# CFO Interview Questions

### Warm-Up Questions

1. I see you worked at the XYZ company. What did you enjoy about your time there?
2. Why are you looking for a new opportunity?
3. What do you find compelling about this role?

### Questions to Reveal a Candidate’s Strategic Leadership Skills

1. Tell me about the [difference between growth and scale](https://theceosrighthand.co/growth-vs-scale/).
2. What have you done in the past to help a company like ours grow or scale? What did you set out to achieve? What hurdles did you overcome, and how?
3. Which resources did you rely upon to reach your goals and to propel that company forward?
4. Which of those resources existed already, and what did you bring in?
5. How did you manage or lead those resources?
6. How did you convince people that what you needed to do was the *right* thing to do?
7. What conflicts arose during that process (among people or between departments who may have been at cross purposes), and how did you resolve them?
8. Tell me about the financial roadmap for the last company you worked for. For instance, our balance sheet was like this when I started, and we wanted to sell the company in 3 years. How did you do it? What was your roadmap like, and how did you help steer the ship?
9. Describe a difficult financial challenge you helped a company unravel. What plan did you propose, how did you implement it, and what were the quantifiable results?
10. Pick a company where you have worked before and tell me about its vision. What was the vision when you started at that company? How did you help them achieve it? Or, if you didn’t achieve that vision, why not, and what could you have done differently?
11. Please walk me through how you might grow a company like ours from $5 million to $50 million (or $50 million to $100 million, whatever is relevant).
12. What challenges do you anticipate for a company in our growth stage?
13. Given what you know about this company, where could you add value?
14. What do you see as the external risks to our company’s success?
15. At this company, we have a board, and some of those board members are outside investors who sometimes have goals that differ from our company's goals. For example, an investor might want to sell in three years, whereas the company may not. What have you done (or what would you do) in this situation? How would you coach our CEO on the appropriate way to handle this?

### Team Management and Leadership Interview Questions

1. Given your knowledge about this company, please tell me what you would imagine doing in the first 90 days. What would be your plan?
2. Please share an example of what might be on the agenda for your weekly finance and accounting meeting.
3. How do you mentor your team? What kind of professional development activities do you encourage to grow their skills, help them become better team members, and guide them forward in their careers?
4. How do you ensure your team feels challenged, valued, and engaged?
5. How do you align your team with your company’s changing goals and keep them on track for meeting those goals?
6. What is your approach to budgeting and forecasting, and how might you modify it for our organization?
7. How do you [hold people accountable](https://theceosrighthand.co/accountability-in-the-workplace/)? Do you use a framework like RACI (responsibility assignment matrix), or prefer a different system to track and manage your team’s responsibilities?
8. What do you do to elevate yourself professionally? For instance, what networks do you associate with, and who do you talk to outside work to stay current and abreast of best practices?
9. How have you used artificial intelligence (AI) as a CFO? Please provide concrete examples.

### Questions to Ask a Chief Financial Officer to Explore Specialized Experience (M&A Example)

1. Tell me about a time when you navigated a merger and acquisition event for a company.
2. What kind of deal was it?
3. What worked, and what did *not* work?
4. If you were on the buy side of the acquisition, was it successful? If not, why, and what could you have done differently?
5. Similarly, if it was an exit, was it successful? Why, and how might you have changed things?

### Cultural Fit Questions

1. Tell me about the best CEO you have ever worked with.
2. Now, tell me about the worst CEO you have ever worked with.
3. If I were to ask your most recent CEO about their experience with you, what do you think they would say?
4. What do you do for fun?
5. If you weren’t a CFO, what would you do to earn a living?
6. What are your career goals and aspirations?