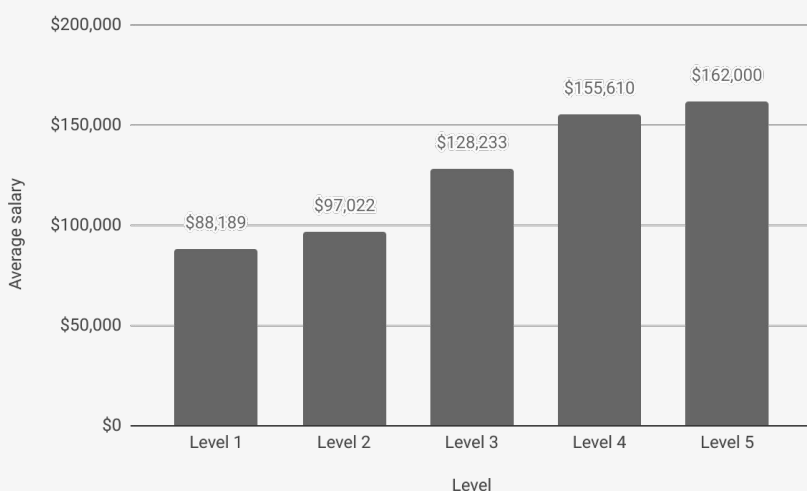
Annual Base Salary



\$152,663
Average Base Compensation

Survey respondents were asked to provide base salary as an exact figure, rather than as a range. Our data shows a relatively normal distribution in base compensation, with 25% of respondents earning between \$125k-\$150k. Notably, 64% of Chiefs of Staff in our survey are making over \$125k. Additionally, the average base salary has increased \$10,000 from 2021, when it was \$142,533.

Average Salary by CoS Level



Average salaries continue to show increases with changes in self-reported experience levels. Note that there are fewer differences in experience, skills or responsibilities between a Level 1 & Level 2 Chief of Staff vs a Level 3, 4, or 5 Chief of Staff.

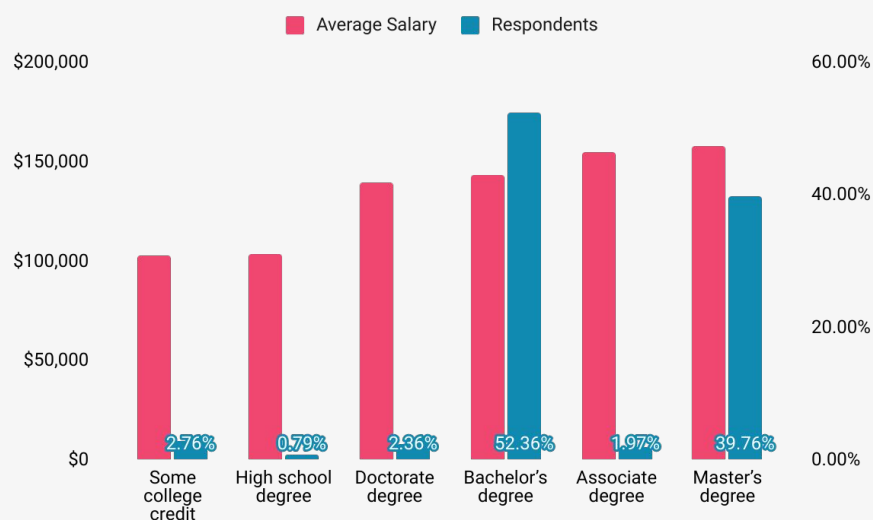
Grouping Level 1 & 2 together, we see the lower levels are being squeezed as the average base salary is \$94,261, down from \$120,210 last year. Thus, we see a 36% average increase in salary at Level 3, a 21.4% average increase from Level 3 to Level 4, and a 4.1% average increase to Level 5.

Average Salary by Company Size



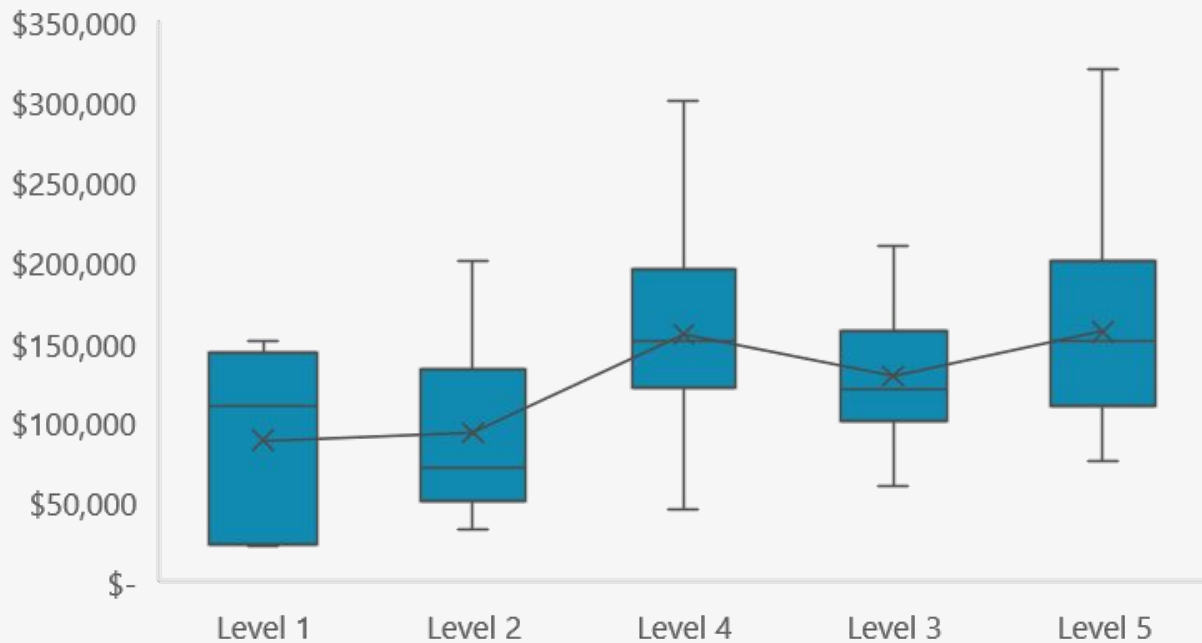
There is a very slight correlation between average salary and company size. The lowest CoS salaries occur at 1-200 employees. Above 200 employees in headcount, the salaries are noticeably higher, in the \$150-200k range.

Average Salary by Educational Attainment



CoS without a higher degree earn about \$50,000 less on average than those with one. However, among the degreed, there is no relation between education level and salary, with Associate's degree holders earning more than both Doctorates and Bachelor's degree holders.

Base Salary Bands by Level



Level 1 (Associate)

- Middle 50% range: \$23k-\$135k
- Average: \$88,189

Level 2 (Jr. Manager):

- Middle 50% range: \$50k-\$127k
- Average: \$93,104

Level 3 (Sr. Manager):

- Middle 50% range: \$100k-\$153k
- Average: \$128,116

Level 4 (Director):

- Middle 50% range: \$125k-\$193k
- Average: \$154,240

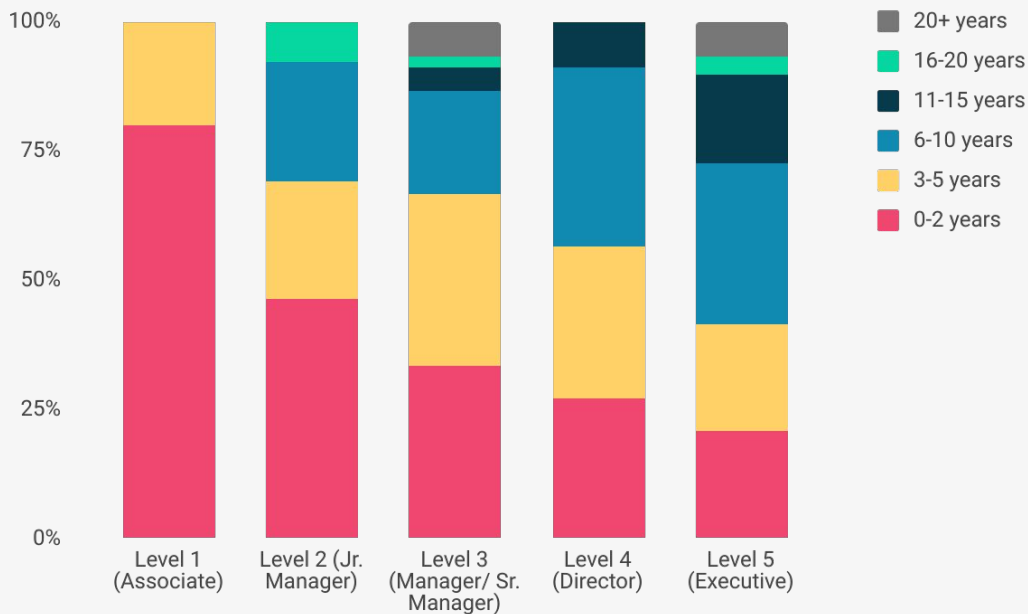
Level 5 (Executive)

- Middle 50% range: \$110k-\$200k
- Average: \$156,103

Just as we saw last year, there is a direct correlation between the seniority level of a CoS and how high their salary can go. This can be explained by the fact that larger or later-stage organizations' executives rely on CoS for a wider scope of responsibilities and will tend to compensate accordingly.

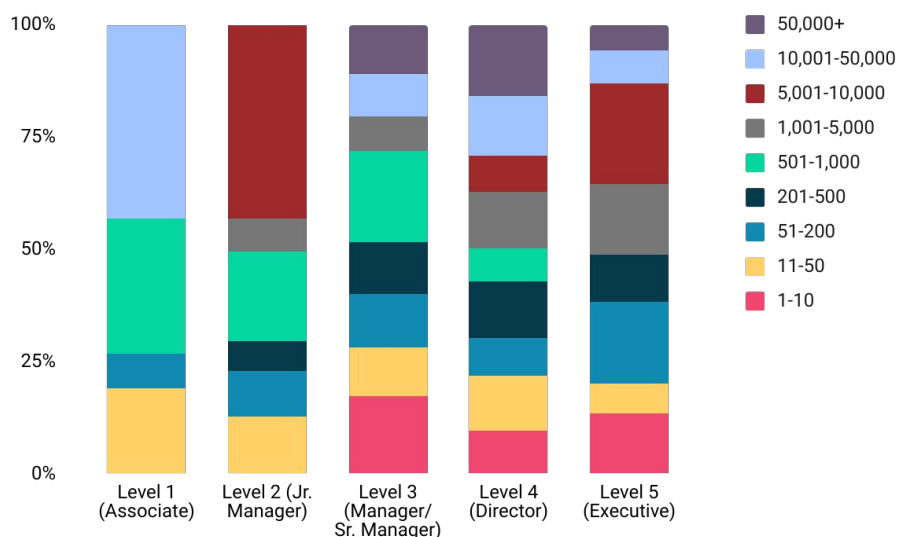
Outliers exist at each seniority level, which can likely be attributed to the variety of CoS responsibilities from company to company.

Years of Experience by CoS Level



Levels 1-3 primarily tend to be performed by people with <5 years of experience, though there are a noticeable minority of respondents with 11+ years of experience. Unsurprisingly, as CoS reach senior levels, a larger share of their cohort has 6+ years of experience.

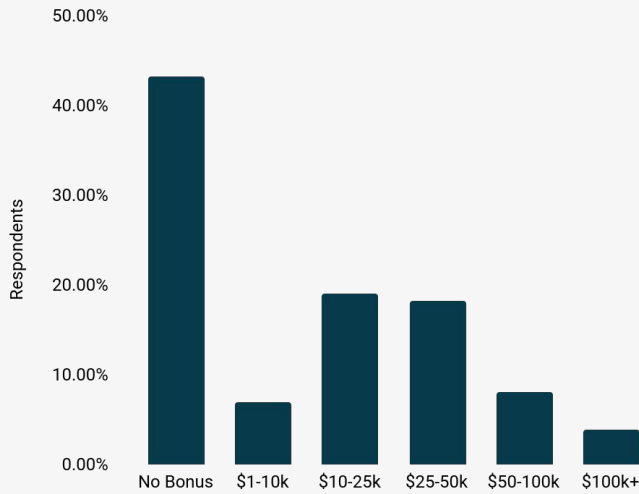
Company Size by CoS Level



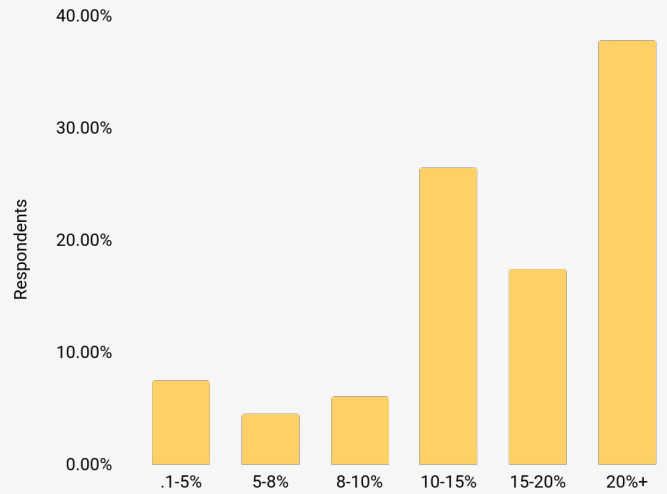
Just like in 2021, there is no obvious correlation between company size and Level of CoS. It's interesting to note that we did not have any Level 1 or 2 respondents at companies with 1-10 employees. This suggests that companies of that size do not tend to hire junior CoS.

Bonus & Equity

Annual Bonus

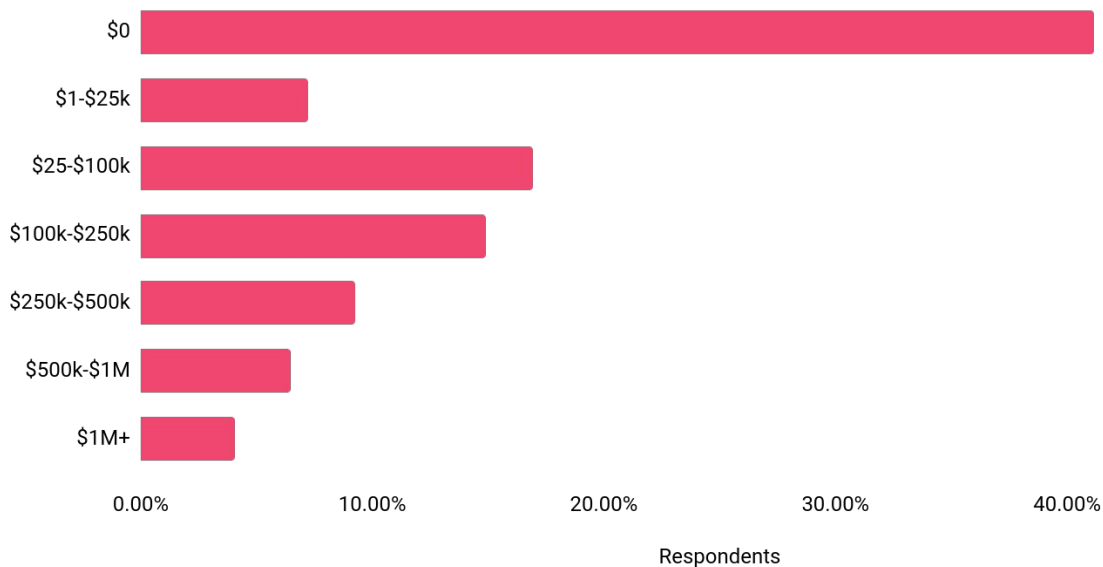


Annual Bonus as % of Base Salary



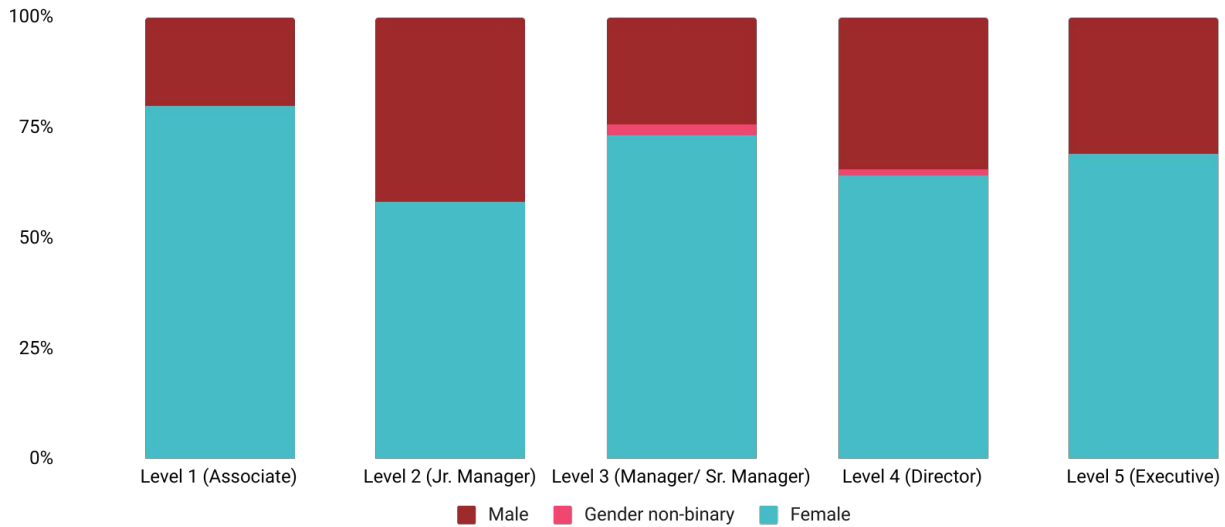
Annual Bonus and value of equity follow a similar trend. Primarily, respondents do not receive bonuses and equity—but if they do, their bonuses tend to be >\$25K, while equity value tends to be >\$100k. This lines up with research from PayFactors, indicating median CoS Bonuses are ~\$35k.

Estimated value of equity (USD)



○ Compensation & Gender

% CoS at each Level by Gender



Females comprise a majority of our respondents at all Levels, with the heaviest skew towards Female CoS in Level 1.

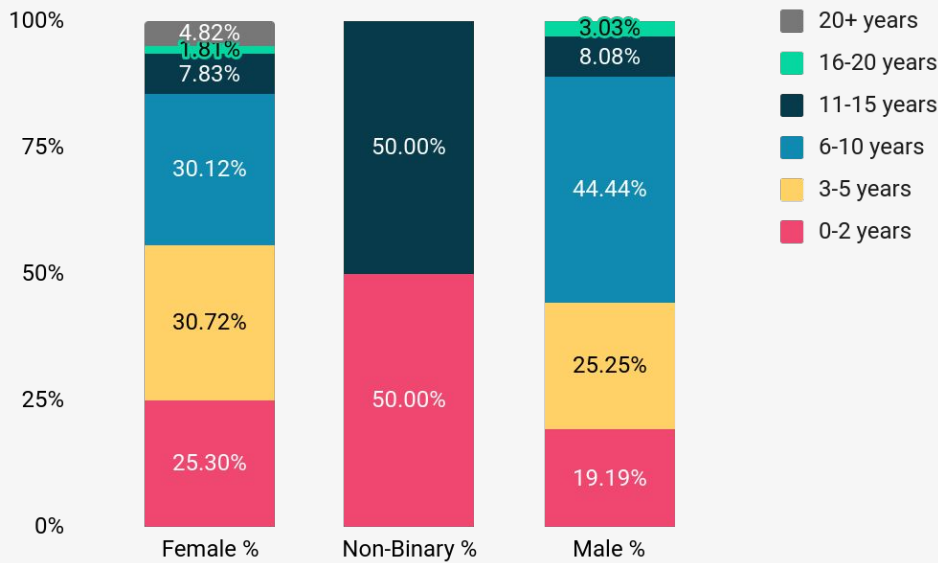
Avg Salary by Gender



The gender wage gap sadly persists in CoS roles as well, with Females on average earning 91% of their Male counterparts' salaries, down from 93% last year.

A hopeful sign is the ratio of female to male CoS pay is 8% higher than the US economy's overall [gender pay gap](#) of 83%.

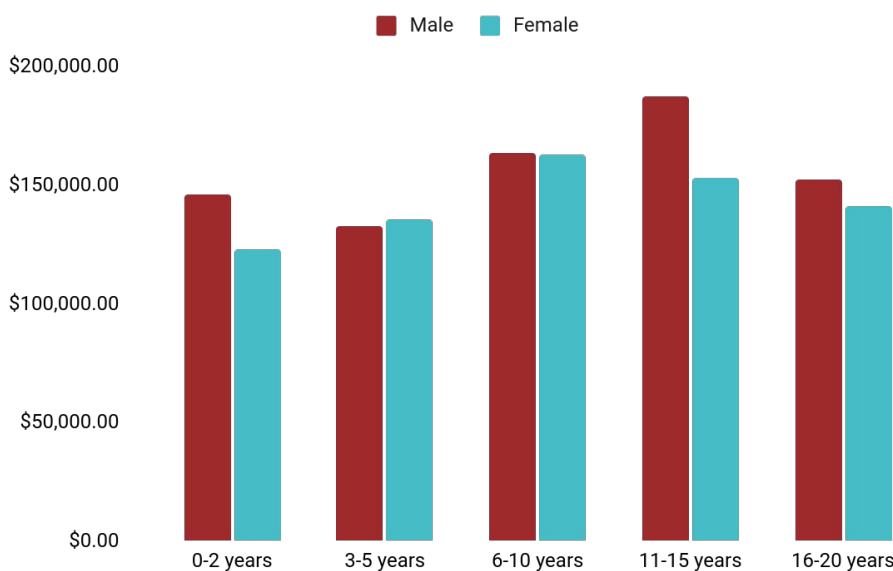
Years of Experience by Gender



Years of experience for survey participants are almost evenly split between genders at each level.

Notably, only female respondents had more than 20 years of experience in their roles.

Years of Experience vs Salary by Gender



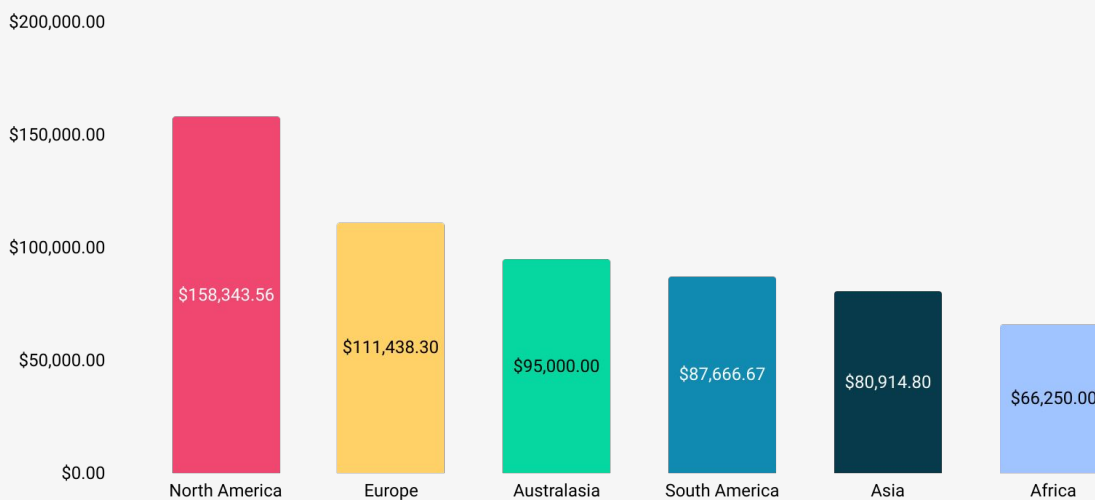
The largest wage gaps between males and females occurred a 0-2 years (females earned 16% less) and 11-15 years (females earned 18% less).

This is an improvement over last year when women earned 28% less in the 11-15 years band.

Similar to last year, in the 3-10 year period, men and women were at parity.

○ Geography & Industry

Average CoS Salary by Geographic Location



CoS roles pay by far the most in North America, specifically the United States. The pay in North America is 42% higher than in Europe and 2.4x higher than the pay in Africa.

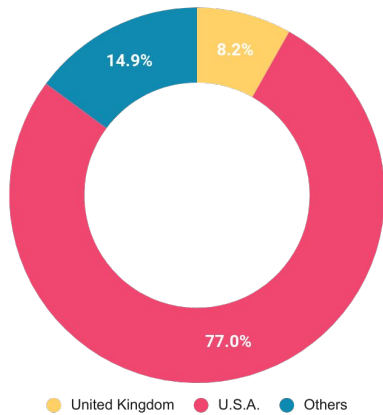
Top Industries for CoS Salary

Industry	Average Salary
HealthTech / Healthcare	\$195,685
Sports & Media	\$190,200
BioTech	\$184,666
Marketing	\$182,444
Transportation	\$175,000
Security	\$162,500
FinTech / Finance	\$156,392
Consulting	\$154,875

Above are the top industries for CoS Salary. These are the industries in which the average pay exceeds the average salary for all respondents. The higher salaries in some of these industries may stem from the capital intensity of sectors such as healthcare, transportation, and finance.

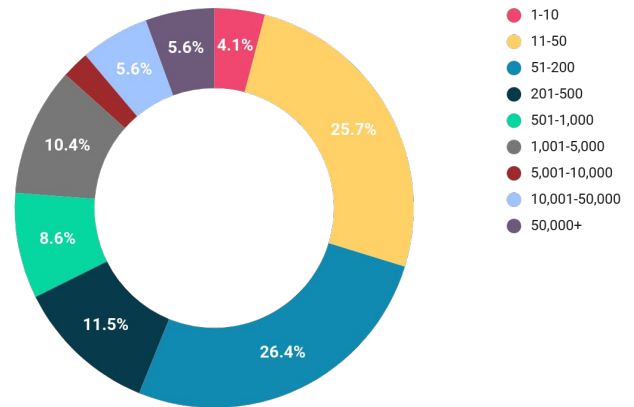
Respondent Data

Country Representation



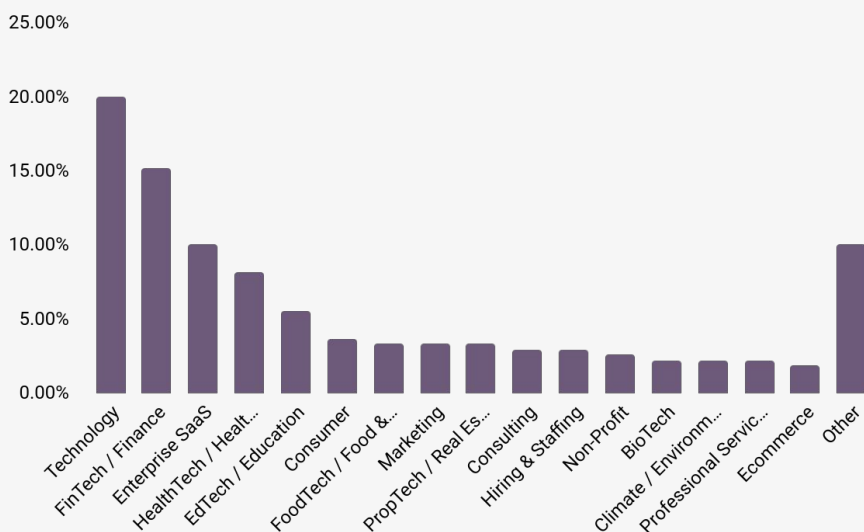
CoS from the USA accounted for most of our respondents but people from more than 20 countries participated.

Organization Headcount



Companies with 11-50 and 51-200 accounted for the majority of our respondents.

Chiefs of Staff by Industry



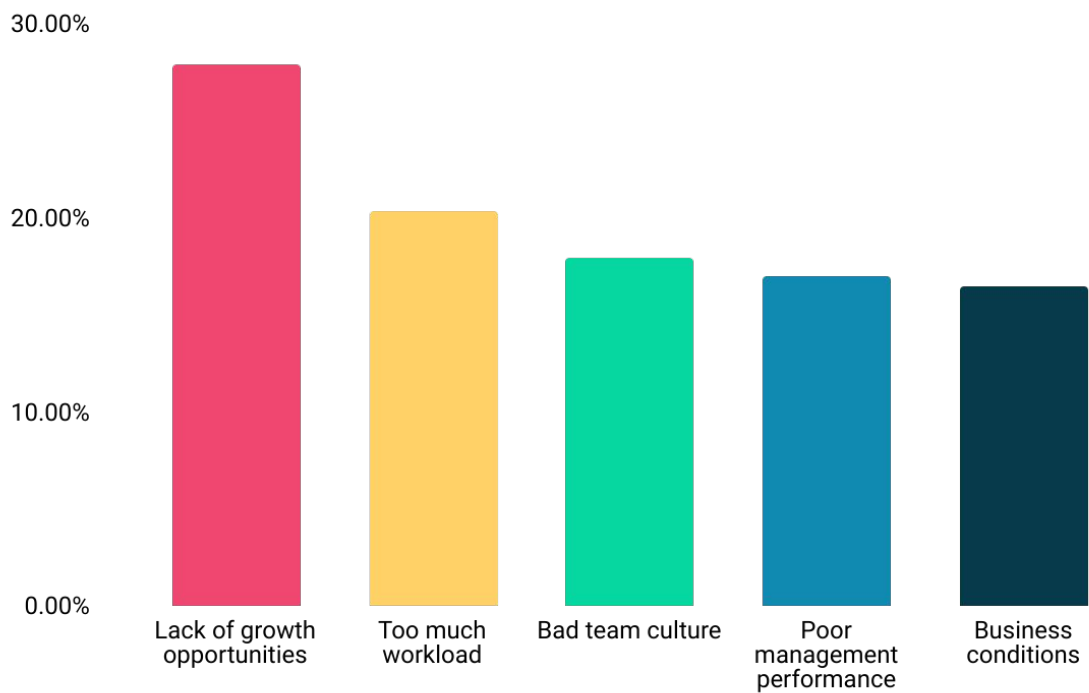
The most common industries that respondents worked in are general Technology, FinTech, Enterprise SaaS, and HealthTech.

There are plenty of additional industries which employ Chiefs of Staff, with the "Other" category comprising 12 industries that had 4 or fewer responses.

○ Career Planning

Given the increasing turbulence in the economy, we wanted to understand how CoS were looking at job transitions. The single most biggest driver to leave a job was “lack of growth opportunities.” Intriguingly the lowest driver was “business conditions,” suggesting that the economy is not spurring CoS to seek new roles.

What reasons would cause you to leave your current job?



Expanding Responsibility

When asked about their current employer, 47.76% of respondents indicated that they wanted to “stay with their current employer but expand role with more responsibilities.” 13% wanted to change companies *and* roles whereas 10% wanted to become a CoS at a new firm. 9.7% of people wished to remain at the same employer and role.

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Get access to the raw survey data.

