Building the future finance workforce

CFO Vision Peer Circle | 13 October 2026

From rethinking Finance work to developing the people who will deliver it

Building the future Finance workforce is about more than adopting AI. The discussion focused on redesigning work to create capacity for higher-value activity, while deliberately building the skills, judgement and accountability people will need as routine work changes.

Key reflections from the room

Redesign the work before changing roles. Fix the underlying process before applying AI. Start with one meaningful workflow, remove unnecessary activity and decide where technology adds value. Use the capacity created to shift Finance towards greater insight, challenge and business partnering.

Protect the experiences that build judgement. As routine activities reduce, some of the work through which people traditionally learn may disappear with them. Create deliberate opportunities for people to investigate issues, challenge outputs, understand the business and learn alongside experienced colleagues.

Turn released capacity into greater value. Time saved through automation does not create value by itself. Be deliberate about where that capacity goes, whether towards stronger business partnering, deeper analysis, better decision support or development activities that strengthen the Finance team over time.

Build from your organisation's starting point. The path will look different for every Finance function. Consider the maturity of your data, systems, controls and people together, identify what could constrain progress and tackle the foundations that will enable teams to use AI effectively.

Combine Finance expertise with digital fluency. The future workforce will need more than technical Finance knowledge or technology skills in isolation. Build confidence with AI and data alongside strong commercial understanding, critical thinking and Finance judgement, focusing capability development on how roles and work are actually changing.

Design accountability into AI-enabled workflows. Define where AI supports the work, where it can operate within agreed boundaries and where human review remains essential. Make ownership, approval and escalation clear so that greater automation strengthens rather than obscures accountability.

Questions to take back to your team

Which workflow should we redesign first? Where could removing unnecessary activity create the greatest business value?

What is holding us back? Which gaps in data, systems, controls or capability need to be addressed to move forward?

How will future judgement develop? What experiences need to replace the learning opportunities that may disappear as routine work changes?

Are we building the right capabilities? How should Finance expertise, digital fluency and commercial skills evolve as roles change?

Where should human accountability sit? What can AI support or execute, and where must people continue to review, challenge and decide?

Continue the conversation with the Deloitte team to explore how redesigning Finance work and developing people can turn AI adoption into greater business value.

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