

Executive Perspectives on Top Risks - CAE Results

2023 & 2032

Key issues being discussed by Chief Audit Executives according to results from the latest Protiviti-NC State global survey

TOP 10 RISKS FOR 2023*	YOY change	TOP 10 RISKS FOR 2032*	YOY change
1. Economic conditions constrain growth opportunities	↑	1. Succession challenges; attract and retain top talent	↓
2. Anticipated increases in labor costs may affect opportunity to meet profitability targets	↑	2. Adoption of digital technologies requires new skills or significant efforts to upskill/reskill existing employees	↓
3. Succession challenges; attract and retain top talent	↑	3. Impact of regulatory environment on operations	↑
4. Cyber threats	↑	4. Cyber threats	↑
5. Uncertainty surrounding the viability of key suppliers, scarcity of supply or stable prices	↑	5. Third-party risks arising from reliance on outsourcing and strategic partners, vendor contracts, and other joint ventures	↑
6. Third-party risks arising from reliance on outsourcing and strategic partners, vendor contracts, and other joint ventures	↑	6. Inability to utilize data analytics and “big data” to achieve market intelligence	↑
7. Inability to utilize data analytics and “big data” to achieve market intelligence	↑	7. Rapid speed of disruptive innovation	↑
8. Ability to compete with “born digital” and other competitors	↑	8. Anticipated increases in labor costs may affect ability to meet profitability targets	↑
9. Impact of regulatory environment on operations	↑	9. Ability to compete with “born digital” and other competitors	↑
10. Adoption of digital technologies requires new skills or significant efforts to upskill/reskill existing employees	↓	10. Economic conditions constrain growth opportunities	↑

*Scores are based on a 10-point scale, with “10” representing that the risk issue will have an extensive impact on the organization.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS STUDY



Uncertainty abounds, triggering heightened risk concerns for executives and boards. Survey respondents rate the overall severity and magnitude of risks at the highest level we have observed in the 11 years this study has been conducted.



The risk landscape is changing but resistance to change persists. Leaders cannot afford to ignore the changing risk landscape, given new risks can emerge rapidly. The culture of their organizations should be prepared to adapt to disruptive change and facilitate escalation of market opportunities and risks to decision makers.



The economy is top of mind. There are significant concerns globally about the potential for persistent challenges related to inflation and growth.



Talent and technology concerns dominate the composition of top risks. The 10-year outlook reflects a mix of opportunities and risks relating to disruptive innovation, advancing technologies and human capital challenges. Executives and boards recognize the need to find the talent to realize fully the value proposition associated with new technologies and digital innovations and are prioritizing strategies around reskilling and upskilling existing employees to get it. They also are concerned about increases in labor costs impacting achievement of profitability goals, as well as evolving approaches to managing hybrid and remote work environments and continued shifts in the nature of work.



There are diverse risk perspectives across the C-suite and boardroom. There is noticeable variation among different leaders about what risks are most critical, highlighting the importance of engaging in conversations about the most significant risks for their organizations.



A long-term view of risks is vital in navigating the near term. As organizations manage the challenges 2023 brings, they should also prepare for the long term by addressing issues noted in this survey, including effectively transforming legacy IT infrastructures, emphasizing the customer experience, investing in future growth opportunities, ensuring privacy and security, and advancing capabilities to deploy advanced data analytics. A long-term outlook helps companies focus on where to invest to be more resilient for the unexpected and better prepared for the next phase of growth.



The results show that risk management, as a discipline, is becoming more critical for success, with executives and boards expressing an overall higher likelihood to invest in strengthening risk management in 2023.

Results are based on a survey of 129 Chief Audit Executives worldwide. The full survey report, *Executive Perspectives on Top Risks*, may be accessed at erm.ncsu.edu or protiviti.com/toprisks. It includes detailed breakdowns of the results by respondent role, organization size, industry, geography and other categories.

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