

## How to make IT careers attract CIOs of the future

Corporate IT Forum chairman John Harris on building up the UK's IT skills...

### Mentoring young tech talent

The first new approach for addressing skills that Harris and the CITF are exploring is the development of a mentoring programme for IT graduates.

The idea is that IT professionals "at the earlier parts of their career" hook up with senior professionals working for major companies or government departments separate from their employer.

This approach will provide younger IT professionals with experience of working in another company and give them access to the wealth of knowledge of senior people in a different environment.

**Harris added that the mentoring won't just...  
...benefit the people being mentored but the mentors themselves.**

"I'd love to mentor someone from another company in the early part of their career because I'd learn a couple of things. I'd learn first of all about another company, how they nurture talent, how that works. Also, you always learn more. You find out about how they're really using things like Twitter and Facebook to get value - and it's a different experience."

Harris also believes there should be little risk of people's heads being turned when they get an insight into another company because they should see the mentoring programme as a sign that their employers believe in them and value them enough to allow them to develop their skills. He admitted there will need to be rules because there is an element of risk attached to people working in other businesses.

"If you're really keen on development and learning, you'll see this as a positive," he said.

Harris is aiming to get the mentoring programme off the ground in 2011, starting with a few trials to see how viable and useful it could be before rolling it out further.



Corporate IT Forum chairman John Harris wants the organisation to play a bigger role in developing IT skills and promoting the industry to young people