



FTI CONSULTING'S CFO STRATEGIES:

2025 Global CFO Report

EXPERTS WITH IMPACT™

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This 6th edition of the FTI Consulting Global CFO Report provides key insights into the strategic priorities that are shaping the future of the Finance function. As enterprise transformation initiatives continue to accelerate CFOs are often leading the charge, driving operational improvements, adopting technology and upskilling talent to seize opportunities and manage risks in 2025 and beyond.

As we enter 2025, many CFOs worldwide are playing a critical role in steering their organizations through uncertainty and transformation. The CFO's role has shifted beyond traditional financial stewardship, becoming more strategic in navigating technological advancements, economic challenges and evolving business models. This year, 56% of surveyed CFOs are prioritizing business model optimization, underscoring the importance of adapting to market shifts and maintaining competitiveness in a fast-paced global economy.

Growth is central to the CFOs we heard from, with 72% of companies expecting revenue growth of 10% or more. Strategic investments in digital transformation, operational efficiencies and customer acquisition initiatives are fueling this optimism. Many CFOs are at the helm of these initiatives, leveraging technology and automation to scale operations and drive innovation. With 84% of responding CFOs identifying finance technology as a top focus area for 2025, artificial intelligence and automation is being used to enhance efficiency, streamline operations and present greater scalability across organizations.

Yet, challenges remain. Skills shortages and the complexity of adopting new technology are barriers to achieving full-scale transformation. CFOs must develop innovative approaches to talent acquisition and retention, ensuring their teams are equipped to support their ambitious growth strategies. As hybrid work models reshape workforce dynamics, the retention and development of talent have become critical to long-term success.

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2025 CFO Highlights and Observations



Revenue Growth Optimism

With 72% (down 3% from 2024) of CFOs expecting double-digit growth, confidence in the global economic recovery is still strong. CFOs are focusing on customer acquisition, customer retention and expansion into new markets. Additionally, business model innovation is a priority to stay agile and competitive in dynamic markets.



Improving Financial Forecasting

85% of CFOs are enhancing forecasting accuracy to better navigate uncertainty and optimize capital allocation. Rolling forecasts and scenario planning are increasingly important as CFOs look to manage risks, identify growth opportunities and improve their decision-making.



Digital Finance Transformation

86% of CFOs are investing in finance technology, artificial intelligence and automation, with a significant focus on enhancing forecasting accuracy and data-driven decision-making. Despite these efforts, 23% of CFOs report reduced focus on digital transformation initiatives compared to last year due to budget constraints and talent shortages in key technology areas.



CFO Tenure

42% of CFOs believe the average tenure for a CFO is over five years. This belief (up 5% from 2024) could be due to a number of factors, including stabilizing market conditions, increased focus on long-term strategy or CFOs staying put for advancement to CEO.



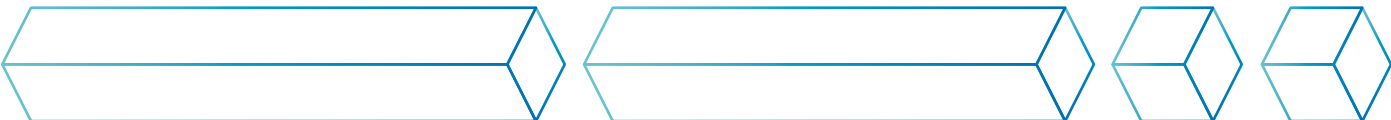
Finance Talent Retention and Acquisition

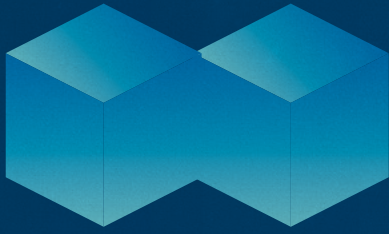
Talent retention and acquisition remain critical focuses for CFOs amidst a continuing shortage of finance and accounting talent. In 2025, nearly a quarter (24%, up 3% from 2024) of CFOs expressed concerns about talent shortages. This highlights the pressing need for effective strategies in this area, especially as 36% prioritize talent acquisition.



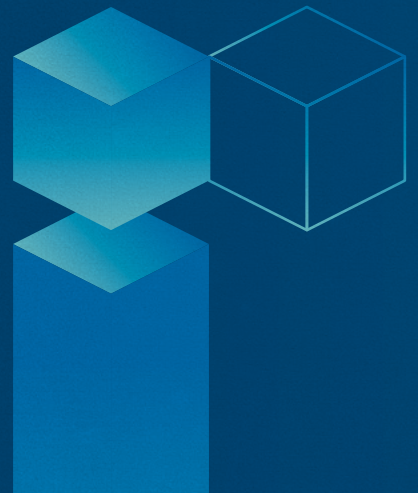
Outsourcing on the Rise

Outsourcing finance functions has increased, with overall outsourced functions increasing by 11% from 2024 to 2025. Notably, 40% are now outsourcing accounts payable, reflecting a shift toward optimizing core competencies. With 66% of CFOs prioritizing strategic planning, outsourcing provides access to expertise and advanced technologies, enhancing operational efficiency and organizational agility.





2025 CFO Highlights and Observations Deep Dive





Revenue Growth Optimism

Revenue growth optimism among CFOs remains strong as we look toward 2025, with 72% of CFOs projecting double-digit revenue growth for 2025. While this is slightly down from 75% last year, there's still widespread confidence in the ability of businesses to expand. This modest decline likely reflects a growing awareness of global economic pressures, including inflation and market volatility. However, this shows a shift toward more measured growth expectations rather than a decline in overall confidence. CFOs are responding to evolving market conditions with strategic caution, but their outlook remains largely positive.

Mid-market firms, particularly those with revenues between \$100M and \$1B, are adjusting their expectations slightly, with 67.5% of CFOs forecasting double-digit growth for 2025, down from 76% in 2024. This decrease may stem from challenges such as rising costs, increased competition and talent shortages. Despite these headwinds, mid-market firms continue to see growth opportunities, particularly where they have made strategic investments in digital transformation and operational improvements. These investments have enabled them to navigate uncertainty with greater resilience, allowing them to focus on long-term growth rather than short-term gains.

Larger firms, especially those with revenues exceeding \$5 billion, remain highly optimistic about their growth prospects. Of note, 77% of CFOs in this group are projecting double-digit growth for 2025, driven by improvements in global supply chains and favorable market conditions. However, even among larger firms, there are areas of caution. For instance, 52% of CFOs in North America cite talent retention as a key challenge, a concern that is echoed across other regions. The competitive labor market and rising costs associated with securing top talent are constraining growth efforts. Additionally, 83% of CFOs in EMEA indicated that improving the accuracy of their financial forecasting is a top priority, a reflection of the economic uncertainty that has made predicting financial outcomes more difficult. This focus on enhancing forecasting capabilities shows that while [these?] CFOs are confident, they are also aware of the risks associated with market volatility and are making moves to mitigate them.

These regional dynamics underscore the broader challenges that CFOs face globally but also highlight the strategic focus they are placing on long-term success. For instance, despite the challenges, 66% of CFOs globally identified strategic planning as a top priority for 2025, a clear indication that firms are not retreating but are instead preparing for sustainable growth. This emphasis on strategy, coupled with the ongoing investments in digital transformation and talent, shows that CFOs remain committed to growth, even in a more complex and uncertain business environment.

While growth projections for 2025 have softened slightly, CFOs across all regions remain optimistic about their ability to achieve meaningful expansion. Their focus on strategic planning, operational efficiency and talent management will be critical to realizing these growth ambitions. For senior finance leaders, this outlook suggests a period of cautious optimism, where adaptability and resilience will be the foundation for sustained success in the year ahead.

RECOMMENDATIONS:



Accelerate Digital Transformation for Scalability:

CFOs should focus on enhancing their digital infrastructure to drive operational efficiency and scale effectively. Leveraging advanced financial technologies such as AI-driven forecasting and automation will not only improve real-time decision-making but also reduce manual processes. By investing in tools that enhance agility, CFOs can better navigate the uncertainties ahead and maintain growth trajectories even amid external pressures.



Refine Talent Strategies to Address Workforce Challenges:

Talent retention and acquisition remain critical factors for supporting growth. CFOs should consider adopting more dynamic workforce strategies, including offering flexible work arrangements, improving employee engagement and creating upskilling programs to build internal capabilities. By focusing on long-term talent development, companies can ensure they have the workforce in place to support strategic growth initiatives and meet evolving business demands.



Strengthen Financial Forecasting and Risk Management:

Enhancing forecasting capabilities is essential for navigating market volatility. CFOs should integrate more robust scenario planning and data analytics into their forecasting processes to anticipate market shifts and manage risks proactively. This will allow finance leaders to create more accurate financial models and respond quickly to economic uncertainties, ensuring that growth objectives are met while minimizing potential disruptions.



Improved Financial Forecasting

The data reveals that 85% of CFOs identify forecasting accuracy as a primary area needing improvement, a figure nearly identical to the results from 2024. This persistent emphasis on improving forecasting capabilities underscores a collective recognition of the critical role that accurate forecasting plays in navigating uncertainty and enabling business growth.

Accurate forecasting is vital for effective financial management, enabling organizations to anticipate market shifts and allocate resources strategically. The survey indicates that 72% of CFOs view high inflation as a top concern, alongside challenges such as supply chain disruptions (60%) and rising competitive pressures (70%). The convergence of these factors suggests a broader economic environment characterized by volatility. High inflation can erode purchasing power, complicating revenue predictions and cost structures. Similarly, supply chain disruptions can lead to unforeseen costs and delays, emphasizing the need for adaptable forecasting models that can quickly respond to changing conditions. This environment highlights the necessity for adopting advanced forecasting methodologies that leverage real-time data and predictive analytics to provide CFOs with actionable insights.

The commitment to enhance forecasting accuracy has remained steadfast, with 57% of CFOs prioritizing this goal in 2025, similar to 2024 responses. Additionally, 79% of CFOs plan to invest in financial planning and analysis (“FP&A”) software upgrades in 2025, marking a 7% increase from the previous year. This uptick reflects a broader understanding that enhancing forecasting accuracy and enabling more informed decision-making relies on sophisticated tools capable of integrating data from diverse sources.

The integration of AI and data analytics into forecasting processes presents a transformative opportunity for CFOs, as well. Our survey indicates that 87% of CFOs plan to use AI tools or have plans to do so within the next 12 months. This significant shift towards technology adoption illustrates a commitment to leveraging innovative solutions that can enhance predictive capabilities.

However, improving forecasting accuracy is not solely the responsibility of the finance function; it requires collaboration across departments. CFOs must actively engage with operational leaders to gather insights that inform more accurate forecasts. The survey highlights that 80% of CFOs believe their finance functions can improve in areas such as business partnering, underscoring the importance of cross-functional collaboration. By leveraging diverse perspectives and expertise, organizations can create more holistic forecasts that consider multiple facets of the business.

RECOMMENDATIONS:



Prioritize Advanced FP&A Technology Investments:

CFOs should invest in advanced FP&A tools (e.g., EPM, BI, AI, etc.) that integrate real-time data and predictive analytics and that additionally automate processes while facilitating sophisticated scenario modeling. These investments empower finance teams to produce accurate forecasts, swiftly adapt to market fluctuations and deliver actionable insights. Equally important is comprehensive training to ensure seamless integration and maximize the potential of these tools.



Enhance Cross-Departmental Collaboration:

Establishing structured ways to collaborate between finance and operational teams is imperative. Regular cross-functional meetings should be instituted to align forecasting with operational realities, allowing Finance to incorporate diverse perspectives that enrich predictive accuracy. Cultivating a collaborative culture will enhance communication regarding market dynamics and challenges, ensuring that forecasting models align with the organization’s overarching strategy.



Harness AI and Data Analytics for Enhanced Predictive Insights:

AI and machine learning enable efficient analysis of large datasets, identifying trends and generating forecasts that incorporate external variables. It is critical to pair these innovations with robust data governance to ensure data integrity. Continuous assessment of AI-driven forecasts will allow CFOs to refine their models and maintain a competitive advantage.



Digital Finance Transformation

CFOs are particularly focused on digital finance transformation, with 84% prioritizing finance technology and automation to streamline processes. This trend underscores the continued recognition that robust digital infrastructure is essential to enhance decision-making processes and improving operational efficiency. Factors driving this shift include the need to respond swiftly to market changes, rising stakeholder expectations for speed, transparency and accountability, and the competitive pressure to maintain profitability.

The increasing complexity of financial data and reporting requirements amplifies the demand for technological solutions, as demonstrated by 79% of CFOs planning to invest in FP&A software upgrades in 2025, a 7% increase from 2024. These investments signal a proactive approach to integrating advanced financial technologies that drive overall performance and help organizations better leverage data for strategic insights.

However, the journey toward digital transformation comes with challenges. Many CFOs cite outdated technology and tools as significant barriers, with 79% indicating that this issue hampers their finance functions. Legacy systems can be costly to maintain and often lack the agility needed to adapt to new market demands. Additionally, 82% of CFOs believe complex and manual processes are hindering their finance function (up 4% from 2024), affecting efficiency and preventing their organizations from fully capitalizing on the benefits of digital solutions. The reluctance to abandon established processes and systems can stem from a fear of disruption and a lack of resources to facilitate smooth transitions. To address these hurdles, it is crucial to implement change management strategies and invest in workforce training to equip teams with the necessary skills.

A notable trend in this digital transformation is the increasing integration of AI tools into finance functions. 87% of CFOs plan to utilize AI within the next 12 months, reflecting a strong commitment to harness advanced technologies. The rise of AI can be attributed to its ability to analyze vast amounts of data quickly and accurately, providing insights that can drive decision-making. Among the various AI platforms, ChatGPT stands out as a widely used tool, with 74% of CFOs currently leveraging it, primarily to assist with decision-making and further analyze data.

RECOMMENDATIONS:



Prioritize Technology:

CFOs should upgrade outdated financial systems and adopt technologies that facilitate real-time data analysis and enhance operational efficiency. Partnering with vendors that provide robust support and training will also ensure that finance teams can effectively leverage new tools and maximize their potential.



Adopt Comprehensive Change Management Frameworks:

Effective digital transformation requires a well-defined change management strategy that fosters stakeholder buy-in and addresses potential resistance. CFOs should articulate a clear vision for transformation and provide the necessary resources and training to empower finance teams. Creating an inclusive culture that embraces innovation and actively solicits feedback will enhance adaptability and responsiveness throughout the transformation process.



Implement AI and Data Analytics:

AI-driven finance solutions bring the promise of automating tasks, improving data analysis and forecasting, strengthening risk management and enabling more informed decision-making. To take advantage of these benefits, CFOs should identify high-impact use cases, build capabilities and infrastructure and foster team expertise. They also need to set the tone at the top by communicating the benefits clearly to the finance team, addressing concerns about job impacts.



CFO Tenure

In 2025, 54% of CFOs (down 2% from 2024) believe the average tenure of a CFO is 3 to 5 years within their organizations. CFOs in this tenure bracket often possess the necessary institutional knowledge and experience to navigate ongoing financial challenges effectively. They have likely developed a deep understanding of the company's operational intricacies and can leverage this knowledge to optimize financial performance. This slight decline may suggest a stabilization in the CFO turnover trend, as 42% of CFOs believe the average tenure for a CFO is now 5 years or more at a single organization, up 5% from 2024, indicating CFOs seem to be staying with their organizations longer.

This shift towards longer-term CFO leadership potentially suggests that they are valued for their deep understanding of the business and their ability to drive strategic, enterprise-wide initiatives. These longer-tenured CFOs often position themselves as key players in steering transformational change within their organizations, aligning financial strategies with broader corporate objectives.

Additionally, CFOs with longer tenures at a single organization are often prime candidates for CEO roles. Their extensive experience within the organization and comprehensive understanding of its financial and operational dynamics uniquely positions them to lead at the highest level. As organizations evolve, the potential for CFOs to transition into CEO positions is increasingly recognized as a strategic advantage, particularly in times of disruption when continuity and experienced leadership are paramount.

The disparity between short-term and long-term tenure may also reflect broader trends within the corporate environment. The rising percentage of CFOs with longer tenures suggests a shift towards valuing leaders who can provide continuity and foster a proactive approach to emerging challenges. These CFOs are not only focused on immediate financial performance but are also invested in long-term planning and strategic foresight, which is essential for sustainable growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS:



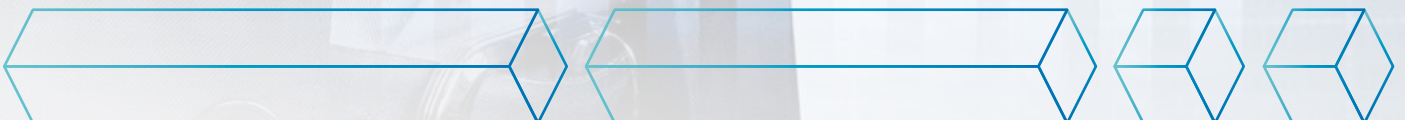
Invest in Strategic Leadership Development

CFOs should pursue development initiatives that enhance strategic thinking, change management and enterprise leadership competencies. Often derived from insights of current CFO, CEO, and board members, these development programs can help leaders with development and job satisfaction.



Establish Succession Planning:

Organizations that identify the CFO as a potential successor to the CEO should develop a structured succession planning framework specifically for the CFO role by identifying and nurturing high-potential candidates within the finance team. This proactive approach minimizes turnover and ensures continuity in strategic leadership, fostering a culture of mentorship and professional growth that reinforces the significance of long-term leadership in finance.



Finance Talent Acquisition and Retention

Talent retention and acquisition has emerged as a pivotal focus for CFOs. One of the most striking trends is the increasing concern over talent shortages, with nearly a quarter (24%) of CFOs highlighting this issue in 2025, up 3% the previous year. This trend can be attributed to several factors, including the growing complexity of the finance function and the rapid advancement of technology, which requires a workforce that possesses both specialized skills and adaptability. As businesses embrace digital transformation and automation, the demand for finance professionals who can navigate these changes has increased, exacerbating the existing talent gap.

Interestingly, in response to these challenges there has been a slight decrease in the focus on training and upskilling current employees, with only 14% of CFOs citing this as a top concern in 2025, down from 18% in 2024. This decline may not necessarily indicate a diminished recognition of the need for employee development, but it could reflect improved conditions within organizations or shifting priorities among CFOs. Many organizations may now prioritize other pressing issues, such as technological integration or financial strategy over training initiatives, viewing them as foundational and, therefore, less urgent.

The focus on talent acquisition remains strong, with over a third (36%) of CFOs prioritizing this aspect in 2025. This emphasis reflects a proactive approach to building resilient finance teams with diverse skill sets and experiences that can foster innovation and help drive growth. Organizations that successfully integrate talent acquisition with a robust retention strategy will position themselves advantageously in a competitive market.

Retention has also emerged as a recurring theme in the CFO agenda, with nearly one-fifth of respondents consistently expressing concerns regarding talent retention across both years. This consistency suggests that while organizations may find success in attracting new talent, the need to cultivate an environment where employees feel valued and supported is equally important. The hybrid work model, now favored by 61% of CFOs (over strictly remote 10% or full-time office 29%), plays a vital role in this regard. By

offering flexible work arrangements, organizations can enhance job satisfaction, allowing employees to balance their professional and personal lives more effectively. This flexibility is not just a trend; it represents a fundamental shift in workplace culture, where employee well-being is prioritized as a key component of retention strategies.

Rising competitive pressures, identified by 70% of CFOs as a significant concern in 2025, have profound implications for talent acquisition and retention strategies. In a market characterized by volatility and rapid change, organizations are not only competing for customers but also for the best talent. The need for skilled finance professionals who can provide strategic insights and drive performance is paramount as companies face intensified competition. High turnover rates can disrupt organizational continuity and hinder performance, amplifying the challenges of finding qualified replacements. Therefore, retaining existing talent is not merely a matter of keeping skilled professionals; it is essential for maintaining operational efficiency and achieving strategic objectives. Organizations that fail to prioritize employee engagement risk losing their competitive edge as skilled professionals seek opportunities in companies that offer better support and development.

RECOMMENDATIONS:



Develop a Comprehensive Talent Strategy:

Organizations should design a tailored talent acquisition and retention strategy that reflects the specialized nature of the finance function. This involves targeting professionals with expertise in areas like FP&A, treasury, tax, and audit, while also investing in tools that streamline recruitment for high-demand roles like data analysts and AI specialists. To ensure a smooth transition into the organization, robust onboarding processes should focus on role-specific training, such as mastering finance technology platforms or understanding regulatory compliance frameworks. Additionally, mentorship programs should pair new hires with seasoned finance leaders to foster knowledge transfer and career growth. A transparent career progression framework should highlight pathways for advancement into leadership roles such as Finance Controller or CFO, addressing talent shortages and boosting employee loyalty.



Embrace Flexible Work Arrangements:

Recognizing the unique demands of finance roles, organizations should prioritize flexible work arrangements, such as remote options during non-critical reporting cycles or compressed workweeks during month-end and quarter-end closes. These arrangements can help finance professionals manage the high-pressure demands of activities like financial reporting, forecasting and audits without sacrificing work-life balance. To support remote finance teams, companies should invest in collaborative technologies like cloud-based ERP systems and secure data-sharing platforms, ensuring efficiency and compliance. A culture of trust and accountability, reinforced through regular virtual check-ins and clear performance metrics, will not only enhance engagement but also position the organization as an attractive workplace for top-tier finance talent.



Invest in Development and Well-Being:

CFOs should routinely assess the skillsets of their teams, identifying gaps in critical areas like advanced analytics, AI-driven forecasting, and regulatory compliance. Customized training programs should focus on equipping finance professionals with emerging skills, such as leveraging AI tools for predictive modeling or mastering integrated financial planning platforms. To complement these technical upskilling initiatives, organizations should prioritize holistic well-being programs tailored to the finance workforce, addressing the mental and physical toll of intense deadlines and cyclical reporting demands. Initiatives like mindfulness workshops during reporting seasons, financial wellness programs for employees, and structured time-off policies can boost morale and retention. By aligning development opportunities with well-being, organizations can build a resilient finance function capable of driving sustained performance.



Outsourcing on the Rise

The decision to expand the scope of back-office outsourcing, particularly in finance, has emerged as a key trend, with the overall percentage of outsourced functions increasing by over 11% from 2024 to 2025. This increase highlights the growing reliance on external capabilities as CFOs seek to enhance operational efficiency, reduce costs and improve access to both technology and skills, without sacrificing capacity.

Survey data reveals that 40% of CFOs are now outsourcing accounts payable in 2025, a notable increase from 30% in 2024. This trend is indicative of a broader strategy aimed at partnering for the execution of transactional activities while investing internally in higher end, knowledge-based processes and hard-to-find technical skills. In 2025, 66% of CFOs expressed a keen interest in allocating more time to strategic planning, a marked rise from just 36% in 2024. Certain routine tasks can be successfully transitioned to and executed by outsourcing providers with global delivery capabilities enabling CFOs to allocate resources where it matters, driving both short- and long-term organizational value.

As the persistent shortage of finance talent remains a pressing concern, outsourcing often presents a viable solution, offering access to skilled professionals, often at a fraction of the cost of full-time hires. Additionally, the integration of automated workflows, platforms and analytics by outsourcing providers enhances the effectiveness of outsourced functions beyond what could be typically achieved by the company alone, especially considering the talent challenges noted in the previous section.

In our experience, over half of finance and accounting activities are suitable for outsourcing, and CFOs are increasingly relying on third parties for delivery. Our data indicates that cash management (37%) and credit & collection (35%) outsourcing are also gaining traction. These processes often benefit from technology and expertise that many organizations lack internally. Outsourcing cash management also allows CFOs to benefit from advanced tools and analytics provided by specialized firms, which can improve cash flow forecasting and reduce operational risks. Similarly, outsourcing credit & collection processes helps organizations streamline processes, enhance customer relationships and ultimately improve cash recovery rates.

Looking ahead, the trend towards outsourcing finance and other back-office functions is poised to continue as CFOs seek to bolster their organizations' ability to deliver high-quality service at an optimized cost.

RECOMMENDATIONS:



Quantify Strategic Outsourcing Value:

CFOs should conduct a comprehensive assessment to understand the potential strategic and financial impact of outsourcing on their organizations, particularly in the areas of finance, procurement, technology and human resources. Organizations which have already successfully outsourced certain activities should assess the opportunity to expand or optimize that scope to enhance value.



Invest in or Partner for Technology-Driven Solutions:

Given the increasing value of advanced financial technologies, CFOs should prioritize investments in integrated software solutions or select an outsourcing partner that can provide those technologies and/or services. This technological enhancement not only supports the efficiency and effectiveness of outsourced processes but also fortifies the organization's overall financial management capabilities.

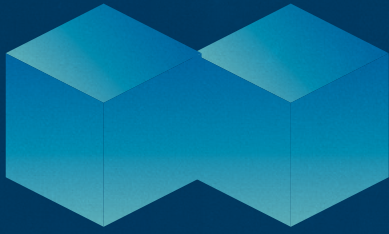


Implement/Refine your Service Level Agreements (“SLAs”):

CFOs should establish and manage to clear, contractual SLAs to assess and govern the effectiveness of outsourced functions. By implementing SLAs that align with current organizational objectives, CFOs can ensure that outsourcing relationships deliver the expected value and that the objectives of the two organizations are aligned. Additionally, a regular governance cadence with the outsourcing provider will provide insights into areas for improvement and help maintain accountability for both sides, ensuring that the outsourcing provider is aligned to the overall financial and business strategy.



Regional Insights





APAC Highlights & Recommendations

For APAC CFOs, improving working capital efficiency remains a key priority, with 82% indicating it as an area for enhancement. Leveraging digital tools for real-time monitoring of accounts receivable and payable can optimize cash cycles and strengthen liquidity management, critical for navigating regional economic variability.

Talent retention is also a pressing concern, with 71% of APAC CFOs facing challenges in retaining skilled finance professionals. Focusing on employee engagement initiatives, competitive compensation packages and flexible work arrangements can help maintain a strong finance talent pool and reduce turnover, ensuring continuity in finance operations.

Additionally, accelerating digital transformation is vital, as 69% of CFOs in the region look to modernize finance processes. Investing in automation and data analytics can streamline workflows and improve data-driven decision-making, allowing finance teams to shift their focus from manual tasks to strategic growth initiatives, thus driving overall business performance.



Top 3 CFO Strategic Priorities:

56%

Business Model
Optimization¹

46%

Cybersecurity

43%

Customer Acquisition
and Retention

Top 3 Activities Monopolizing CFOs' Time:

46%

Capital Structure

38%

Management
Reporting

37%

Cash Flow

Top 3 CFO Challenges:

78%

Outdated Business
Model

73%

Supply Chain
Disruption

72%

Technology
Obsolescence

EMEA Highlights & Recommendations

For EMEA CFOs, enhancing forecasting accuracy is a strategic imperative, with 83% identifying it as a key area for improvement. Leveraging AI-driven forecasting tools can significantly reduce time spent on manual processes, allowing finance teams to focus on high-impact activities. This shift is crucial, as 52% of EMEA finance leaders currently report being consumed by time-intensive forecasting efforts. Automating these processes not only increases precision but also strengthens the finance function's ability to respond swiftly to market changes.

Accelerating finance technology adoption remains a top priority, with 67% of EMEA CFOs acknowledging the need to advance digital capabilities. Implementing cloud-based platforms and integrating real-time data analytics can streamline operations, improve decision-making and drive financial agility.

Manual processes still dominate the landscape, with 45% of CFOs indicating underutilization of automation. Addressing this gap presents an opportunity to optimize workflows, cut costs and redirect resources to strategic initiatives, positioning the finance function as a driver of business growth and innovation.



Top 3 CFO Strategic Priorities:

48%

Business Model
Optimization

44%

Cybersecurity

43%

New Markets and
Geographies

Top 3 Activities Monopolizing CFOs' Time:

63%

Cost Management
Strategies

33%

Reporting and
Analytics

28%

ESG
Strategy/Reporting

Top 3 CFO Challenges:

70%

Geopolitical Instability

66%

Energy Cost Volatility

64%

Inflation

North America Highlights & Recommendations

For North American CFOs, optimizing cash flow management remains a crucial focus, with 78% citing it as a priority. Leveraging predictive analytics and automated cash flow forecasting tools can improve visibility, enabling proactive decision-making. Addressing this area is essential for mitigating financial risks and maintaining adequate liquidity amid economic uncertainty.

Strengthening cybersecurity measures is another key concern, with 62% of CFOs expressing worry over potential threats. Enhancing cyber resilience through advanced threat detection systems and frequent security audits can protect financial data and maintain trust among stakeholders.

Additionally, driving digital transformation across finance operations is gaining momentum. Nearly 75% of North American CFOs are actively seeking to accelerate automation and integrate cutting-edge technologies, such as AI and blockchain, to streamline workflows and enhance data accuracy. Investing in digital tools not only boosts efficiency but also positions the finance function to deliver deeper insights and drive strategic growth initiatives across the organization.



Top 3 CFO Strategic Priorities:

55%

Business Model
Optimization

50%

Cybersecurity

43%

Technology Adoption
or Optimization

Top 3 Activities Monopolizing CFOs' Time:

37%

Financial Planning &
Analysis

36%

Management
Reporting

37%

Strategic
Planning

Top 3 CFO Challenges:

75%

Cyber Attacks

74%

High Inflation

73%

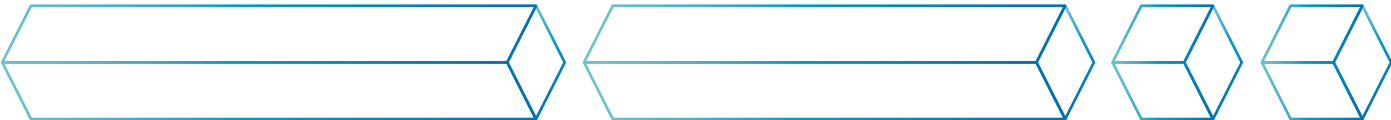
Rise in Cost of Capital /
Interest Rates

Conclusion

As we enter 2025, CFOs are positioned at the forefront of organizational transformation, driving strategic initiatives that will shape the future of their businesses. The evolving role of the CFO is a pivotal force in navigating economic uncertainty, fostering innovation and ensuring long-term growth.

This FTI Consulting report underscores the critical focus areas for CFOs, from optimizing business models to embracing digital transformation. The shift toward automation and advanced finance technologies is unlocking new levels of operational efficiency and scalability, positioning organizations to capitalize on market opportunities. At the same time, the ongoing battle to attract and retain top-tier finance talent remains a pressing challenge, requiring innovative approaches that go beyond traditional methods. The use of outsourcing has proven effective in streamlining operations and driving considerable cost savings.

Looking ahead, CFOs must continue to deliver value to their organizations by focusing on profitable revenue growth at optimized costs. CFOs will be instrumental in shaping their organizations’ ability to thrive in a rapidly evolving economic environment, as well. Leading CFOs will demonstrate that they have the visionary leadership to navigate the complexities of the future and can drive meaningful change in 2025 and beyond.



About The Survey

In July of 2024, FTI Consulting in conjunction with CFO Dive conducted a survey of senior finance executives in North America, Asia, Europe, Australia the Middle East/Africa. A total of 655 completed responses were collected from North America, EMEA and APAC.

Respondents were senior finance executives who were likely to have strategic responsibilities within their companies and a wide purview of the challenges and opportunities their companies will be facing over the coming year. Over 87% held the title of either CFO, VP of Finance, Chief Accounting Officer, or Director of Finance. The remainder held the title of controller, treasurer, or internal auditor.

The greatest number of total responses (63%) represented companies with annual global revenues over USD 1 billion. Therefore, the high-level results will be slightly skewed towards companies within that range. The remainder originated from companies between USD 100 million to USD 1 billion (37%). The responses came from 21 different sectors (including other).

The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and not necessarily the views of FTI Consulting, Inc., its management, its subsidiaries, its affiliates, or its other professionals.

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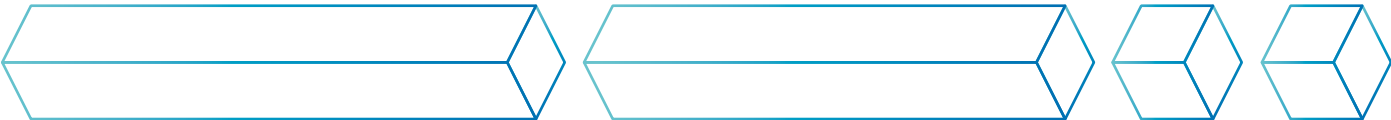


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