The changing role of the CFO
Introduction

The UK government’s finance function comprises more than 10,000 staff across many dozens of organisations. It is responsible for spending and disbursements worth more than £700bn per year, and for managing assets worth more than £1,300bn and liabilities of over £3,000bn. Since the turn of the century, the profession has been changing fast - becoming more professional, and taking an increasingly prominent and strategic role in organisations' strategy, transformation and delivery.

Previous EY studies on the roles of chief finance officers (CFOs) have provided valuable insights across public and private sectors globally. However, this year we have decided to take a closer look at the public sector in the UK. The report examines how the role of the CFO is evolving to meet changing public expectations, the civil service reform and efficiency agendas, the introduction of new business models, emerging skills requirements, and the opportunities and risks thrown up by new technology.

Specifically, this study looks at how CFOs’ roles have changed over the past five years, and how finance leaders and their teams will need to develop over the next five to meet their organisations' needs and address the challenges facing them. It also explores the ways in which CFOs can develop the next generation of finance leaders, helping to foster a talent pool that will sustain the finance profession over the years to come.

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EY is grateful to all the participants in this study. In particular, we would like to thank those who readily shared their insights and personal experiences in a series of interviews and surveys:

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**Martin Robertson**
Corporate Director Resources, Walsall Housing Group

**Craig Watkins**
Former Director of Finance and Planning, Ministry of Justice

**Jon Thompson**
Chief Executive Officer, HM Revenue and Customs
During January and February 2016, we conducted face-to-face interviews with... across the UK public sector – from major central government departments to housing associations.

19 CFOs

Who we talked to?

Organisation turnover

Career background

Spent majority of career within the finance function

Significant business experience in roles outside finance

Worked in more than one sector

Internal appointment to the current role

Spent part of the career in one of the major global auditing firms

Significant experience working in different international environments

Education

CA, CPA or equivalent

MBA

Other post-graduate degree

Business/accountancy-related bachelor’s degree

Other university degree

Aspirations

Reached career aspiration with the current role

Chairman of the Board

Non-executive director

CEO

Other

Different CFO role
We have been required to develop skills not always traditionally associated with the accountancy profession – including business planning, risk management, influencing and strategic thinking.
The evolving role of finance

There was a time when the finance function within government was viewed by some as a professional backwater. However, austerity has propelled the function into the vanguard of transformation. “If you go back a few years, the finance team had to just get on with what it was told,” says Alastair Bridges, former finance director at the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs. “That has changed – certainly in the rhetoric. Departments know they need a good finance function and permanent secretaries all value good financial directors.”

With the UK’s finances in a challenging state, departments have been tasked with delivering services on increasingly tight budgets even as public expectations continue to rise. And with savings plans requiring changes to business processes and organisational structures, CFOs are increasingly being called on to support chief executives and other organisational leaders in planning, testing and monitoring reforms. Almost 70% of respondents to our survey say that they are spending more time on providing analysis and insight to support senior leaders and decision makers than they were five years ago.

“It is essential for CFOs to take a more strategic role,” says Jon Thompson, chief executive of HM Revenue & Customs and a former head of the government finance profession. The scale of savings required by government spending plans requires CFOs to take a leading role in transforming their organisations: “There is a big difference between a government department being asked to save 5% and being asked to save 30%,” Thompson comments. “If someone says they want the same outputs for 30% less, you need to have a big, radical conversation. That feeds the transformation agenda, producing a more flexible way of doing business that will be cheaper in the long run.”

This shift has required the profession to develop skills not always traditionally associated with the accountancy profession – including business planning, risk management, influencing and strategic thinking. When asked how their workload has changed over the last five years, 63% of finance chiefs say that nowadays they spend more time supporting their organisation’s development and its strategic goals. Indeed, more than half say they are increasingly taking the lead in developing and defining overall strategy.

Figure 1: Top challenges faced by CFOs today

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lack of autonomy for decision-making</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maintaining existing finance function</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Procuring efficient MI systems for better decision-making</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Improving financial planning and literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Financial and skills capability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Government budgetary pressures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CFO Public Sector survey January/February 2016 interview with 19 CFOs.
Almost 70% of CFOs say that compared to 5 years ago, they are now spending more time communicating their organisation’s progress on strategic goals to stakeholders.

Source: CFO Public Sector survey January/February 2016 interview with 19 CFOs.
With ever-increasing responsibilities, the changing role of the senior finance officer has been accompanied by increasing professionalisation among leaders and within the workforce. It is still less than 10 years since government departments were first required to have in place a professionally-qualified finance director, reporting to the permanent secretary and with a seat on the departmental board. This requirement has helped ensure good management and accountability in government finances at the top table, effectively helping to position finance into the heart of decision making.

Strategic shift

Despite the new demands presented by finance leaders’ growing roles in strategy and business planning, the task of setting an operational framework and standards for the finance department remains at the heart of the CFO’s role. And most still prioritise this work: almost 80% of those surveyed say they’re happy with the amount of time they spend ensuring business decisions are grounded in sound financial criteria, based on a robust control environment. And 84% express satisfaction that they are able to spend enough time leading reforms and initiatives within the finance team to support overall organisational strategic goals.

However, our survey identifies a belief among CFOs that they need to move further away from day-to-day accountancy responsibilities, taking an even greater role in formulating strategic and organisational decisions. More than 60% of finance leaders say that they are not currently spending sufficient time providing analysis and insight to support senior leaders, and want to be freed up to spend more time producing information to assist decision-making - generating material such as data-driven analytics and strategic risk assessments. And 58% say they do not have enough time to properly develop and define strategic decisions.

Bridges says: “There is a desire among CFOs to move up the value chain. There have been some big strides forwards in recent years, but inevitably you still spend a lot of time fire-fighting or making sure the basics are in place. Things are moving in the right direction, though.”

Of course, with greater involvement comes greater responsibility. Since 2013, CFOs have had a duty to ensure that their organisation complies with the rules outlined in the 2013 Treasury handbook Managing Public Money. In addition, the government has increased transparency - publishing a raft of public spending data by which departments can be held to account. Almost half of CFOs say that compared to five years ago, they are now spending more time communicating their organisation’s progress on strategic goals to stakeholders.

In addition, a number of high-profile cases involving poor-value contracts with private sector suppliers have had a negative impact on the public’s perception on Whitehall’s financial competence. Craig Watkins, a former Ministry of Justice finance director and now a director in EY’s government and public sector practice for UK and Ireland, says: “CFOs are now operating in a less forgiving environment. For instance since 2010 the Public Accounts Committee has become more confrontational.” So there are strong political and financial pressures for finance chiefs to sharpen up their teams’ skills in commercial work such as procurement and contract management.

Transformation

The changing role of CFOs has arrived hand in hand with an era of fiscal challenge and organisational transformation within government – catalysed by both the austerity agenda, and the opportunities offered by digital technology.

These pressures and opportunities have brought CFOs centre-stage as senior leadership teams try to drive forward transformation within a challenging financial environment. Rebuilding organisations’ operations in new and more efficient forms does, of course, demand investment; and almost half of CFOs say that the difficulty of securing the required capital presents a barrier to adopting technology. However, others have successfully made the case. Martin Robertson, corporate director of resources at Walsall Housing Group, notes that “there is a focus on ‘channel shift’: moving customers away from visiting and calling to online self-service. You have to invest a bit up front to achieve that.”
Opportunities and challenges

New skills
For CFOs to reform the technologies and roles managed by finance departments, while simultaneously adding value to organisational policy and strategic decision-making, they must develop a complex new range of skills and abilities. And they must improve not only their own capabilities, but also the ability of their teams to provide effective support, take on some of the more traditional finance function leadership roles, and make use of new technologies and techniques.

When asked about the new skills that CFOs most require to realise the priorities of their finance function over the next five years, some 95% of respondents name developing commercial skills as a “critical” or “significant” priority — the favourite by some distance. Incidents such as the G4S and Serco electronic tagging controversy, where the firms were discovered to be mischarging for monitoring offenders — despite the use of an ‘open book’ contract giving the Ministry of Justice direct access to company performance data — have demonstrated the need for government to prove it can regain its position as an ‘intelligent customer’.

In addition, policy changes and limited resources have led some organisations to explore new ways of revenue-raising — creating demand for another set of commercial skills. In the housing association sector, for example, a lack of grant funding for rental properties is pushing providers towards building more homes for sale. Such activities are inherently riskier, providing new challenges to CFOs.

Robertson says: “My role is to keep people’s focus on the commercial realities of what they are doing. One of my contributions is to test proposals and to make sure they are really well thought-through. Very often, the role is to say: ‘This isn’t even a financial consideration, but you haven’t thought of it’.”

In second place amongst the skills most required among CFOs is the ability to develop their teams, enabling them to take on more of the finance chiefs’ responsibilities — for as leaders spend more time on strategic decision-making at the organisational level, they need their staff to step up and fill the gap. “One of the essentials is that the team around the CFO has the ability to do the essential business of transactional management and stewardship so the CFO can stand back,” says HMRC’s Thompson. “Pumping up the leadership capacity gives the CFO more headspace.”

When they trust and empower their teams, CFOs can spend less time on fire-fighting, adds James Aspinall, finance director at the West Midlands’ Centro Passenger Transport Authority. These days, says Aspinall, he can commit 90% of his time to adding value to the body’s strategic policy development. “I have got the team now to deal with the day-to-day issues,” he comments. “I review monthly reports with the team and issues sometimes crop up. But I absolutely trust my finance manager, and I let her get on with it.”

Watkins highlights two more crucial skills for today’s crop of CFOs: communication skills, and a broad overview of their organisation’s operations. “One thing that comes out clearly is the value attached to being able to manage high-level relationships — at board level, directors general and ministers,” he comments. “You need the ability to have empathy and understand other people’s agendas, using all of your skills of diplomacy.”

Source: CFO Public Sector survey January/February 2016

Figure 3: Top challenges likely to be faced by CFOs in the next five years

- Operational effectiveness
- Delivery of projects, products and services
- Government budget pressures
- Financial and skills capability

Source: CFO Public Sector survey January/February 2016 interview with 19 CFOs. **18 participants responded
Figure 4: Whether CFOs felt time spent on various areas in their role was sufficient

Ensuring business decisions are grounded in sound financial criteria based on a robust control environment

Providing analysis and insight to support CEO and other senior leaders, including sophisticated data-driven analytics and strategic risk assessments

Leading key initiatives in finance that support overall strategic goals, such as changes to finance operating models

Developing and defining the overall strategy for your company, including the risk factors of different strategic decisions

Funding, enabling and executing strategy set by CEO

Representing the company’s progress on strategic goals to external stakeholders (investors, analysts, media, etc.)

Source: CFO Public Sector survey January/February 2016 interview with 19 CFOs.

“One of the essentials is that the team around the CFO has the ability to do the essential business of transactional management and stewardship so the CFO can stand back. Pumping up the leadership capacity gives the CFO more headspace.”

Jon Thompson, Chief Executive, HM Revenue & Customs
Furthermore, CFOs must be able to communicate well beyond those top levels, engaging with people throughout the finance team and across the organisation. Robertson says: “I have worked with fellow directors, run roadshows, and talked to all our staff about the financial implications of government changes to regulations. Mobilising the business to bring about the changes was led mainly by the chief executive and myself.”

To help create and communicate such change, CFOs need both an excellent understanding of all their organisation’s operations, and a familiarity with emerging trends and technologies across the business. “You might be weighing up different finance models and options and the implications of each. There are a whole host of different topic areas you get into, and you need to have a certain level of knowledge about those different things,” says Watkins. “In the area of IT, for instance, if the proposal is to adopt a ‘tower’ model, you need to know what that means. You need to understand supply chains. This means that you can no longer just confine yourself to the topic of finance in its purest form.”

Recruitment challenges

Given this expanding skill set, and robust demand for finance professionals from the private sector, recruiting the right personnel for finance teams is far from straightforward. Almost three quarters of CFOs agree or strongly agree that organisations are facing a growing talent crisis to find finance leaders who can thrive in the new environment. Nine in ten say that organisations will need to recruit from a more diverse talent pool to find the next generation of finance leaders.

While many staff are driven by a public service ethos and such benefits as public sector pension arrangements, many CFOs cite restrictions on take-home pay as a key obstacle to recruiting staff with appropriate skills. Robertson says: “It is a seller’s market. Treasury management, development finance, corporate finance and procurement professionals can be hard to find. If you want someone really good, you have to pay a bit more. For the public sector, that is a problem.”

HMRC, notes Jon Thompson, is concentrating on developing its own managers; it simply doesn’t have the budget to recruit top leaders in competition with finance and accountancy businesses. “We are investing in professional qualifications to grow future leaders,” he says. “We are not competitive in the open market - we can’t go out and buy someone for £700,000 like the private sector.”

Figure 5: Key barriers to adopting new technologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of internal skills</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy IT complexity</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment required</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of new systems and technology</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty over benefits of technologies</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus of IT function on other priorities</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus of finance function on other priorities</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff capacity to adapt to change</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty over ROI</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security &amp; risk concerns</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CFO Public Sector survey January/February 2016 interview with 19 CFOs.
CFO goals

Whilst CFOs are well aware of the need to improve the professional finance skills and technologies available within their teams, their key development goals revolve around the ability to help scope, plan and scrutinise organisational change projects. Asked their top strategic priority over the next five years, some 58% rank initiatives such as redesigning supply chains, operating models and digital systems at the top of their list. In second place, 26% choose driving cost efficiencies through increased automation, outsourcing, rationalisation and restructuring.

The crucial importance of CFOs’ input into such money-saving programmes should help shield finance teams from the deep cuts hitting frontline services; certainly, finance departments have been in the ascendant in recent years. Watkins highlights that as the public sector’s finances stabilise, CFOs will need to protect their newfound influence and wider roles. “The current aim of, ‘finance at the heart of decision-making’, is easier to achieve at a time of austerity, but history suggests more difficult when the pressure is off,” he says. Bridges, though, is optimistic: “Maybe as we move to slightly more stable financial and economic conditions, there is a platform to build on. The finance function can move to thinking not just about cuts, but about value.”

Partnering opportunities

Respondents were asked how important a range of objectives are to them, in terms of their “top goals for the operating model of the finance function” over the next five years. Improving business partnering between the finance operations and other units and functions within the organisation was listed by 95% of CFOs as either critical (58%) or a significant priority (37%) – making it the most popular answer by some distance.

Aspinall is responsible for an £8bn transport investment programme – but that total is split between various organisations, including local authorities. “If I don’t make sure I understand what we have promised and that the various organisations can still fund it, then nobody else will,” he says. “If we assume certain projects will start by a certain date and business rates will start flowing, any delay could cost a million pounds over a year. Five or six of those, and we aren’t going to be able to deliver.”

He says that better collaborative working is the “big prize” within and between government organisations. “In the past we have all worked in splendid isolation,” he comments. “It is about understanding and taking account of problems that weren’t previously considered by different parts of the organisation. It is a big mindset change.”

The ways in which such collaboration occurs, though, will change over time. For some time, the Cabinet Office has been pushing government organisations to pass back office functions to shared service centres - generating economies of scale and bringing private investment into back office functions. But the agenda has made slow progress, with many organisations keen to retain their own bespoke systems and accounting officers wary of losing control of spending and processes for which they remain personally accountable. A 2012 report by the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee found low take-up of centrally-created shared service centres, noting: “Those bodies which have become customers of shared service centres have retained their own processes rather than adopt those of the centre, resulting in over-complicated systems which also undermine the scope for efficiency.” These issues persist as the 2016 report on Shared Service by the NAO found that “only two of the 26 planned customers have joined a single operating platform”.

Certainly, the shared services agenda doesn’t head up CFOs’ ‘to do’ lists, with only 37% ranking it as a “significant priority” within the finance function – well below jobs such as standardising tasks and automating processes. Watkins says that although the potential savings are significant, finance chiefs face the challenge of being flexible enough to recognise that some current agendas may not survive developments in digital technology. “traditional shared services could be overtaken by technology such as blockchain and other developments coming from leftfield,” he comments. “Finance departments face the interesting dilemma of trying to solve, here and now, the issues of an operating model – for instance shared services – whilst keeping an eye on the future model and the potential for innovation, in a world where the pace is accelerating.”

“The potential savings are significant, finance chiefs should be flexible enough to recognise that the agenda may not survive developments in digital technology.”

Craig Watkins, former Finance Director at Ministry of Justice
Developing the right skills, functions and organisational cultures

When CFOs are asked to rank their “top three strategic priorities for their organisation’s finance function”, the most popular top priority – backed by half of respondents – is to ‘make significant changes to the finance function skill set’.

This represents a major challenge not just for CFOs, but also for the next generation of finance leaders. Asked to name the ‘critical skills and experience needed by future finance leaders’, 89% of CFOs say leadership skills are ‘critical’. Whilst this answer was well in the lead, strategic risk management is seen as critical by 53%; and Bridges highlights the close links between the two skills. “CFOs need to be at the table when risks are being discussed,” he says. “Even if they don’t directly have the final say over decisions, finance will have some stake in sorting risk issues out if you need a better or different process. Finance can help clarify the true risks, and help mitigate them.”

Watkins points to the private sector, where finance chiefs have typically taken a much greater role in leading change: “The private sector often describes the CFO as the chief executive’s right-hand person. Nothing happens without the CFO being consulted. That hasn’t always been the case in the past in the public sector. Can we hand on heart say say that every permanent secretary looks first to their CFO? That is one of the big shifts that needs to continue”. Jon Thompson – a former CFO now in his second permanent secretary-level job – sums it up: “The CFO and the chief executive need to run things together,” he says.

The digital landscape

To help lead change, finance functions will need both better data, and the ability to make sense of it. Small wonder than that the second most popular top priority for finance functions – named by almost half of respondents – is realising the potential of big data and analytics capabilities to transform forecasting, risk management, and value assessments. “Big data gives the fantastic ability to analyse whole systems of transactions rather than just parts of them,” says Thompson. “The CFO is an essential part of that – they have to get used to dealing with outputs as well as inputs, which means getting to grips with what is being produced and the performance of the organisation as a whole.”

Figure 6: Skills and experience required to deliver strategic priorities of CFOs for the next five years

1. **74%**  
   Build understanding of digital, smart technologies and sophisticated data analytics.

2. **53%**  
   Build leadership and team-building skills.

3. **21%**  
   Increase exposure to major strategic change programs – such as IT delivery or M&A integration.

4. **58%**  
   Improve stakeholder management skills – including investors, CEO, Boards and other C-suite members.

5. **53%**  
   Improve strategic risk management skills.

6. **11%**  
   Gain more international exposure.

Source: CFO Public Sector survey January/February 2016 interview with 19 CFOs.
Aspinall says: “Inevitably, finance has benefited from technology and is set to continue to do so. The ability to obtain reports very quickly and drill down from anywhere has made a big difference to our work.” He points to the automation of data submissions from bus operators, which were previously collated through manual surveys. “That enables us to audit much more quickly and efficiently,” he comments.

Bridges points out that the introduction of customer self-service interfaces saves a huge amount of administrative work, permitting finance teams to focus on analysing and interpreting the data generated. “The finance function is increasingly concentrating on strategic enabling stuff. Staff are saving time on entering data and able to focus more on what the data is telling us,” he says.

However, new digital tools can threaten staff with information overload, presenting a challenge to the finance operation. “The danger is that you can get too detailed,” says Aspinall. “Everyone now has the ability to get involved in the detail, rather than just one person – that has to be managed properly.”

Choosing the right digital tools is also vital for the finance function. High-profile failed ICT projects in government illustrate the dangers of badly-run procurements and programmes. Bridges says that care is needed to ensure that technology has been tried and tested. “We don’t necessarily want to be at the cutting edge of technology,” he says. “We have to be careful about taking risks with taxpayers’ money, and go on once glitches are sorted out.”

No substitute for experience

As CFOs work to produce new generations of finance leaders, according to the survey, the most valuable approach is to offer emerging leaders the opportunity to lead a major transformation project – named by 58% of respondents as ‘critical’. As Watkins says: “finance leaders increasingly lead major transformations. This means you need to understand good programme management, and delivery within the public sector context. Running such programmes gives finance leaders key experience and insight in how to successfully deliver large scale change.”

CFOs also have a key role themselves in developing emerging talent. Some 53% name as ‘critical’ the designation of talent development as a key performance indicator for senior finance chiefs; 42% say the same of both giving emerging finance leaders exposure to boards, and providing mentoring and coaching by senior finance executives.

Watkins says there is no substitute for learning on the job, as long as it is carefully overseen by the CFO or other senior finance executives. He says: “You can’t take a member of the team and teach them the broader skills they need in the same way as you can train them for a tax or an accounting exam. That broader knowledge comes from experience – life experience – and particularly making mistakes. Those are the experiences that build you.”

“..."The opportunities presented by new technology mean that CFOs will be responsible for delivering some major transformations. They need to understand good programme management and delivery within public sector context."

Craig Watkins, former Finance Director at Ministry of Justice
In a question on the challenges facing their employer, 63% of CFOs say that not enough female future finance leaders are emerging.
Accessing common tools

Senior finance professionals can also take advantage of central government efforts to boost the finance profession through the government’s Financial Management Reform programme. Instituted in 2013, the programme aims to help create a pipeline of talent, develop skills, encourage knowledge sharing, promote greater use of data and management information, and build up a detailed understanding of specific areas of government spending.

Bridges says that the initiative has helped to create a better sense of a joined-up finance profession. He says: “For me, the main benefit has been around networking. In previous years, finance was a bit siloed – each department had its own finance team, and [finance leaders] only occasionally got together at a meeting at the Treasury.”

Last year, as part of the programme, the government – with EY as a key delivery partner – launched a finance academy designed to offer finance skills development across all departments and grades.

Diversity is also a key challenge for the finance function, which has historically been male-dominated at senior levels. In a question on the challenges facing their employer, 63% of CFOs say that not enough female future finance leaders are emerging. When asked how to address the issue, 89% reply that better visibility for women leaders as role models could help, with 84% recommending active sponsorship of women in finance. Only 5% support the introduction of gender-based targets.

89% of CFOs said better visibility for women leaders as role models could help fill the void of a lack of female finance leaders in the profession, with 84% recommending active sponsorship of women in finance.

Figure 8: Strategies to address lack of female finance leaders

Visibility for women leaders acting as role models

Active sponsorship of women in finance

Training for all staff, including leaders

Clearer communication regarding their career path in finance function

Metrics to monitor progress on increasing female participation

Introduction of HR policies e.g., flexible working arrangements

Source: CFO Public Sector survey January/February 2016 interview with 19 CFOs.
Conclusion

As we have seen, CFOs within central government are enthusiastic about the increased value that they are being asked to add to business operations. While this places additional demands on their time, they are keen to go further towards a more strategic private sector model, where senior finance staff are routinely seen as integral to decision-making by the chief executive.

The efficiency and transformation agendas provide opportunities in this area, but they also offer challenges to the CFO’s core role of maintaining a robust finance function. Juggling the two priorities will not make life any easier going forward and require greater resilience, but CFOs are confident about their ability to step up – particularly where they can develop their teams to take on leadership roles and make use of emerging technologies.

However, pay restraint in the public sector can make attracting the best skills difficult, and internal capacity-building and career development are seen as crucial. It might seem counter-intuitive, but Bridges says that one of government’s best tools in attracting new talent is the very financial pressure that organisations and departments are facing. “Although it may feel tough at the moment, in some ways it is the best time to be working in finance,” he says. “Everyone is looking to us for answers.”

Figure 9: Key challenges faced by organizations today

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Slightly agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Slightly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisations are facing a growing talent crisis in terms of finding finance leaders who can thrive in tomorrow’s environment</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisations will need to recruit from diverse pools of talent to find the next generation of finance leaders</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisations will increasingly need to recruit finance executives with IT-related skills and experience in the future</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough female future finance leaders are emerging</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The traditional career path to CFO, via accountancy training and controller or divisional/regional role, is being eroded and will eventually disappear</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The growth of finance shared services and increasing automation are disrupting the traditional career path to the CFO role</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CFO Public Sector survey January/February 2016 interview with 19 CFOs.
Contacts

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