



# 2024 Corporate Finance Report: CPAs in the C-Suite

Most Wanted Competencies  
for Finance Leaders



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# Executive Summary

We asked 320 hiring managers – including CEOs, chief human resource officers, and executive recruiters – for their opinion on the most important competencies for senior finance leaders. Our findings serve as a crucial guide for CPAs who want to ascend to senior finance roles, particularly in light of the evolving expectations and responsibilities of CFOs.

**Hiring managers for the CFO position tell us opportunities do exist for CPAs to take the next steps:**

- 1. CPAs Remain Valuable, but Must Evolve:** Despite a decline in the percentage of S&P 1000 CFOs who are licensed CPAs, our research indicates that CPAs are highly valued for CFO roles. However, today's CFOs must possess a broad skill set – including strategic planning, risk management, and technology oversight – that goes beyond traditional financial reporting and compliance.
- 2. Forward-Looking Financial Acumen:** The ability to manage a company's future finances is paramount. Competencies such as capital management, financial forecasting, and cash flow management are critical. CFOs must not only report past results but also strategize for future growth and stability.
- 3. Leadership and Strategy Are Essential:** Effective CFOs must excel in leadership, strategic and critical thinking, and the ability to build and lead high-performing teams. These abilities are no longer considered soft skills; they are essential competencies for modern CFOs.
- 4. Emotional Intelligence:** While ranked lowest in priority, emotional intelligence remains a necessary skill for effective leadership. It aids in building relationships, managing teams, and making balanced decisions.
- 5. Industry-Specific Competencies:** Different industries demand unique skills from their CFOs. High-growth companies require battle-tested financial management and risk mitigation strategies, while nonprofits need expertise in managing unpredictable funding and limited resources.

While CPA credentials provide a strong foundation, aspiring CFOs must cultivate a diverse set of competencies to meet the dynamic demands of today's financial leadership roles. Strategic planning, advanced financial acumen, leadership, and adaptability are critical for those looking to secure a seat at the executive table.

# Introduction

Just 43% of S&P 1000 CFOs were licensed CPAs in 2022, down from 55% in 2012. The questions this raises are more nuanced than just “Do CPAs still have a seat at the executive leadership table?”

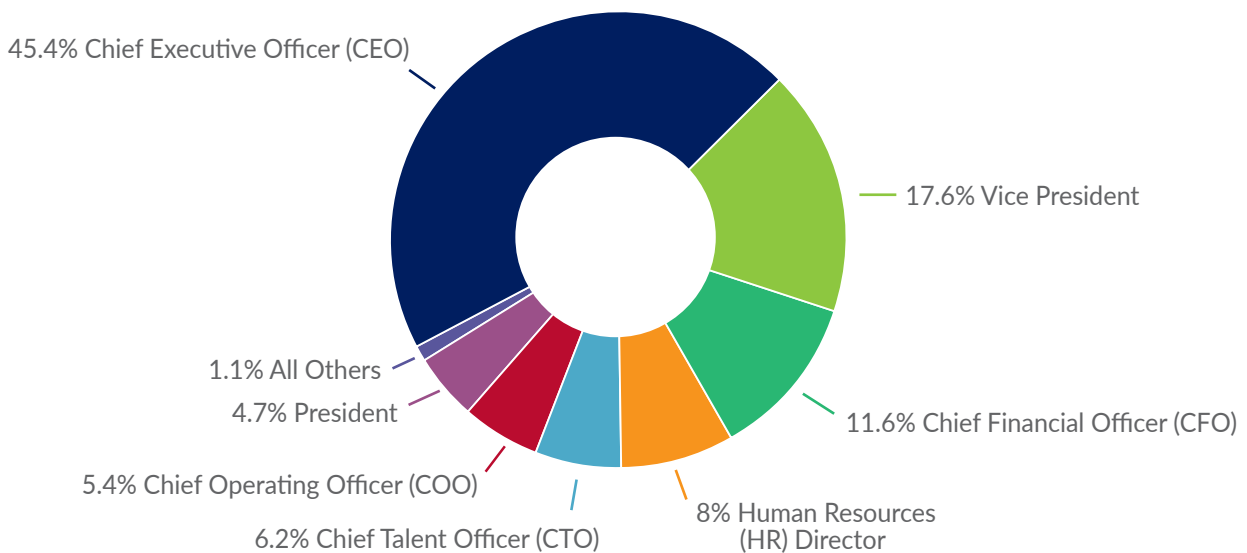
- Are the skills and training of a CPA still valued in a CFO candidate?
- Are the skills of a candidate with a Master of Business Administration (MBA) valued more?

- What can you do to be better prepared and differentiate yourself as you apply for a CFO or financial executive position?

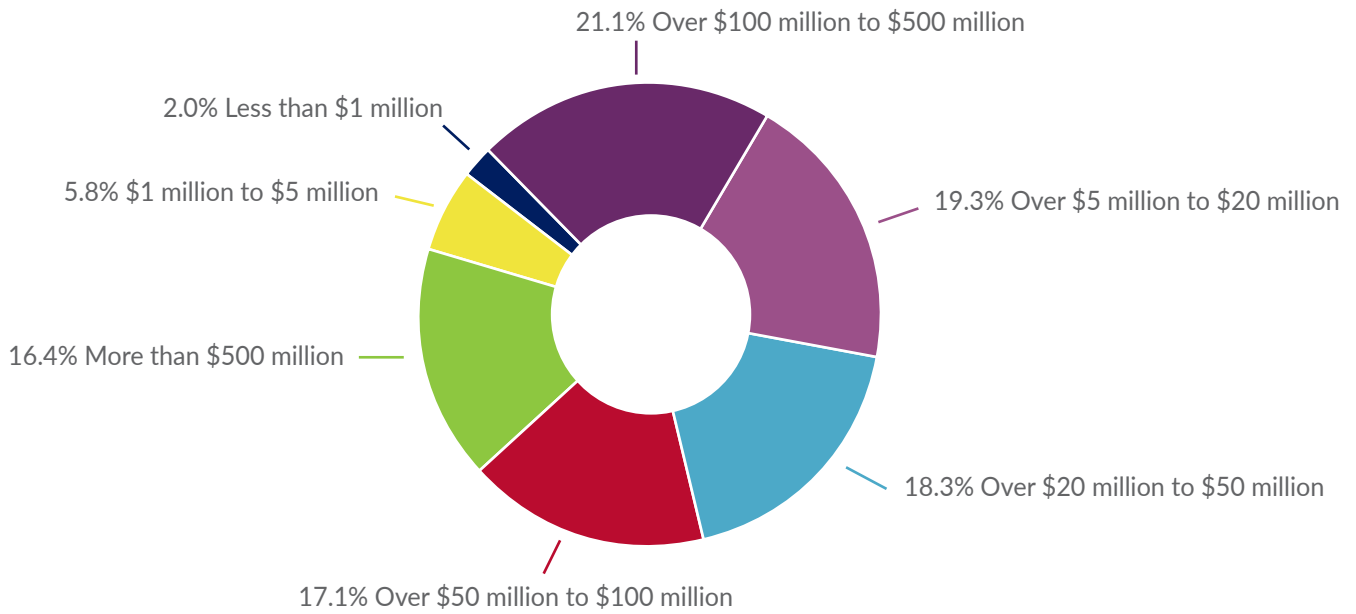
- How can you get more finance chief interviews?

To answer these and other relevant questions and to provide our members with the most meaningful data and insights, we surveyed more than 320 CEOs, talent executives, and other senior executives across the United States – those who actually hire CFOs – about what they desire most in CFO candidates.

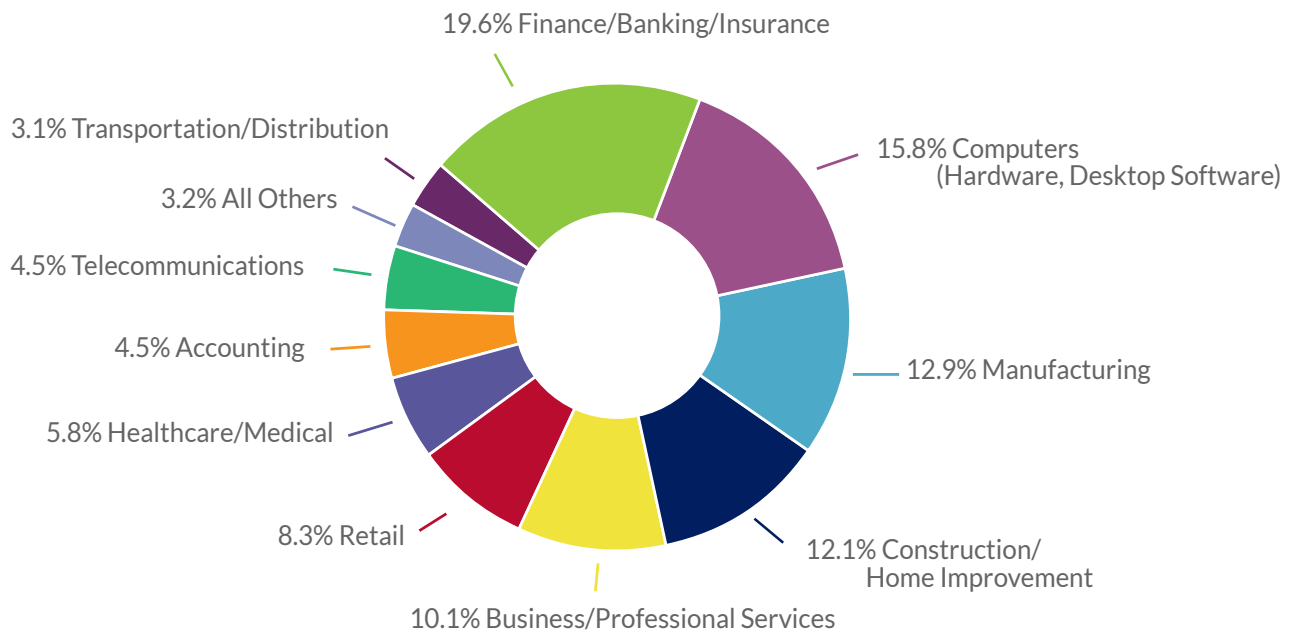
## Hiring Executives Demographics



## Annual Revenue of Represented Companies (range is \$5 million to over \$500 million)



## Industries Represented



Participants ranked over 80 competencies (see chart on page 18) that they look for when hiring a CFO.

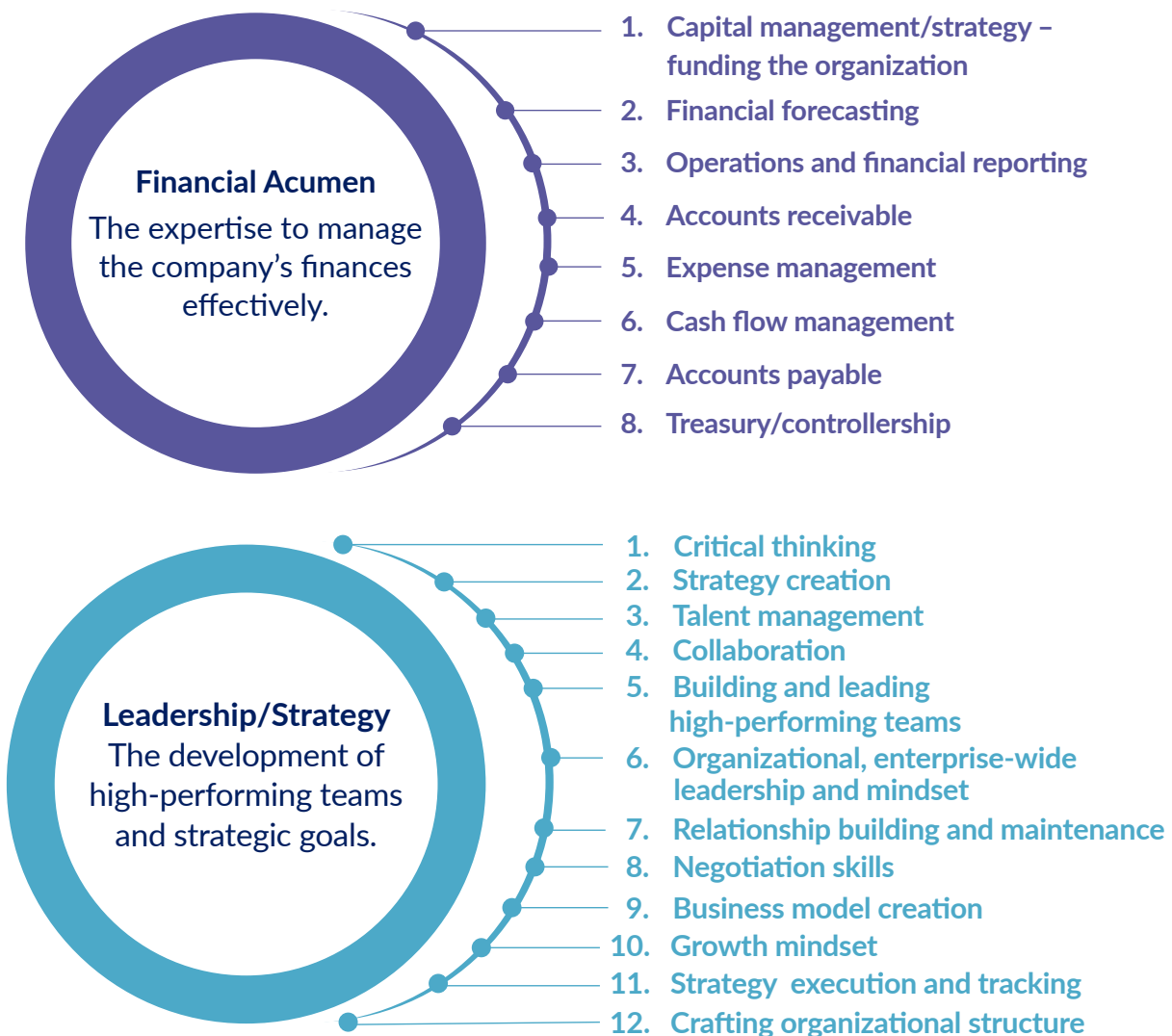
We first asked them to rank higher-order buckets of skills, which we called general competencies. Then, we asked them to rank sub-competencies within their top three general competencies. This gave us a unique look at the high-level and specific attributes that hiring managers are seeking.

We also analyzed the open-ended responses on why participants chose specific competencies as most important for the CFO role. In this report, we have pulled out the most important competencies and sub-competencies according to all of our participants and have associated them with key findings to better prepare aspiring CFOs on their journey.

What can you do to be better prepared and differentiate yourself as you pursue a CFO or financial executive position?

## General Ranking of CFO Competencies

General competencies are listed in order of desirability, and sub-competencies are listed in order within their general competency. General competencies are in the center, with sub-competencies numbered around them.





### Compliance and Regulatory Knowledge

Ensuring organizational adherence to laws, regulations, and

1. Financial reporting compliance
2. Tax compliance
3. GAAP compliance
4. Ethics and integrity
5. Internal audit oversight
6. Regulatory compliance
7. Contract compliance
8. Environmental, social, and (ESG) compliance



### Technology and Analytics

Data-driven decision-making and cutting-edge technology proficiency.

1. Advanced data analysis ability
2. Data-driven decision-making
3. Adaptable to new technologies
4. Data privacy/security
5. Early adoption of new technology
6. Optimize company processes
7. Product/customer profitability analysis
8. AI skills and openness to adoption of AI
9. Compelling narrative creation for data
10. Data mining
11. Performance metrics/KPI analysis
12. Managing technology teams and projects
13. Robotic process automation



### Industry Specific Knowledge

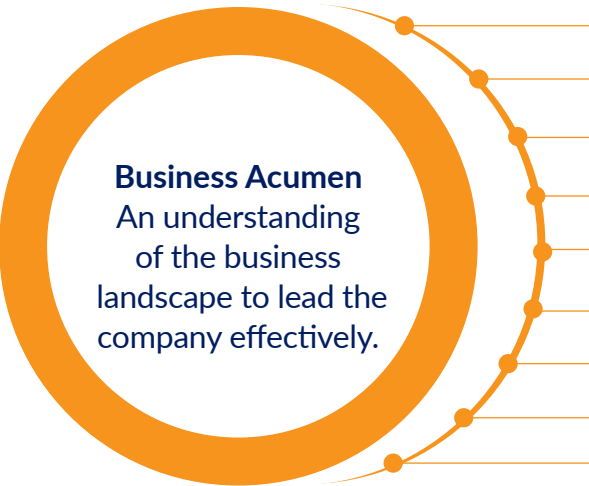
A deep understanding of market conditions and how they influence the company.

1. Industry/product forecast and outlook
2. Networking and industry relationships
3. Rules/regulations
4. Production
5. Logistics
6. Industry/product-specific KPIs




**Communication**  
Engaging in effective relationships with both internal and external stakeholders to maintain alignment with corporate strategy.

1. Effective verbal communication
2. Transparency
3. Adaptability of communication to audience
4. Effective written communication
5. Communicating financial information to nonfinancial audiences
6. Negotiation skills
7. Crisis communication
8. Cross-cultural communication
9. Investor relations
10. Contract negotiation
11. Fostering trust
12. Driving consensus
13. Board relations/compliance reporting
14. One-on-one and interpersonal communication
15. Presentation skills



**Business Acumen**  
An understanding of the business landscape to lead the company effectively.

1. Operations
2. Risk management
3. Human resources
4. IT and data
5. Mergers and acquisitions
6. Supply chain and logistics
7. Legal
8. Physical plant
9. Insurance



**Emotional Intelligence**  
The individual skills of effective self-management.

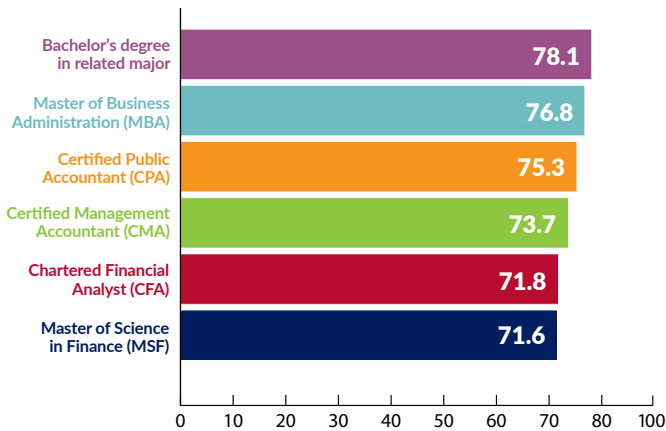
1. Social skills
2. Self-motivation
3. Self-regulation
4. Adaptability
5. Self-awareness
6. Self-reflection and growth
7. Networking
8. Goal-setting and persistence



# Key Finding 1: Opportunities Exist for CPAs, but What Got You Here Might Not Get You There

Some pundits would have you believe that CPAs do not get hired for CFO roles anymore, but our research shows that CPAs are valued just as much as those with an MBA.

**Importance of Degrees/Certifications  
When Hiring a CFO**



Scale: 0 (Not Important) – 100 (Extremely Important)

While the Fortune 500 may have pivoted dramatically to finance backgrounds rather than accounting, CPAs are becoming CFOs at private companies, smaller organizations, and other entities. However, what got you to your CPA may not get you to CFO.

Success in public accounting firms often comes from years of hard work, technical accounting knowledge and skills, and a careful compliance and attention to detail mindset. These competencies may have cleared the path to corporate finance leadership once. Not anymore.

Candidates have traditionally climbed the ranks to a high-level finance role with experience in financial reporting, accounting standards, and compliance and cost management. While this technical accounting background is valued for CFO positions, hiring managers told us they value other competencies much more

Today's CFOs are often taking on responsibilities once assigned to CEOs and COOs, including overseeing human resources, risk management, and technology. These broadened roles require skills and competencies beyond financial reporting and compliance and regulatory knowledge – skills that you may not have built up in an accounting firm or within the finance function at a company.

To stand out, CFO candidates must build comprehensive skill sets that position them to drive strategy, plan for growth, and provide enterprise leadership.

**CPA is equally as preferred by hiring managers as other qualifications.**

# Key Finding 2: Forward-Looking Financial Acumen Makes the Difference

The critical shift that CPAs can make to climb the corporate hierarchy is to build forward-looking financial acumen.

Financial acumen was the top-rated general competency that executives are looking for in CFO candidates.

Rank	Top 4 General Competencies
1	Financial Acumen
2	Leadership/Strategy
3	Compliance and Regulatory Knowledge
4	Technology and Analytics

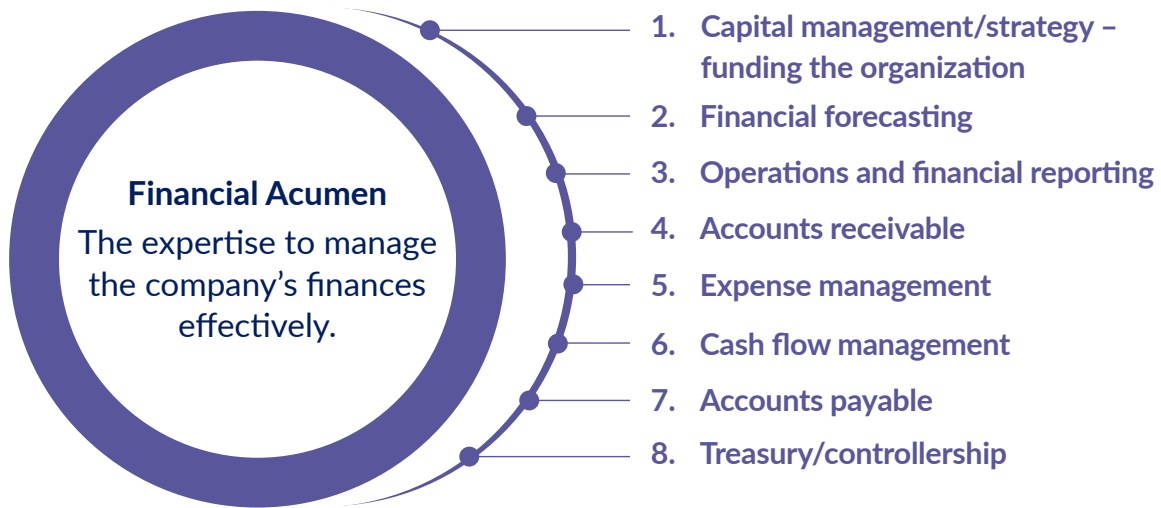
**What is interesting, though, is that the most desired sub-competencies within financial acumen were all *future-focused*.**

The sub-competency “Capital Management/Forecasting – Funding the Organization” ranked No. 1 out of 8 under financial acumen and No. 1 out of 79 total competencies in importance (see page 19 for ranking of all sub-competencies). Hiring managers are seeking finance leaders who don’t just report on past results; they strategize for the future.

Is your employer preparing you to analyze and strategize for the future? CFOs are responsible for raising, allocating, and managing the company’s capital now and in the future. Experience as an auditor or even in advisory might not prepare you to be a financial forecaster or provide experience in funding an organization. When overseeing a company’s financials, including cash flow and financial risk, the CFO must always be considering and preparing for tomorrow. This includes developing and executing strategies to ensure financial support for operations and growth goals. If you build an intentional career path toward a CFO position, you should seek out opportunities to develop these critical skills through education and stretch experiences.

The sub-competency “Financial Forecasting” ranked 2 out of 8 under financial acumen and 2 out of 79 in importance of all the sub-competencies (see page 19 for ranking of all sub-competencies). With this sub-competency, CEOs and hiring executives want CFOs with skills to predict future financial performance accurately and consistently. CEOs clearly want the ability to provide predictability and profitability. Providing accurate financial forecasting helps keep the company profitable.

## Financial Acumen Sub-Competencies in Order of Importance



Over the past few years and across companies of all sizes, the CFO has become more of a *strategic partner* to the CEO, not just a *financial technician*. The CFO must be a general manager who can balance operations, finances, and strategy with human resources, technology, and a clear future-focused mindset.

In a public accounting firm environment, CPAs primarily focus on *looking back* to ensure that their clients' financial records are accurate, comply with standards and regulations, and provide the users of financial statements with a trustworthy source of information. In the

corporate world, CFOs must focus on the future to ensure companies are empowered to act strategically, prepared for risk along the way, and have the resources to grow and thrive. It is a different mindset.

**Across companies of all sizes, a CFO is expected to be more of a strategic partner to the CEO and board and not just a *financial technician*.**

# Key Finding 3: Leadership and Strategy Are Not Soft Skills – They Are Requirements of CFOs

According to our research, “Leadership and Strategy” was the second highest-ranking general competency for CFOs. CEOs are looking for CFOs who can develop high-performing teams and create impactful strategies.

How CFOs develop those teams and goals depends on how strong they are with several Leadership and Strategy sub-competencies.

## Leadership and Strategy Sub-Competencies in Order of Importance



### Critical Thinking

The first sub-competency under leadership and strategy in which CFO candidates must excel is critical thinking. This sub-competency ranked 4 out of 79 overall in importance among the sub-competencies (See page 19 for ranking of all sub-competencies). Unfortunately, critical thinking is not always well-defined, might not come easily, and is difficult to master.

Critical thinking is a leadership and strategy skill that requires questioning, analyzing, self-reflecting, evaluating, and synthesizing.

#### Step 1—Question Everything

- Practice asking probing questions.
- Challenge all assumptions from different angles.
- Create hypotheses and collect evidence to validate.

#### Step 2—Analyze with Logic

- Reduce complex problems into smaller, manageable questions.
- Evaluate cause-and-effect relationships by applying logical reasoning.
- Analyze data, factors, and patterns.

#### Step 3—Do Some Self-Reflection

- Be open-minded and consider different viewpoints.
- Search for cognitive bias and emotional limitations.
- Modify your approach based on self-awareness findings.

#### Step 4—Evaluate the Pros and Cons

- Assess situations based on logic rather than emotion.
- Evaluate advantages and disadvantages of decisions.
- Weigh the credibility and reliability of your data and evidence sources.

## Step 5—Synthesize Your Conclusions

- Consider any long-term implications.
- Synthesize information from various sources.
- Connect ideas and develop new insights.

Critical thinking takes practice and time to master, but it can be done. This different leadership and strategy methodology will help CFO candidates and new hires:

- Have meaningful conversations with the CEO, the board, investors, the media, analysts, and partners. Whether brainstorming, navigating a crisis, or assessing new market opportunities, the critical thinking process will help CFO candidates and new hires be seen as dependable corporate resource who has the confidence of the CEO and the board – a right-hand person to the CEO.
- Identify growth opportunities and analyze market trends. Those with both strong financial acumen and critical thinking skills will stand out and be in the best position to advise the executive team and the board.
- Develop a corporate financial strategy that aligns with its strategic goals. The formal steps of critical thinking will ensure that any bias, advantages, or disadvantages are uncovered, increasing the strategy's chance of success.
- Harness the power of analytics and make more data-driven decisions. Today's CFOs are using critical thinking and data analytics insights to optimize company processes, identify growth opportunities, and mitigate risks effectively.

## Strategy Creation

Another leadership and strategy sub-competency that ranked high was strategy creation. It ranked 6 out of 79 in importance among the competencies in our research (see

page 19 for ranking of all sub-competencies).

*CEOs know where they want the organization to go, but they do not necessarily know how to get there. They expect their CFOs to take the lead and create the strategy to get there. CFOs must be trailblazers in pursuit of corporate vision.*

It is important to note that CEOs are looking for CFOs who can focus on *HOW to get stuff done*.

Strategy creation also includes strategic vision. CEOs want to partner with CFOs who possess and can convey a similar strategic mindset and vision – focusing on crafting organizational structures and business models that align with the company's goals and drive sustainable growth. While strategy execution and tracking is an important complement to strategic creation, it ranked 51 out of 79 overall in importance of sub-competencies. CEOs want CFOs to develop a plan that can be delegated to other leaders to execute. Here, we see clearly the CEO's desire to have a strategic partner.

For ways to strengthen your competencies, see this report's Conclusion section for ideas.

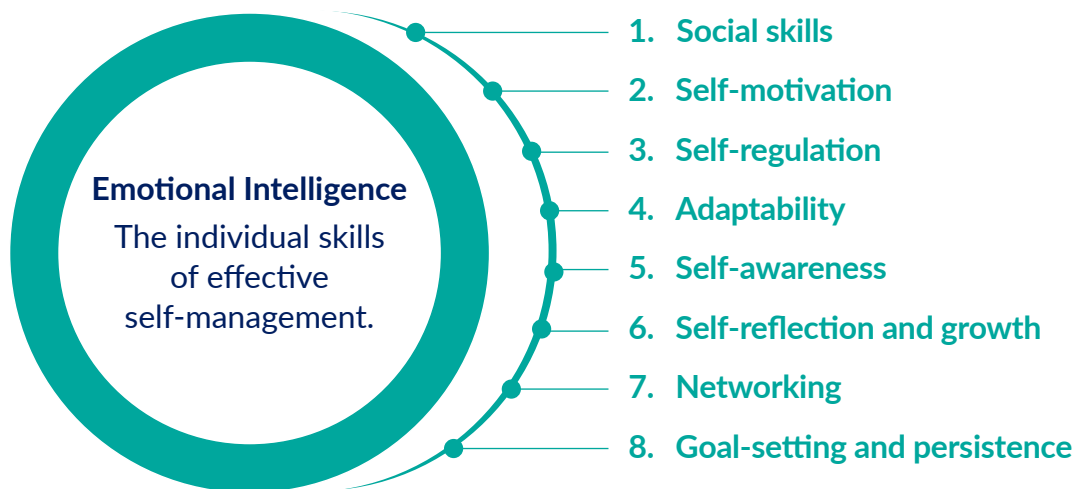
**CEOs know *where* they want the organization to get to, but they do not necessarily know *how* to get there.**

# Key Finding 4: Emotional Intelligence Ranked Low, but Do Not Let That Deceive You

While having a high level of emotional intelligence will make you a more effective leader, it is not a competency that hiring executives prioritize during CFO searches. It is possible that relying on strong emotional intelligence on emotional intelligence *could harm* a CFO candidate's chances more than help them. Emotional intelligence

consistently ranked at the bottom of general competencies (8 out of 8). As seen in the table of ranked sub-competencies in the Appendix, all the emotional intelligence sub-competencies (below) rank near the bottom, with social skills being the highest at 69 out of 79.

## Emotional Intelligence Competencies in Order of Importance



It is possible that emotional intelligence sub-competencies ranked near or at the bottom not because emotional intelligence is not valued but because hiring managers assume executive-level candidates have already mastered these skills. Or, the hiring managers are more focused on some of the “harder skills,” such as critical thinking, strategy creation, and business model creation.

After all, not displaying emotional intelligence during an interview could diminish your strengths in other areas. For example, as a holistic CFO candidate, you may need to address how you would manage finance, human resources, and information technology teams. With broad responsibilities beyond finance, CFOs must be able to apply emotional intelligence to motivate, lead, resolve

conflicts, and make key decisions with these teams. Emotional intelligence helps one understand the perspectives and concerns of all parties, including CEOs, executive leadership, board members, shareholders, analysts, managers, employees, and more. A certain level of Emotional Intelligence is required for successful relationship building. Also, high emotional intelligence ensures that CFOs are making decisions consistently that take into consideration reputation, trust, and legal compliance.

In fact, in a field of CFO candidates who have competing “hard skills,” the one who has high emotional intelligence will stand out from the other candidates. Ignore soft skills at your peril.

Emotional intelligence helps one understand the perspectives and concerns of parties they are interacting with, including CEOs, executive leadership, board members, shareholders, analysts, managers, employees, and more.

# Key Finding 5: Specific Industries Require Certain Skill Sets

## In High-Growth Organizations, CFOs Must Have a Depth of Battle-Tested Skills

High-growth companies – typically those organizations that have had revenue increases of at least 20% in a 12-month period – experience significant demand or technical advancements. These types of companies offer unique challenges and complexities for CFO candidates or new hires that other companies might not. Five of these challenges are as follows:

- **Managing Cash Flow:** CFOs must know the status of cash at all times. High-growth companies usually have to make large investments in human resources, inventory, and capital expenditures during periods of unpredictable growth. CFOs must have strategies to ensure liquidity and working capital is maintained. In many cases, growth can equate to volatility, and volatility requires access to cash.
- **Accelerating Growth:** The CFO plays a key role in maintaining rapid revenue growth as challenges grow in complexity. CEOs are looking for specific competencies to meet this challenge, including having the ability balance short-term and long-term investments, securing funding if necessary, and expanding existing systems and processes to drive better accuracy and efficiency as a company grows.
- **Mitigating a Variety of Risks:** A number of risks can have devastating effects on a high-growth company. CFOs must have strategies in place that will help continue growth in spite of regulatory changes, market fluctuations, competition, and more. A CFO in a high-growth organization must continually evaluate the company's current situation and have plans to avoid emerging cash flow shortfalls.

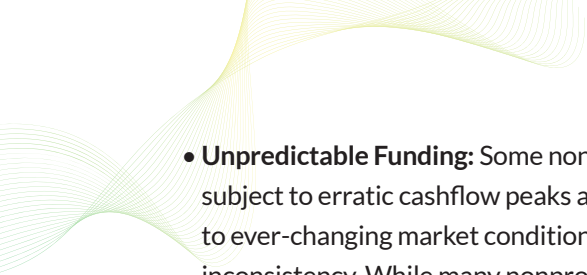
- **Ensuring Regulatory Compliance:** Depending on the industry, type, and size of the company, a CFO may have to deal with more regulations and compliance requirements over time. A CEO wants a CFO who has experience and competencies that will make sure that the company is complying while still in high-growth mode, especially at newer or younger companies where the CFO may be the only executive charged with compliance with vast and complex regulations.

- **Retaining the Best Talent:** CFOs in high-growth companies must be prepared with a compelling talent retention strategy. The talent market is ultracompetitive right now, and it can be expensive and time-consuming to recruit full-time employees. Research, such as The Pennsylvania Institute of CPAs' talent retention study "CPA Talent Retention 2024: Keeping Your Best Performers," shows why a talent retention strategy must be a priority for any executive in corporate finance or public accounting. That white paper also provides recommendations on how to retain the whole person beyond salary.

While there are specific challenges when considering or accepting a CFO position at a high-growth company, there are several intriguing rewards for CFOs as well, such as equity in the company, a high amount of stock options, performance-based bonuses, and more.

## With Nonprofit Organizations, You Will Need to React and Succeed Quickly

Nonprofit organizations offer CFOs their own set of challenges that differ from other organization profiles.

- 
- **Unpredictable Funding:** Some nonprofits can be subject to erratic cashflow peaks and valleys due to ever-changing market conditions and revenue inconsistency. While many nonprofit organizations get their funding from donations, fundraising, and grants, CFOs in these environments must be constantly aware of the economic impacts on grants and funding and must be prepared to implement a strategy of secondary funding if necessary. Non-profit CFOs are regularly expected to generate strategies for nontraditional revenue generation.
  - **Lack of Resources:** Nonprofits historically run on tighter budgets than their for-profit counterparts. Priorities must be made among technology upgrades, hiring and retention, training, and more. Nonprofit CFOs are often called upon to ruthlessly prioritize areas of focus for the organization, especially when there are many viable opportunities but limited resources to pursue them.

- **Dwindling Donor Contributions:** Sooner or later, donor fatigue may arise if the donors feel the organization is reaching out to them too often. CFOs must know how to manage and grow the donor database. They are also expected to understand grant regulations and laws for grants and donations. This is essential to ensure sustainable operations for years to come.

**While certain competencies stand out across the board, each company is different, and aspiring CFOs must be adaptable and eager to learn.**



# Conclusion: Securing Your Seat at the Table

A CPA license, with its intrinsic financial acumen, is still highly valued in the world of corporate finance, but our research shows that aspiring CFOs need to build an intentional plan to gather complementary competencies to meet the needs of the role. CEOs and other hiring executives want CFOs who can wear many hats. They want CFOs who can predict future performance, create strategy based on their vision, and validate opinions with data and analytics.

CFOs must be able to focus on the present while also thinking of the future – identifying opportunities, anticipating risk, and preparing for worst- and best-case scenarios. In some industries, CFOs must also have expertise and competencies to handle donors and grant funding, industry compliance and regulatory requirements, while they oversee finances, human resources, operations, information technology, and more. They have access to data, analytics, and metrics that impact every department in an organization, and they must also have technology implementation and leadership/strategy experience.

So, how can CFO candidates obtain or strengthen their competencies to be better prepared to apply for and secure a corporate finance executive position?

Keep in mind that one of the best skills that a CFO can possess is the ability to continue to acquire new knowledge. Now is the time to secure the right knowledge, skills, and experience. Here are a few ways.

- 1. Take Advantage of Massachusetts Society of CPAs (MassCPAs) courses.** MassCPAs offers a broad range of live webinars and on-demand learning on technology, management, and regulations.
- 2. Take on Management Roles.** If you haven't before, focus on pursuing roles where you are managing people in different departments – either at your current employment or in a new position. CEOs will want to see how you handle various staffing issues and considerations. One critical component of building leadership skills, like the ones the hiring managers prize, is to take on stretch experiences. Do something scary in your career! It could be the ticket to your next great opportunity.

- 3. Acquire Other Industry Experience.** In addition to pursuing management opportunities, look for new roles that could give you responsibility for, or allow you to collaborate with, human resources, operations, and information technology. Maybe your experience is all in auditing and you need to round out other financial competencies.
- 4. Start Networking.** Attend relevant conferences and join industry associations among other efforts to find mentors and stay in touch with industry trends. Once again, MassCPAs can be a great help here.
- 5. Start Practicing Critical Thinking.** Work to uncover the root cause of an issue by having someone ask “why” after each response at least five times to drill deeper. This approach goes from surface-level answers to more specific answers, providing a more comprehensive perspective of the problem.
- 6. Invest in a Professional Résumé Writer/Designer.** This could be one of the biggest moves of your career. Spend the money and use someone who works with résumés, recruiters, and employers every day. Highlight competencies such as financial acumen, leadership/strategy, and compliance and regulatory knowledge.
- 7. Build Strategic Skill Sets.** Pursue education and opportunities where you'll learn how to build strategies that work. Go beyond technical accounting CPE and learn about people management, business model definition, and strategy creation. Spend time on a nonprofit board, move into advisory practice areas if possible, and get involved in the profession.
- 8. Volunteer as a CFO for a Small Business or Nonprofit.** Consider volunteering as a CFO for a small business or nonprofit organization. Many of these enterprises cannot afford a full-time CFO, so they welcome skilled volunteers. This opportunity allows you to gain real-world, hands-on experience in financial management while making a positive impact on the community.

# Appendix

This Appendix provides detailed rankings and descriptions of the competencies and sub-competencies identified in our survey. It serves as a valuable resource for aspiring CFOs, offering a comprehensive list of the skills most sought after by hiring executives. This section includes:

- **General competencies:** Broad skill categories that are essential for the CFO role, such as financial acumen, leadership/strategy, compliance and regulatory knowledge, technology and analytics, industry specific knowledge, communication, business acumen, and emotional intelligence.

- **Sub-competencies:** Specific skills within each general competency, ranked by importance. These sub-competencies give a granular view of the precise attributes that make candidates stand out, such as capital management, critical thinking, and advanced data analysis.

By consulting the Appendix, readers can gain a deeper understanding of the skill sets required for CFO positions and identify areas for personal development.

## Key of General Competencies

- 1 Financial Acumen** The expertise to manage the company's finances effectively.
- 2 Leadership/Strategy** The development of high-performing teams and strategic goals.
- 3 Compliance and Regulatory Knowledge** Ensuring organizational adherence to laws, regulations, and internal policies.
- 4 Technology and Analytics** Data-driven decision making and cutting-edge technology proficiency.
- 5 Industry-Specific Knowledge** A deep understanding of market conditions and how it influences the company.
- 6 Communication** Engaging in effective relationships with both internal and external stakeholders to maintain alignment with corporate strategy.
- 7 Business Acumen** An understanding of the business landscape to lead the company effectively.
- 8 Emotional Intelligence** The individual skills of effective self-management.

Rank	Sub-Competency
1	Capital management/strategy – funding the organization
2	Financial forecasting
3	Operations and financial reporting
4	Critical thinking
5	Financial reporting compliance
6	Strategy creation
7	Industry/product forecast and outlook
8	Tax compliance
9	Accounts receivable
10	Networking and industry relationships
11	GAAP compliance
12	Expense management
13	Talent management
14	Ethics and integrity
15	Rules/regulations
16	Cash flow management
17	Accounts payable
18	Operations
19	Internal audit oversight
20	Regulatory compliance
21	Advanced data analysis ability
22	Effective verbal communication
23	Data-driven decision-making
24	Collaboration
25	Building and leading high-performing teams
26	Adaptable to new technologies
27	Treasury/controllership
28	Transparency
29	Risk management
30	Production

Rank	Sub-Competency
31	Organizational, enterprise-wide leadership and mindset
32	Data privacy/security
33	Relationship building and maintenance
34	Logistics
35	Industry/product-specific KPIs
36	Negotiation skills
37	Contract compliance
38	Adaptability of communication to audience
39	Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) compliance
40	Human resources
41	IT and data
42	Effective written communication
43	Early adoption of new technology
44	Optimize company processes
45	Business model creation
46	Growth mindset
47	Product/customer profitability analysis
48	Mergers and acquisitions
49	Supply chain and logistics
50	Communicating financial information to nonfinancial audiences
51	Strategy execution and tracking
52	AI skills and openness to adoption of AI
53	Negotiation skills
54	Crafting organizational structure
55	Compelling narrative creation for data
56	Data mining
57	Performance metrics/KPI analysis
58	Crisis communication
59	Cross-cultural communication

Rank	Sub-Competency
60	Legal
61	Investor relations
62	Contract negotiation and management
63	Fostering trust
64	Managing technology teams and projects
65	Driving consensus
66	Board relations/compliance reporting
67	Physical plant
68	Insurance
69	Social skills

Rank	Sub-Competency
70	Self-motivation
71	Robotic process automation
72	Self-regulation
73	Adaptability
74	One-on-one and interpersonal communication
75	Presentation skills
76	Self-awareness
77	Self-reflection and growth
78	Networking
79	Goal-setting and persistence

### Rankings of General Competencies for Entity Type

Rank	Sole Proprietorship		Limited Liability Company		C Corporation		S Corporation		Nonprofit Organization		Limited Partnership	
	Item	Total Respondents	Item	Total Respondents	Item	Total Respondents	Item	Total Respondents	Item	Total Respondents	Item	Total Respondents
1	Financial Acumen	70	Financial Acumen	43	Financial Acumen	53	Financial Acumen	15	Financial Acumen	6	Leadership/Strategy	9
2	Leadership/Strategy	68	Leadership/Strategy	41	Technology and Analytics	42	Leadership/Strategy	15	Compliance and Regulatory Knowledge	6	Compliance and Regulatory Knowledge	7
3	Compliance and Regulatory Knowledge	54	Compliance and Regulatory Knowledge	32	Leadership/Strategy	39	Compliance and Regulatory Knowledge	12	Leadership/Strategy	4	Financial Acumen	6
4	Communication	41	Industry Specific Knowledge	27	Compliance and Regulatory Knowledge	35	Industry Specific Knowledge	10	Technology and Analytics	4	Industry Specific Knowledge	6
5	Technology and Analytics	40	Technology and Analytics	27	Communication	26	Technology and Analytics	8	Communication	3	Business Acumen	6
6	Industry Specific Knowledge	38	Communication	24	Industry Specific Knowledge	19	Business Acumen	6	Industry Specific Knowledge	3	Technology and Analytics	4
7	Business Acumen	31	Business Acumen	21	Business Acumen	17	Communication	3	Business Acumen	2	Communication	4
8	Emotional Intelligence	6	Emotional Intelligence	6	Emotional Intelligence	4	Emotional Intelligence	3	Emotional Intelligence	2	Emotional Intelligence	1



## About MassCPAs

The Massachusetts Society of Certified Public Accountants (MassCPAs), a 501 (c) 6 organization, is the state's premiere professional organization with more than 11,500 members in public accounting, industry and business, government and education. Through its advocacy, continuing professional education, membership, communications and academic and career development departments, the Society provides services that allow its members to learn, connect and prosper in the accounting profession.



## About CPA Crossings

This research has been done in partnership with CPA Crossings. The CPA Crossings Research Program offers a powerful benefit to drive member and staff retention. Now is the time for state CPA societies, associations, and independent firms to embrace new ways to increase their appeal to prospective members and to strengthen current staff relationships. Publishing customized state-specific research provides insights on critical topics facing the accounting profession.

CPAx becomes your resource partner in collecting data, analyzing results, and producing customized research reports. For every project, CPAX provides comprehensive research to share with members and staff relationships with data and analysis on the hottest topics trending in the accounting profession. We create the research instruments, conduct the data collection, analyze the results, and produce reports or presentations of findings. Your research is delivered with actionable insights that we can highlight using your society or firm branding. All of this is done in a timely manner to make an impact on the appropriate target market. We also provide marketing launch support to help amplify the message and ensure that your members or staff get the most out of the content.

To learn more about our Research Program please reach out to Kelly Waffle, Director of Research, at [kwaffle@cpacrossings.com](mailto:kwaffle@cpacrossings.com) to set up a personal meeting.