



## CFO Vision

Peer circle discussion – Building a future-ready finance team

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# Peer Circle Discussion: Building a Future-Ready Finance Team

Talent remains a top priority for Finance leaders but given changes in technology, demographics, and the macro environment, organisations must continue to adapt.

The discussion was anchored around the Finance Talent theme identified from the [Finance Trends 2026 report](#), supplemented by further stats from the [Human Capital Trends 2025 report](#) to provoke discussion.

## The Impact of AI on Finance Talent:

- Automation & Disruption:** For some of the more advanced firms, AI may soon be able to construct complex financial models and potentially reduce the need for junior roles whereas another firm is exploring Agentic AI for transactional finance tasks
- Employee vs. Company Benefits:** Firms are identifying tension between employees' concerns about job security (or potential opportunity for a 4-day work week) and the company's drive for increased productivity through higher value-add activities

## Integrating Finance & Data Science:

- Evolving Skillsets:** The consensus was that future Finance teams will be heavily data-driven, with a strong preference for upskilling existing Finance professionals in data science, as opposed to finance training for data scientists – with Finance professionals' improved ability to interpret insights into actions being a key reason

• *"Everyone needs to be data literate"*

## Stability & Navigating Continuous Change:

- Change Fatigue:** Finance teams often experience burnout from continuous change initiatives without immediately recognising the associated gains – it is crucial to balance these evolving needs with core Finance responsibilities

- "Team has got to get used to constant change"*
- "I can't remember ever not being in a vortex [of change]"*
- "Good leaders create stability through purpose... if you buy into it, you feel stable"*
- "If Finance can't keep up – you've got to stop"*

## Addressing the Experience Gap & Recruitment Challenges:

- Entry-Level Recruitment Challenges:** While entry-level talent is more mouldable, firms often ramp up recruiting of them in periods of growth and ramp down during periods of stagnation/decline due to a greater focus on margin
- Mid-Level Challenges:** Mid-level roles can be problematic; some are less willing to change, viewing it as a threat, and some feel 'stuck' due to unclear career paths
- Integrating into Industry:** Recent staff hired from Big 4 firms have been viewed as less resilient and needing 1-2 years to adjust to industry, whereas before they had been able to have an almost immediate impact

- "If an accounting hire doesn't have technical skills, then keep looking"*
- "If you're not an accountant, you are a dangerous analyst" (in response to a facilitator highlighting that CFOs increasingly have a non-accounting background)*

## Statistics to provoke discussion

- 70+ % of managers and workers are more likely to join and stay with an organization if its employee value proposition helps them thrive in an AI-driven world
- 54% of workers are concerned about the blurred distinctions between what is done by humans and technology
- 75% of workers want stability
- 85% of leaders want agile work
- 66% of leaders say their recent hires weren't fully prepared – most citing lack of experience
- 66% of employers have recently increased experience requirements – most “entry-level” roles now require 2-5 years' experience
- 45% of workers who have used GenAI, have done so in a work context
- 64% of finance leaders are prioritising technical skills such as AI and automation, data analysis and advanced scenario modelling



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