



From Strategy to Execution: Where Finance Transformation Begins

1. The Shift Is Clear

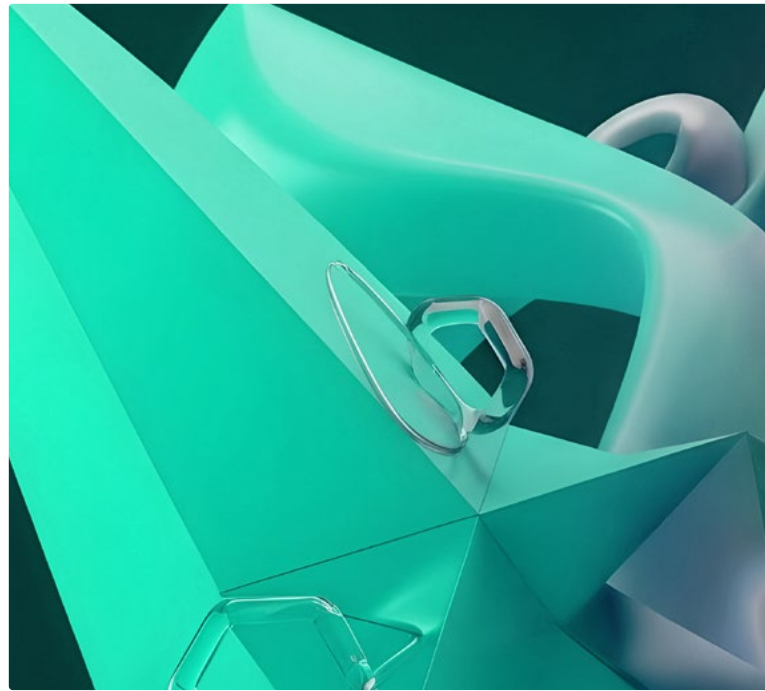
The expectations placed on finance leaders have changed significantly.

This shift was explored in our Chief Future Officer guide, which examined the evolution of the CFO from financial steward to strategic business partner. Research from Deloitte highlights this changing mandate, with finance leaders increasingly expected to balance growth, risk management, technology adoption and operational performance alongside traditional finance responsibilities.¹

Today's finance leaders are expected to do far more than oversee reporting, budgets and compliance. Deloitte's Finance Trends research found that **57% of finance leaders now influence enterprise strategy across their organisation**, reinforcing the growing role finance plays in shaping broader business direction and transformation priorities.¹

The vision of a more connected and insight-driven finance function is now widely understood.

The challenge is rarely understanding why transformation matters. The challenge is turning that ambition into action.



2. The Execution Gap

For many finance leaders, the case for transformation is already established. The benefits of automation, improved visibility and more connected finance operations are widely understood. The challenge is not whether change is needed, but how to make progress while balancing day-to-day operational demands.

Finance teams are often expected to improve efficiency, support growth, strengthen governance and adopt new technologies simultaneously. These priorities compete for the same resources, budgets and stakeholder attention, making it difficult to determine where to focus first.

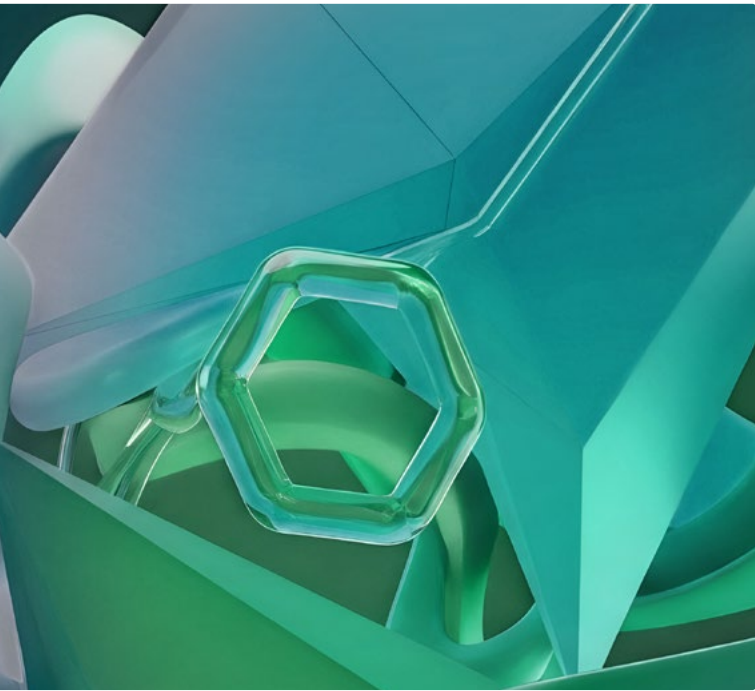
Research from PwC highlights this challenge, finding that while finance transformation remains a high priority for many CFOs, implementation can be difficult alongside ongoing operational responsibilities and competing business demands.²

At the same time, Deloitte's Finance Trends research suggests that while many finance functions are investing in AI and advanced technologies, fewer are realising measurable value from those investments.¹

This often creates a gap between ambition and execution.

Without a clear starting point, organisations may find transformation efforts become a collection of disconnected initiatives rather than a coordinated program of improvement.

The vision is understood. Execution is where many organisations struggle.



3. Why Transformation Stalls

While organisations may recognise the need for change, they do not always have a clear view of where inefficiencies exist, where bottlenecks occur or which manual activities consume the greatest amount of time and effort. Over time, workarounds, duplicated tasks and disconnected processes can become embedded into day-to-day operations, making them difficult to identify and address.

This challenge is rarely confined to a single process. Accounts payable, accounts receivable, procurement, payroll, approvals and reporting often span multiple systems, teams and stakeholders. As a result, issues that appear to be technology-related may actually stem from process design, inconsistent workflows or unclear ownership.

Research from APQC highlights the importance of understanding process maturity and benchmarking performance before embarking on major improvement initiatives, noting that organisations with a clear view of current-state performance are better positioned to identify gaps and prioritise opportunities for improvement.³

Without a clear understanding of how work flows across the finance function, organisations can struggle to identify where effort is being lost, where risks exist and which opportunities will deliver the greatest value.

Before organisations can determine where they want to go next, they first need a clear understanding of where they are today.

4. Clarity as the Foundation

Effective transformation starts with a clear understanding of current workflows, process maturity and operational performance.

Without this visibility, organisations can struggle to identify bottlenecks, prioritise improvement opportunities or build alignment across finance, IT and leadership teams. McKinsey's State of Organizations 2026 report highlights this shift, with organisations increasingly focused on improving process flows (39%) and reducing silo's (35%) to drive performance.⁴

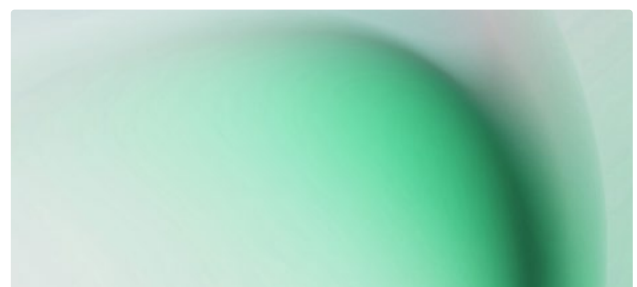
This is why assessment and benchmarking are often used as a starting point for transformation initiatives. A structured review of finance processes can help establish a baseline and create a shared understanding of where improvement efforts should begin.

Effective transformation often starts with:

- A clear view of current workflows and process maturity
- Identification of bottlenecks, manual effort and process friction
- A shared baseline across finance, IT and business stakeholders
- Benchmarking against recognised practices and performance indicators
- Greater confidence in where improvement efforts should begin

Understanding current performance creates a more informed starting point for future investment, helping organisations focus resources where they are most likely to deliver measurable value. The benefits of this approach are reflected in research from The Hackett Group, which found that Digital World Class® finance organisations operate at 45% lower cost while delivering faster and more effective business insights than their peers, reinforcing the importance of strong process, data and technology foundations.⁵

Clarity creates the foundation for more confident, better-sequenced transformation.



5. Turning Clarity into Action

Once organisations have established a clear understanding of their current finance operating environment, transformation becomes easier to prioritise and execute.

Rather than tackling isolated issues as they emerge, finance leaders can focus on the opportunities most likely to improve efficiency, strengthen controls and support business objectives.

This often involves:

- Prioritising opportunities based on business impact and effort
- Addressing high-friction, high-volume processes first
- Aligning finance, technology and operational stakeholders around shared objectives
- Establishing measurable success criteria and performance indicators
- Building momentum through achievable, incremental improvements

By taking this approach, organisations can create a stronger business case for investment while demonstrating measurable outcomes throughout the transformation journey.

The objective is not simply to automate more processes. It is to create a finance function that is more efficient, resilient, scalable and capable of supporting better business decisions.

When clarity is combined with a structured action plan, transformation becomes less about reacting to problems and more about delivering measurable business outcomes.

6. The Next Step

For many organisations, the hardest part of finance transformation is not selecting technology or securing budget. It is knowing where to start.

By this stage, the need to improve efficiency, strengthen controls, increase visibility and reduce reliance on manual processes is already well understood. What is less clear is where to focus first to deliver the greatest value.

This is why many organisations begin with assessment before implementation, using a clear baseline to prioritise opportunities and guide investment.

A structured review can help organisations:

- Understand the current maturity of finance processes and workflows
- Identify bottlenecks, risks and manual touchpoints
- Benchmark performance against recognised practices
- Prioritise improvement opportunities based on business impact
- Build a practical roadmap for future transformation initiatives.

This approach is not about creating more work. It is about creating greater clarity.

At FUJIFILM Process Automation, we help organisations gain clearer visibility into their finance operations through our **Finance Health Check on Business Processes**, designed to benchmark process maturity, identify practical opportunities for improvement and provide actionable recommendations.

Transformation does not begin with technology. It begins with visibility, understanding and a clear path forward.



[Request Your Finance Health Check](#)

¹ Deloitte, 2025. Finance Trends 2026: Navigating the Expanded Scope of Finance. Available at: <https://www.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/leadership/finance-trends-leadership.html>

² PwC, 2025. CFO Insights. Available at: <https://www.pwc.com.au/insights/cfo.html>

³ APQC, 2025. Process Management and Benchmarking Resources. Available at: <https://www.apqc.org>

⁴ McKinsey & Company, 2026. The State of Organizations 2026. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/people%20and%20organizational%20performance/our%20insights/the%20state%20of%20organizations/2026/the-state-of-organizations-2026.pdf>

⁵ The Hackett Group, 2025. Digital World Class® Finance Teams Operate at 45% Lower Cost and Deliver Faster, Smarter Insights. Available at: <https://www.thehackettgroup.com/the-hackett-group-digital-world-class-finance-teams-operate-at-45-lower-cost-and-deliver-faster-smarter-insights/>

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