

Press release  
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## One in five Kiwi CFOs ambitious to move into CEO role

- 21% of New Zealand CFOs hope their next career move will be CEO of their current organisation.
- 23% say they hope to move on to a larger organisation as part of their next career stage.
- New Zealand CFOs say the key steps needed to reach the next stage of their career are gaining experience in another part of their current company (56%), managing a major project (49%) and stronger relationships with external stakeholders (40%).

**Auckland, 26 October 2016** – Despite reaching the pinnacle of their career in finance, New Zealand Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) are ambitious to progress further and are very conscious about their career development. According to an independent survey from specialist recruiter [Robert Half](#), more than one in five (21%) CFOs believe the next step in their career is to move up to the CEO role in their current organisation.

**Megan Alexander, General Manager Robert Half New Zealand** said: *“Many CFOs see their next career move as running an organisation as CEO, indicating finance leaders have the transferrable skills necessary to make the transition from CFO to CEO.”*

The majority (42%) of CFOs are keen to remain within the finance sector: They are either ambitious to move on to a larger organisation (23%) or they want to expand their finance role in their current organisation (19%). However, moving on from the financial remit also seems to be an attractive career option as 21% of CFOs hope their next career move will be Head of a business division other than finance. The survey data suggest New Zealand CFOs are ambitious to move on to bigger and better things, as only 11% are satisfied in their current role.

*“The modern CFO is now considered a strategic business partner who’s not only responsible for their organisation’s finance department, but is able to contribute to the overall direction of the business – attributes that are part of the broad skill set needed to step up into the CEO role. Being able to lead an organisation often requires professionals to have an in-depth understanding of the business’s finance function and an informed view of the broader financial environment, which are key tenets of any CFO’s role,”* **Megan Alexander** added.

*“The current market for CFOs in New Zealand is currently buoyant, so it is not surprising to see a large number of CFOs ambitious to take the next step in their career by moving on to a larger organisation.”*

**The following questions was asked to 100 New Zealand CFOs: “Which of the following comes closest to describing what you hope will be your next career move?”**

CFO/Financial Director in a larger organisation	23%
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	21%
Head of a Business Division (other than finance)	21%
A bigger CFO/Finance Director in current organisation (e.g. Group CFO)	19%
No change/satisfied in current role	11%
Retire	3%
Other/don’t know	2%

*Source: Independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 100 New Zealand CFOs and finance directors.*

In terms of the essential steps required in achieving the next stage in their career, more than half (56%) of New Zealand CFOs see gaining experience in another part of their current organisation as their main priority. Another 49% of CFOs believe managing a major project or change program is crucial to achieving their next career move, followed by building strong relationships and trust with external stakeholders (40%) and gaining international experience (39%).

**Top three steps New Zealand CFOs believe are needed to achieve the next stage of their career**

Gain experience in another part of the organisation	56%
Manage a major project or change program	49%
Build relationships and trust with external stakeholders	40%
Gain international experience	39%
Build relationships and trust with internal stakeholders	37%
Gain more experience in current role	32%
Complete a professional/industry qualification or MBA	14%
Other	11%

*Source: Independent survey commissioned by Robert Half among 100 New Zealand CFOs and finance directors – multiple answers allowed.*

*“New Zealand CFOs are ambitious to move onto the next stage of their career, highlighting the position itself is not necessarily the peak of their career ambitions. Gaining experience across all areas of a business and building relationships with internal and external stakeholders are instrumental steps for any CFO wanting to showcase their capabilities to the fullest extent,”* **Megan Alexander** added.

*“Our findings show New Zealand CFOs are acutely aware of what they want for the future of their careers and the necessary steps needed to achieve the next step. All professionals, including the CFO, need to map out their career journey and knowing one’s career aspirations allows them to focus on their ultimate career goals.”*

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**Notes to editors**

**About the research**

The annual study is developed by Robert Half and conducted by an independent research firm, surveying 100 Chief Financial Officers (CFO) and finance directors in New Zealand. This survey is part of the international workplace survey, a questionnaire about job trends, talent management and trends in the workplace.

**About Robert Half**

Robert Half is the world’s first and largest specialised recruitment consultancy and member of the S&P 500. Founded in 1948, the company has over 325 offices worldwide providing temporary, interim and permanent recruitment solutions for accounting, finance and technology in New Zealand. More information on [roberthalf.co.nz](http://roberthalf.co.nz).

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Gabrielle Nagy

Public Relations Manager Robert Half Asia Pacific

[gabrielle.nagy@roberthalf.com.au](mailto:gabrielle.nagy@roberthalf.com.au)

+61 2 8028 7751