



# CEO Landscape 2025

We studied a universe of 524 companies – including 424 listed firms from the ET500 and 100 of India’s leading unlisted businesses – spanning 20 diverse sectors. Here’s what the data reveals about the CEOs steering them.

## Leadership

59% of companies are led by Professional CEOs, while the remaining 41% are led by Promoters who double up as CEOs.

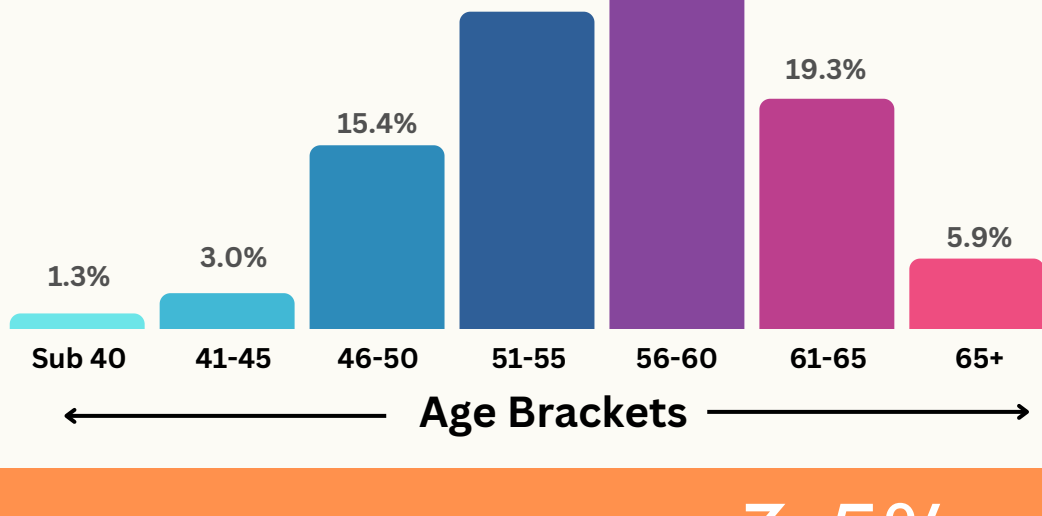
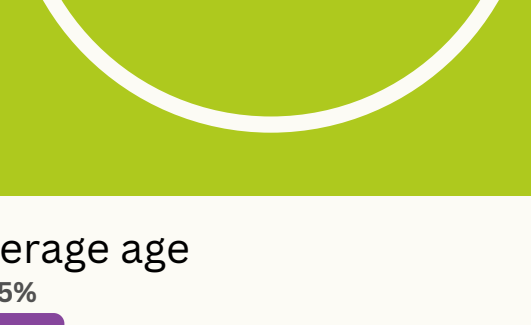
Promoter CEOs



Professional CEOs

## Age

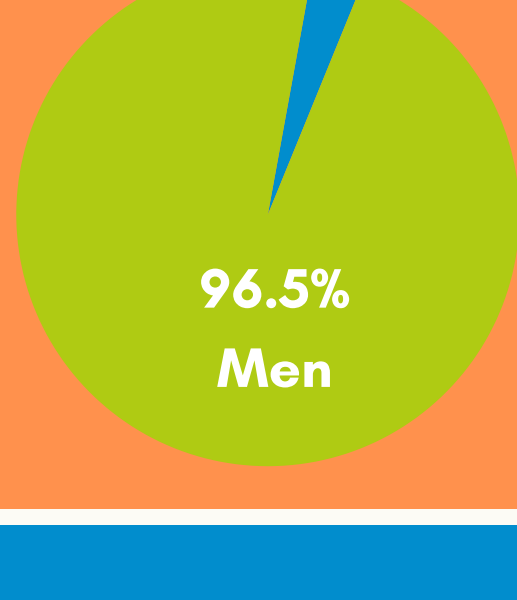
The average age of professional CEOs is 56, with a balanced spread across age brackets. The average age has remained steady at 56y, from FY22.



## Gender

Though only 3.5% of professional CEOs are women, this is still a 3x jump from 1.1% in 2022.

3.5% CEO Women



96.5% Men

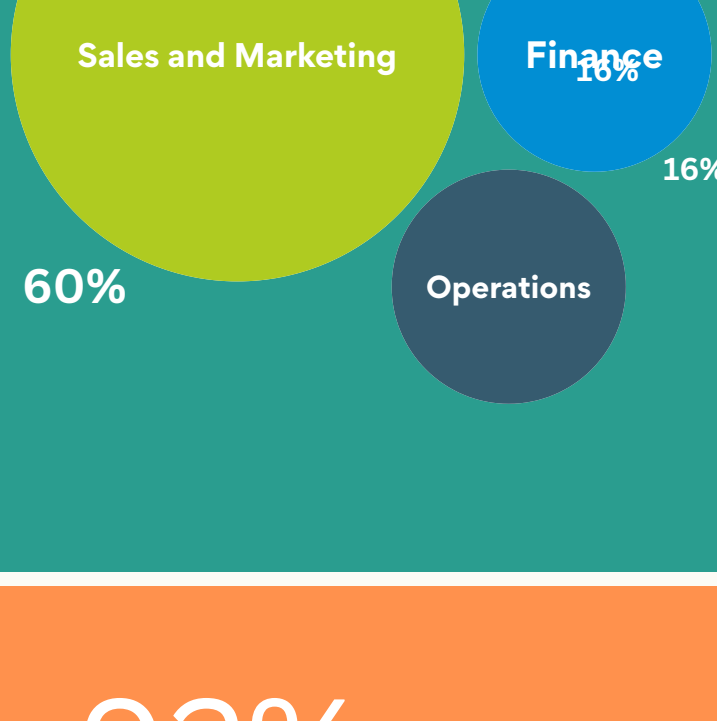
## Average Tenure

Professional CEOs now stay longer – 5.3 years on average, up from 4.5 years in 2022.



## Work Stream

Sales & Marketing remains the dominant track to the top, with 60% of CEOs emerging from this background. Operations and Finance follow closely, each contributing 16%, while Consulting and other domains make up the rest.

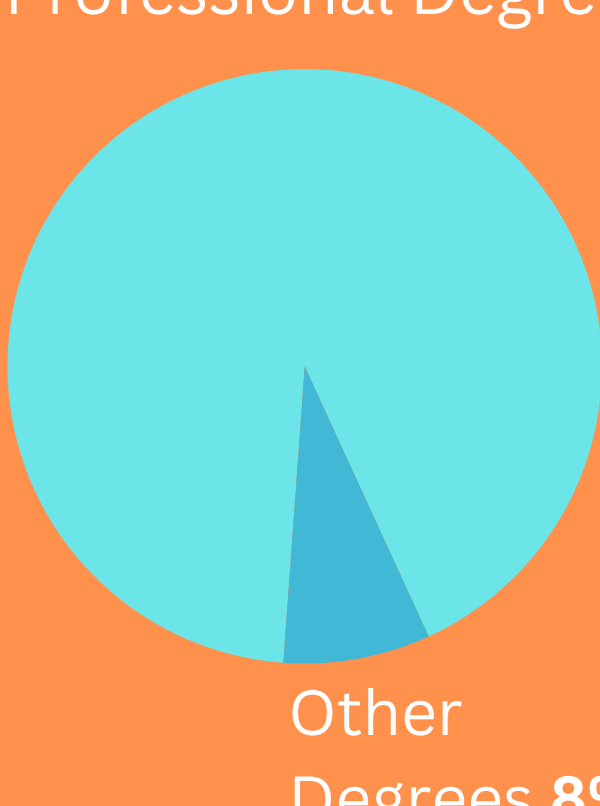


## Education

92% Professional Degrees

When it comes to education, 92% of CEOs hold professional degrees, and over half of them – 50% – have an MBA, showing that India Inc continues to bet on strong academic grounding.

Out of those 92% professional edu- 50% are MBAs

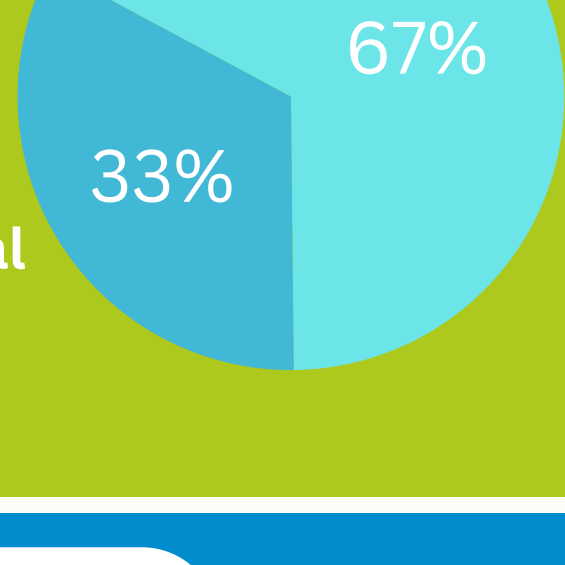


Other Degrees 8%

## Hiring Route

Of all professional CEOs out there, 67% were internally elevated while 33% were externally hired.

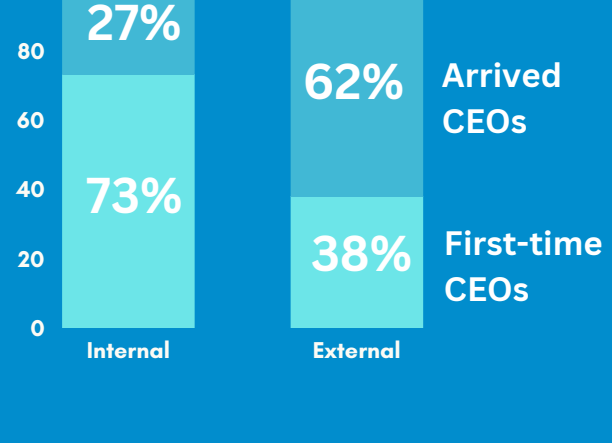
Internal Promotions



External Hires

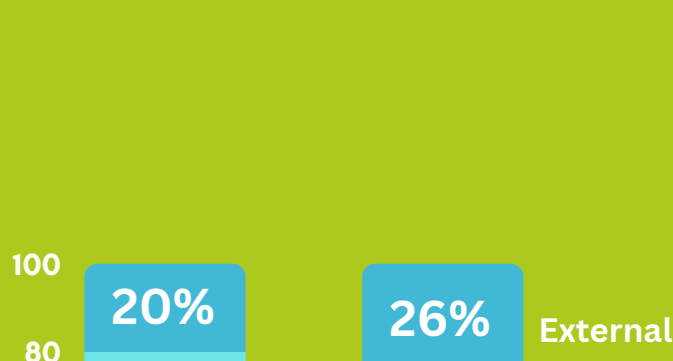
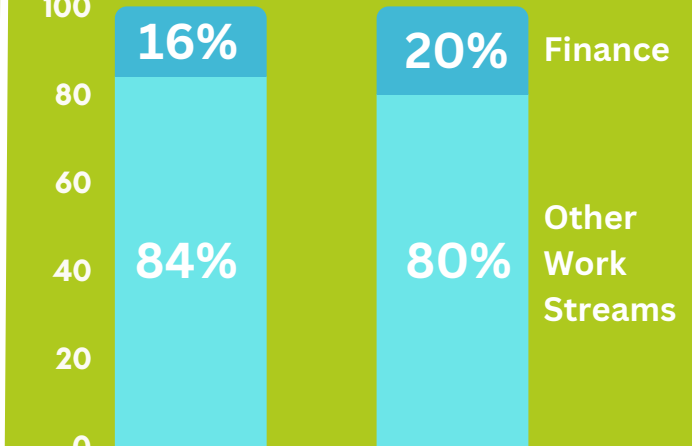
## First time vs Arrived CEOs

For someone looking to become a CEO for the first time, it is better to stay and make it to CEO in the current company - 73% of the internal elevations are first-timers, while only 38% of the external hires are first-time CEOs



## CFOs - for the CEO role

Compared to the historical average of 16%, the last 2 years saw 20% of CEOs coming from a finance background – a nod to the uptick in preference to promote CFOs to CEO role.



Companies seem to prefer CFOs for CEO role, not just when it comes to internal elevations, but even for external hires - 26% of the CEOs hired in last 2y were from CFO track.

