Hey! What's New? 2026-45

The CFO's Strategy Era Has Arrived

According to an article in the latest issue of FEI Canada's *F. A. R.,* sponsored by Workiva, "inaccurate data is more than an operational failure. It is a breakdown in trust. A new survey commissioned by Workiva of more than 400 C-level executives shows how they are reimagining their roles to address this challenge and lead with greater confidence. As AI pushes organizations to prioritize productivity, collaboration and data governance to manage risk and accelerate growth, CFOs are stepping forward as some of the most balanced AI decision-makers in the C-suite. They combine optimism about productivity gains with discipline around governance and risk, recognizing that trusted, traceable data turns uncertainty into advantage."

The survey found that CFOs are moving decisively on AI. "Nearly all (94%) say AI is already improving the timeliness and strategic nature of financial decisions. Almost all agree the rise of agentic AI requires joint CFO-CIO operations (97%) and a unified C-suite strategy for data governance (97%)."

CFOs are building trust through governance, the survey says. "Finance leaders understand that transparency and disciplined controls are essential to meeting stakeholder expectations. Even as reporting standards and regulatory requirements are debated globally, investor expectations remain constant. 93% say investors and lenders will continue to demand consistent disclosure."

At the same time, regulatory change remains a real challenge. The survey found that "86% of CFOs say shifting regulations will not reduce the need for accurate, real-time data, and 89% say their companies already maintain controls that exceed current requirements. Even so, only 39% of CFOs worldwide say they are confident their companies will be able to adapt quickly as reporting requirements evolve. U.S. CFOs in the survey were more confident in their ability to adapt (50%), perhaps due in part to a higher level of confidence in the strength of their internal controls."

CFOs are leaning into C-suite collaboration. "As AI adoption and data governance reshape enterprise strategy, finance leaders are increasingly partnering with technology leaders to ensure decisions are grounded in shared data and shared accountability. More than half of CFOs also believe they should be the CSO's primary collaborator in driving sustainability outcomes. 97% of CFOs agree on:

- C-suite must unite around shared data governance strategy.
- CFOs and CIOs must work together to implement and benefit from agentic AI.
- Access to shared sustainability data leads to better business results.

The survey reports that "CFOs see governance as trust infrastructure. While regional oversight is constantly debated, U.S. federal discussions have intensified around proposed SEC regulations that would allow public companies to transition to a semiannual reporting cadence. Despite this potential reduction in frequency, CFOs remain committed to rigorous disclosure standards. They no longer view governance as a defensive compliance function but as a strategic competitive advantage."

CFOs agree that:
• 94%: regulatory oversight ensures a level playing field through consistent, comparable disclosures.
• 94%: clear guidelines help reduce legal uncertainty.
• 89%: their company maintains rigorous controls that exceed current regulatory requirements.
• 86%: regulatory changes will not reduce the need for accurate, real-time data to drive business decisions.

AI is redefining C-suite leadership roles and relationships, the survey stresses. “CFOs are taking the lead in scaling its value across the enterprise. They are embedding AI into finance. They are advocating for C-suite alignment around shared data governance. They are exceeding regulatory requirements while anticipating investor expectations. And they are expanding their influence across technology and sustainability strategy. In a market defined by volatility, automation and rising demands for transparency, organizations that fail to integrate AI with disciplined governance will fall behind. CFOs understand this. The finance function is no longer supporting enterprise strategy. It is defining it. Growth depends on intelligent automation. Trust depends on governed data. And CFOs are positioned to deliver both.”

Get the survey report at CFO mini report - The CFO’s Strategy Era Has Arrived.