

# 10 Habits of Highly Successful Chief Financial Officers

Successful CFOs not only focus on risks and opportunities behind the numbers, they are key leaders in the company with a lot of influence who help shape the company culture. Being a successful leader requires excellent communication, collaboration, and team-building skills.



Here are ten habits of highly successful Chief Financial Officers that helped them go from good to great:



## 1 Show ethical leadership

CFOs are one of the most trusted individuals in the organization and must hold the highest standard for ethics. They set the tone for the entire business. Every decision must consider employees, stakeholders, and customers.



## 2 Use analytical thinking

Great CFOs are highly strategic. They understand the business and use that knowledge when meeting with teams, customers, investors, and board members.



## 3 Work well with others

Great CFOs are collaborative. They know how to communicate well, manage up, down, and across organizations, pick the right time to motivate and reward performance, and are generally well liked.

## 4 Build talent

Dedicated people are an organization's most valuable asset. To build high-performing teams, great CFOs invest in talent and encourage employees to take ownership of their tasks.

## 5 Have a curiosity-driven attitude

Great CFOs ask questions to get to the root of the problem. CFOs are not just curious, but relentlessly curious. If they don't understand the business and don't ask the right questions, it means they can't add value and insights.

## 6 Stay current

How tech-savvy do CFOs need to be? While it is important to stay on top of trends, a CFO doesn't need to be an expert in every software or system. However, they do need to bring the right experts in when necessary.



## 7 Act as strategic partner

A great CFO is a fantastic strategic partner to the CEO. They spend time understanding where the market is and what's driving the business. They also analyze trends to ensure they are always forward-looking.

## 8 Align teams

The CFO is a key player in building alignment within the senior team. At any given time, the rest of the company is watching how the C-suite challenges each other, holds each other accountable, and leads with a common purpose.

## 9 Make deals

Great CFOs make the deal happen rather than sitting back, saying "no," or pointing out roadblocks. Actively finding and creating opportunities is a complete switch from the traditional CFO role, but it's crucial.

## 10 Manage risk

CFOs often have to make tough calls. They focus on cash and cash flow while also acting as a strategic advisor to the CEO to balance innovation with risk. Focusing on cash, thinking through solutions, and being able to speak uncomfortable truths are key to being a good partner to the CEO.

