



Gene Siciliano



How To Evaluate Your CFO

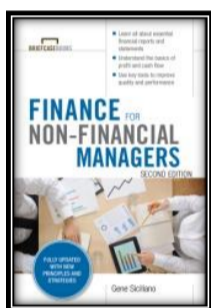
Middle market CEOs are often in a difficult position. They have grown their companies successfully, and their management team in sales and marketing and production are top notch. Now they need a real chief financial officer, the missing link in the team, the chair perhaps occupied by a long-time employee who has risen to the position of controller, at least in name.

The CEO knows they need more. Yet they often are not experienced enough in working with CFOs to know how to evaluate financial officers during the hiring process, or during actual performance on the job. Learning by trial-and-error is a very costly process, and most would prefer to learn from others' experiences whenever possible.



The *National Association of Corporate Directors* surveyed a cross section of their members awhile back to find out how they felt about CFOs and their role in organizations. We think you'll find the results helpful in your own assessment. The survey contained just 3 questions:

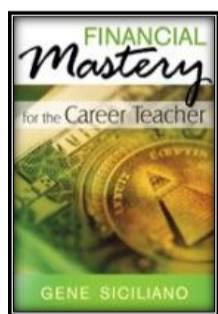
Finance for Non-financial Managers, 2nd Edition, McGraw-Hill 2014, covers 14 key topics in the increasingly demanding world of business



finance. This new and significantly expanded revision includes a wealth of new material, following on

the heels of the best selling original. Because managers can no longer afford to be non-financial.

Gene brings his extensive financial management acumen and plain language writing style to the world of personal finance with **Financial Mastery for the Career Teacher**, Corwin Press



2010. Written at the urging of an educational publisher, the guidance and strategies in this book will work for

professional people well beyond the education industry.

Survey Question 1) From the Board's perspective, what are the skills and qualities you value most highly in a CFO? The principal answers, in ranked order: integrity (including candor, honesty and independence), communication skills, financial skills, team skills, strategic vision, and positive relationships with the financial community.

Survey Question 2) What skills and qualities are most often lacking in the CFO? The principal answers: comprehensive knowledge of the business, strategic vision and skills, communication skills, people skills, independence, and management skills.

Survey Question 3) What are the most critical roles of the CFO? The principal answers: evaluate and communicate results, manage financial health of the organization, understand and participate in strategic planning, ensure accuracy of reporting and ethical compliance, act as business partner/advisor to the CEO, and challenge management appropriately.



What about CEO views on the same subject? Turns out these results were not much different from a survey of CEOs by the same group. If you believe the findings are valid (and we do), then let us ask CEO readers 3 questions of our own:

Our Question 1) Do you actively and specifically take these or similar factors into account when you assess your CFO's performance for your organization, or when you are in the market to hire such a person?

Our Question 2) Do you feel comfortable evaluating your CFO in such areas as financial skills, strategic planning leadership, and ability to ensure accuracy of reporting?

Our Question 3) Do you permit, in fact require, your CFO to function with independence, challenging management when the CFO considers it appropriate, without exacting a price for not following the party line?

For an independent assessment of your financial department's personnel, practices and procedures, consider us a resource to your board or to yourself. Contact me to learn more about this fast, powerful tool for evaluating your organization's arguably most critical technical department. Can you afford to wing it?



Should you consider doing something today? Yes, yes, and yes!

And if you have decided to get started and you want help doing it, call me. I can help you., 310-645-1091 or 888-788-6534.

Or, [e-mail me](#) for more information.

Gene Siciliano, **Your CFO for Rent**®



Gene Siciliano is the founder and president of Western Management Associates, source of *Your CFO for Rent*® services for over 25 years. The firm provides interim and part-time CFO/Controller services, executive coaching and guidance in operational finance and exit strategy. Gene and his team of seasoned CFOs and controllers have a clear mission in their work with CEOs and owner/operators of privately owned companies. Our value proposition:

- Increase the company's net worth and profitability by improving the management team's financial proficiency and bottom line results, and
- Develop and execute strategies that will make your company more appealing to a buyer or investor, if and when the time comes for an ownership transition.