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CFO transformation

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Over the past twenty years a significant number of transformation programs have evolved that focus on systems, tools and processes in order to improve business performance. These programs were initiated to bring about long term and persistent changes. Our research shows that various transformational levers have been intensively implemented, however, their effect on the profit margins are significantly lower than expected. Consequently, any commitment to streamline a business that does not lay adequate focus on the “human” dimension to change, will not prove to be effective.

There has been a significant transformation in various aspects relating to services and financial management processes, to conform with new regulations which have emerged over the last decade. Some of these are in the form of IFRS standards, laws of financial security and stronger prudential ratios resulting from the financial crisis, etc. These developments have contributed towards promoting auditability, traceability and reliability of data for the purpose of reporting and compliance. The critical challenge for the finance function has been to move up from a role of merely managing finances to a more encompassing one. This new role takes into account strategic, executional and talent-related issues. Only in this way can the finance function be seen as a strategic rather than as a technical resource.

There has been an extensive debate over the years on the role of the finance function and its need to evolve into a more strategic conception. However this debate has generally not delved upon how the finance function should encompass, if at all, the role of human resources in organisational change and transformation.

While financial controllers still aspire to become true ‘business partners’ and operational managers, the way they operate has paradoxically made this goal rather more difficult to achieve. To play an effective role in facilitating the mobilisation of an organisation, they must be able to upgrade to a truly strategic and managerial dimension.

Since Mazars has usually been a partner of the finance function and related areas in conjunction with its responsibilities as auditors, in its consulting division it also offers a range of solutions to enhance the effectiveness of this function in keeping with emerging best and innovative practices. Focused upon three key dimensions, namely, strategy, operations and risk control, it relies on the approach described in this publication on transformation of the finance function. This publication also describes Mazars’ approach on financial management. It is based on a comprehensive analysis of the “Model of information and management” of the company, which structures the process of reporting and monitoring of the organisations. This approach provides a diagnosis of financial management and how this can be aligned with the overall organisational strategy with the help of financial tools.

Our approach has several unique features. It aims to mobilise both rational and emotional drivers of transformation. In the process, it promotes a sustainable performance of the company, which not only focuses on the financial indicators but also questions the very essence of this approach. In its unique way, it helps prevent the pitfalls that would accompany any proposed transformation. The importance of the human dimension in the transformational programs to improve business performance is also significantly highlighted in this publication. In fact, it stresses that if the human dimension is not considered in an organisational transformation, there may arise a vital gap between the human resource of the organisation and the development of its organisational culture. We are confident that you will find this publication useful to your business.
Executive summary

Transforming the finance function

Aligning strategy, organisation and finance, by mobilising rational and emotional factors

The chief financial officer (“CFO”), as a leader and a member of the steering body of an organisation, has witnessed a transformation in this role due to changing business strategies.

The CFO is currently faced with four critical questions:

- How to anticipate market trends (business, economic, partners) by realistic planning and management tools available for general direction?
- How to reproduce reliable and secure information, which meet the requirements of supervisory authorities?
- How to define the drivers of growth and the critical factors for cost reduction, while evaluating the risks?
- How to align the finance function and its daily activities in line with the organisation’s strategy and on its objectives of change? How to distinguish between what is short-term and long term?

The first of these questions was emphasised in the discussions on the transformation of financial management over the past ten years. The issues of reliability, traceability and security of information produced by financial departments have prevailed over management of partner relationships and operational management. The reporting function of the finance department has often outweighed the responsibility to control.

The second and third questions summarise the expectations of the finance function’s internal clients, the management committee it reports to, towards the CFO. These expectations position the finance function in a role of a business partner with operational management. It is this sense of authority which allows the finance function to extend its dialogue with operational management to propel the organisation in its strategy.

The finance function also seeks answer to the fourth question. It can do this by mobilising key drivers in two dimensions: rational and emotional. Our conviction is that the next stage of transformation in the finance function would happen through a conjoined mobilisation of these two categories of drivers.

This “point of view” publication seeks to provide answers to these questions and illustrates them with a progressive approach proposed by Mazars. It focuses mainly
on the activities of control and monitoring, identified under the finance management function. In fact, these activities are the most anticipated by operational management, whether to define the performance of the organisation or to predict its evolution. For the first part, we will see how the tools that support these activities can be adapted to align with the strategic goals of an organisation and under what terms and with which drivers. These drivers are not simply organisational (the rational), but also human (emotional) and the modus operandi (processes, operation). Besides the roles and responsibilities of each of these are not the only facilitators that should be stressed upon to bring about this transformation. To define and implement these, an organisation demands a managerial approach based on an understanding of the nature and purpose of the existence of the organisation and its unique characteristics. In the case of financial management, this transformation gains effectiveness when the finance function perceives the performance of the organisation in a way that is not exclusively financial and when operational management perceive their job with a viewpoint which is also financial. It is then that the management of a two-way communications bears fruit, in both directions (and not as two monologues).

In the second part of this publication, we focus on the question of a fruitful outcome of communication to and from the finance function. To promote dialogues between the finance management function and its internal clients, it is necessary to give a meaning not only to the expected end result of the finance function itself (indicators, dashboards, analysis) but also to the goals the organisation has set for itself. They are often expressed in financial terms, which limit their purpose to a strictly quantitative dimension and restrict others from perceiving the deeper meaning of these, which is certainly multidimensional.

The question on understanding the meaning is essential to share the strategic objectives of any organisation, public or private, and foster collective ownership of these objectives while creating a sense of belongingness based on shared values. While understanding the meaning of such goals one needs to go beyond just the sense of involvement (often regarded as a moral agreement) and seek a positioning with a sense of commitment (motivating more, based on groups of similar business references) in order to transform objectives into goals.

In the third part, we address the need to promote learning and professionalism from the perspective of a sustainable performance. The management of change is a strong requirement for improved cooperation between the finance management function and operational staff. In the current business environment, organisations continuously face severe economic, social, and financial turmoil. Organisations have to adapt to these changes continuously through the implementation of ambitious transformation programs. The resilience of organisations to such adversities is possible through a meticulous management of different performance dimensions such as economic, social, environmental and financial.

Finally, in the fourth part, we propose an improved methodology which facilitates the ushering in of such transformations, in diverse environments.
Introduction

The finance management function has gone through profound changes, due to increasing expectations of its internal customers, operational management, regulations and the market.

These transformations can be classified into 3 stages:

- As a first step, the finance management function is desired as an internal supplier: producing documents and data for regulatory use (declarative/accounting viewpoint), along with indicators and dashboards (analytical view). This is short term;

- The second stage sees this function take on additionally, a role of internal advisor/consultant - this adds a forward-looking/prospective dimension to activities. The management control starts to focus on more things (supply, demand, competition, resources, innovation, environment, etc.). This is medium term;

- The third stage is reached when the operational management recognises the finance function as an internal partner – and when it plays active role in elaboration of the strategic plan and its implementation and monitoring. This is long term and may shape the future of the organisation.

These 3 roles are not mutually exclusive. For any given organisation, the role of the finance management function can be that of a supplier, advisor and partner. What is interesting is that each stage these roles add up. A business can be stabilised at one of these stages; and aim, through a transformation program, to access the next stage.

Diagram 1: Development of the CFO’s role.

Source: Mazars 2011
1. **Drivers for adapting the plan**

1.1 **Two dimensions - emotional and rational**

In a context of change, (either inspired by the strategy or development of the market), evolution of the economic model (value chain) is more likely to impact the organisation’s management/business and information models.

These two models are defined as following:

- A business model that identifies the processes, key indicators and management principles, which allow the control and steering of the organisation over the value chain - these processes cover the back office functions (finance, HR...) and business (service, production, commerce...) and are controlled by key performance indicators (“KPIs”). The same indicators can be comprised and interpreted differently. The formalisation and implementation of the management model aims to standardise a reading of these indicators, while taking into account cultural differences that exist within the organisation;

- The information model describes the production and exchange of information - it aims to structure the very process of producing and facilitating information exchange. Consequently it acts as a common vocabulary of the firm.

In a transformation of an organisation (and therefore of its economic model), the objective is to align the organisation with the strategy; in the present case, this means aligning these two models with the strategy.

8 drivers allow the evolution of the business and information models which relate to the rational dimension that deal with the process, means (tools) and systems and the emotional dimension that deal with management culture and practices and individuals’ behaviour.
Combining these drivers can initiate effective transformation, in a sustainable way. Our research shows that organisations are primarily interested in the ‘rational’ drivers since they are the more immediate and easier to set in motion. However, what gives these programs strength in the long term is the ability to operate the ‘emotional’ drivers at the same time, since they tend to change managerial practices in the longer run.

1.2 Issues within the finance-management function

In the last few years the notion of reporting was mobilised to ensure compliance with regulations along with gradual conformity with international standards. IFRS standards, Sarbanes-Oxley, LSF in France. This development, which was reinforced by the past few years of crisis mostly in the financial sector, led to formulation of new security rules, somewhat distancing the financial controllers from the operational staff and key stakeholders in the information dissemination process.

This focus on reporting, based on the process of accounting more than the business content of the organisation, does not facilitate management dialogues. The job profile requirements for controllers have changed significantly - with an initial focus on knowledge and performance skills not supplementing accounting competency and compliance. This was first observed in the group doing management control and has eventually extended to the controllers of...
operational sites, whose mission gave more room for the establishment of financial dashboards, but negatively affected their leadership role in management issues.

Today, the issues of the finance management function consist of not only reporting but also building on the profits, while developing the processes for performance control and leadership in the management. The aim is to reconcile the evaluation of economic performance (not just financial) and business knowledge.

1.3 Reconciling commitment and involvement

Most often, the strategic alignment of the model of management and information favours the rational dimension or disconnects the emotional dimension. It does not encourage the commitment of employees.

**Diagram 3: Strategic alignment of the two dimensions rational and emotional of firms**

However, combining the two dimensions, rational and emotional, allows the reconciliation of consistency of objectives and team cohesion. Consequently, involvement (rational translation of an objective) is reinforced by commitment (emotional translation of this objective into a goal).
2. The essential question of meaning

Promoting commitment leads us back to talking about transforming an objective into a goal. For this, it is necessary to attach value both retrospectively and prospectively to the objective. For management, this means explaining the contribution of teams to the organisation’s strategy.

This question of attaching value and providing meaning to each individual’s work in the larger picture is fundamental to the changes experienced by private as well as public organisations, looking for constant adaptation and sustainable restructuring. The speed of change in structures is such that some employees, when they arrive, lose sight of the essential objectives and their direction. The constant reminder of these objectives is necessary to increase clarity and allow them to be seen in a collective sense or work.

2.1 Giving meaning to the deliverables of finance management function

In the case of the finance management function, providing meaning or making sense of the end results (deliverables) produced by this function (eg KPIs and dashboards) avoids reducing the management to a single reporting system producing the figures, which would bring the finance function to the traditional role of a “bean counter”. This also does not oppose management culture and business culture.

A common example is when the two cultures are very different. The management control on the one hand and business on the other hand, with two information systems in parallel, compete to produce indicators that the management needs to control or steer.
Making sense of the deliverables from financial management requires an educational effort to explain to both parties what these are, how they are constructed and what purpose they serve. This is evident with the indicators, whose interpretation can vary greatly between operational and a management controller and whose use of (or interest) may be understood differently by the two participants in the management dialogue. The most frequent and unfortunately unproductive situation is when a management controller produces indicators aimed at operational management, without knowing that the latter does not use them even though they need them, and do not know what purpose they serve.

For example, in the case of a consulting firm, an indicator delivered by the controller of the ratio of net revenue (“RN”) corresponds to the following equation: RN = billing rate / average salary cost for all days carried out by employees excluding overheads.

This indicator is very useful for a profit center manager who wants to know if he is valued appropriately, by his selling price and the benefits realised by his team. This net ratio differs depending on the type of advice (lowest to highest, IT firms, functional design, management, strategy) and allows the executive board to know what type of service or benefit is given, and if it is consistent with its market position.

A management consulting firm (where the net ratio is high) would have a net ratio of IT firms and would know immediately the offset is relative to its market.

In reality, sometimes the management controller delivers the indicator of net ratio without providing much help to the management, and the latter does not use it (but directly uses the sale price as the sole criterion of analysis) when required. In this case, the management dialogue once more resumes as two monologues.

2.2 Making sense of objectives

Making sense of the goals can go beyond the process of linking the individual to the enterprise solely on the economic front. This reason is not always enough to generate employee commitment, to secure the implementation of the strategy, to maximise business performance, particularly when the strategic vision itself tends to be diluted.

Such reasoning is more pronounced through a sense of “community”, which aims to integrate the employees in a collective business sense and produce meaningful values. This reasoning then produces personal commitment. It mobilises community references (retrospective effects) and supports the strategic vision (prospective actions). The use of these two driving factors facilitates the simultaneous involvement and commitment of employees while allowing them to understand their objectives.
Diagram 5: Throwing out a strictly ‘contractual’ logic by giving meaning to objectives

3. Driving change in the context of a sustainable performance

A strong management dialogue requires a greater professional approach towards the finance-management function, increased cooperation between these functions and the managerial function and finally, appropriation of control by operational management. These developments can lead to greater management control and assist in repositioning the “controllers” at a position close to the company’s business.

This changeover varies according to the importance and urgency of change, the management’s desire to position the finance function at a “Business Partner” role, and the nature of the ongoing transformation programs.

There are 3 methods to drive this change:

- Realignment: Upgrading the management control. The most relevant example for this is when the company moves from a decentralised culture to a centralised culture (i.e. sharing rules and common assets). In this scenario the finance management function does not change its fundamental objective;

- Anticipation: Adapting and steering the management control based on the company’s strategic demands and by changing the finance-management structure to align to its long term objectives. This can be best explained when a company, which focuses its growth strategy on the acquisition of competitors, anticipates issues related to the integration of new entities and adapts with cultural differences. However, formerly independent companies are not necessarily prepared for such a scenario;
Leadership: This is a key role played by the finance-management function in the transformation of the company. This can be achieved by closely linking the personal position and leadership of the group’s financial director to the transformational goals of the company. For example, IBM’s CFO has been, in parallel, named Chief Transformation Officer of the company.

3.1 Creating learning objectives

Although the finance-management function is the key in driving change, it also helps in better utilisation and generating organisational learning in 2 main areas:

- Resource allocation: It helps in ensuring that the corporate resources are obtained and are used effectively to achieve business objectives;

- Change management: It impacts and influences other members of the company to implement a strategy to achieve its business objectives.

As depicted in the ensuing chart, the implementation and its regular support make up the functions of the business. On the other hand, their control makes up the functions of management control, human resources and managerial skills.

**Diagram 6: Processes of management control - function management control, HR and managerial**
3.2 Learning through professional groups

It is necessary to adapt the control system to promote learning and ownership of deliverables (i.e. KPIs, dashboards etc.) of the finance-management function and align its objectives through increased professionalism of the financial and managerial functions. This will assist in the overall performance and will be a result of the social, economic and financial performance.

Adapting the finance-management function to a different level of learning and ownership will also facilitate efficiencies and professionalism, as shown below:

- Controlled focus on reporting: This professional approach makes the accounting function aware of management issues and the management function aware of accounting issues;

- Controlled focus on reporting and steering: On one hand, this professional approach promotes cooperation between functions of the finance-management and on the other hand, it promotes cooperation with the managerial function.

Diagram 7: Diffusion of management constraints and strategic opportunities throughout the company

The diffusion of management constraints and strategic opportunities via the control mechanism

The diffusion of constraints and opportunities can follow a top-down, bottom up orientation, or transverse

Strategic opportunities at the operational level contribute to enhancing the strategic vision

Source: Mazars 2011
3.3 Pursuing a sustainable performance

Adaptation of the control and monitoring system is important in order to increase the level of professionalism and cooperation within and between the finance-management function and managerial function. With an increased level of professionalism, a greater strategic alignment of the business becomes more important. This strategic alignment can be achieved through the diffusion of management constraints and research opportunities.

Diagram 8: Maximising overall performance via the control mechanism

This approach helps different functions cooperate better over time and become more professional and consequently translate into an increased level of overall performance in the long-term.
4. The advocated approach

The implementation of financial transformation in any organisation requires a specific approach, taking into account the emotional dimension in the organisation, rather than focusing solely on the rational.

**Diagram 9: Conviction - approach**

Furthermore, this approach applies to transformation programs with the goal of adapting mechanisms of control.

The advocated approach is based on the ‘ROMA’ approach, which consists of 4 areas:

- **R (Resources)**: support axis, including the tools needed by the company for its operations;
- **O (Organisation)**: organisational axis, especially focusing on the way the company operates;
- **M (Market)**: axis for the company’s business (which is unique to the industry);
- **A (Actors/agents)**: axis based on human culture, behavior and values present in the company.
This approach benefits from a methodological tool kit, divided into 5 phases:

- **Phase I** - Diagnose and analyse the existing finance-management function;

- **Phase II** - Analysis of the impact of current transformation projects. This is to know what mechanism of control must be adapted for alignment with the transformation already under way;

- **Phase III** - Definition of the transformation. This sets the targets and objectives of the transformation, while analysing the impact of the transformation on the finance-management and managerial sectors;

- **Phase IV** - Organisation of the transformation. The content of the transformation is validated and the means of its implementation is documented in a change management plan;

- **Phase V** - Deployment of the transformation, including procedures for monitoring its success, from the perspective of a sustainable performance.

**Diagram 10: Summary of approach**

Source: Mazars 2011
4.1 Phase I – Diagnosis

This first phase is identifying areas of improvement in the current finance-management function and documenting deviations from the target. It consists of two tasks: an audit focused on internal control and reporting, and a diagnosis for management control and monitoring. The deliverable is a diagnosis report.

4.2 Phase II – Impact analysis of current transformation

This second phase aims to analyse the impact of ongoing transformation projects on the finance-management function.

The four axes of the ‘ROMA’ approach forms the foundation of this impact analysis. The most representative of this is the impact matrix (or matrix ROMA), which quickly allows the visualisation of the nature and depth of impact. This matrix provides a graphical representation in which one can refer to, or categorise the various changes identified. The objective is to determine the groups most impacted, and therefore those which require special attention.

Diagram 11: The ROMA matrix

Source: Mazars 2011
4.3 Phase III – Definition of transformation

This third phase aims to define the expected target of this transformation and the vectors that will be mobilized, while analysing the impact this will have on the employees of the sectors concerned.

The method used defines the procedure in a collaborative process:

- The process. For example, a dashboard delivered each month by the management control to factory managers. Focus on one of the indicators in the dashboard, such as gross margin. ‘Gross Margin’ is the group of activities that contribute to delivering this indicator to factory managers;

- The actor/agent responsible for the process. In the previous case, the management-controller is responsible for the delivery of the dashboard to factory managers. The actor/agent in this case therefore is the management controller, being responsible for the entire dashboard delivery process;

- The product, a result of the process. In the previous case, it is the indicator of the gross margin;

- The client, (moral, organizational or physical) for whom the product is intended. In the previous case, it is the factory manager(s);

- Resources - All the means necessary for the completion of a process. In the previous case, all components of information needed to calculate the gross margin indicator (such as individual component margins, as well as the means of disseminating this information appropriately in order to derive a gross margin), can be considered resources.

In any collaborative work such as transforming the finance-management function, it is essential for all concerned parties to share the same reference base for collaboration.

Take the example of the indicator of gross margin (dashboard) delivered monthly by the management to factory managers. Aligning the mechanism of control on the company strategy helps to ensure that the following questions are shared by all:

- What does the product serve? The actor (here the controller) must decide if the gross margin is an indicator of real use to the plant manager. In addition, if the plant manager himself needs to deliver this indicator analysis to an industrial director (who is then the client in another process), the controller needs to be aware in order to qualify the criticality of the indicator’s delivery process. Answering this question gives meaning to the objective;

- What is included in the product? This includes a common understanding or definition of the product. In the case of gross margin, a common
understanding of the indicator’s definition must be ensured and this definition must be shared within the sector control management (to ensure all management controllers use the same formula for gross margin) and between this sector and its managerial sector (to ensure the plant manager has the same understanding of the gross margin). Answering this question gives meaning to the deliverable.

The method used, based on individual and group interviews, can answer such questions. It leverages on the motivations of working groups, translating the intangible qualities of personal relationships into operational effectiveness.

This phase is completed by an impact analysis, which is essential in order to define the future direction of the transformation.

4.4 Phase IV – Organization of transformation

This phase defines the transformation strategy. It takes into account organizational constraints and opportunities, particularly the skills and resources to be mobilized. The goal for this phase is to create a realistic and progressive direction for the implementation of the transformation. It is based on the impact analysis (ROMA matrix) described in the previous phase.

This phase results in a support plan, consisting of the following:

- Training plan: Professionalize teams and promote learning; form a common language; instill the values of the organization;
- Support plan: Once the transformation has begun, adequate support must be provided to ensure that objectives are met. Lack of support can result in slow integration and in the emotional dimension overriding the rational dimension, causing employees to lose sight of the objective of the transformation;
- Planning of the transformation program, in particular communication actions.

4.5 Phase V – Deployment of transformation

What should be kept in mind is that a transformation program requires constant monitoring and measuring.

A change management plan is always subject to adjustments, mostly related to the four ROMA axes.

Examples:

- A temporary inflection of the business strategy, linked to its own market. In one case mentioned earlier, a company based its growth on an
aggressive strategy of acquisitions, which required close collaboration with the finance management group to anticipate its transformation processes. A reversal of the market can hinder this acquisition strategy, with a delay in favour of a focus on profitability. Managing the finance function, then, no longer requires anticipation of this transformation, but should instead refocus on maintaining financial stability;

- The evolution of critical procedures related to a change in regulations. The finance function is particularly exposed to this type of development;

- The lack of internal relays due to significant employee turnover. In this case, a review of the support plan may be necessary;

- The lack of resources. As a support plan is designed with the objective of mobilizing a certain amount of available resources, any significant reduction in such resources may require a review of the support plan in order to preserve the objective of the transformation.

Rather than only adjusting the support plan, it is also important to develop monitoring procedures that can describe these adjustments and translate them into plans of action. This monitoring helps maintain the course of the transformation.
Focus

There have been numerous examples of companies defining, organising, and implementing sound financial transformations in their organisations. Companies have adapted their controls mechanisms through the following means:

**Via the implementation of a strategic project to improve the performance of ALIM Group**

In 2007, to improve its performance, the ALIM Group decided to change organising and structuring its activities by region. Acquisitions were undertaken, while integrating production and marketing activities. The objective was to make management of both industrial and commercial sectors more responsive and integrated.

Led by the financial department, the project led to a collective overhaul of processes, systems and tools dedicated to reporting and controlling, regardless of the function (purchasing, R & D, marketing, etc.) or the organisational level concerned (Group, Region, Department). In terms of emotional levers, the project brought about a policy change with the goal of educating all managers to new modes of control in the organisation. This also led to professionalisation of accounting and management sectors as well as operational teams, in order to reconcile business and management culture in a spirit of mutual understanding to, ultimately, promote group performance.

**Through the implementation of an operational project of optimisation reporting**

In 2010, the BIOLO Group decided to optimise its reporting and control information procedure. The decentralisation and heterogeneity in terms of organisation, systems, processes and management culture of the group were the result of many acquisitions that had permitted the group to ensure its external growth, through its own financing. The organisation aimed to control funds and ensure organic, external growth in a more centralised and homogeneous way, by homogenising and optimising reporting.

In this context, in early 2011, the BIOLO Group overhauled its business and information models. The Group’s goal was, by the end of 2011, to have formalised the transformation path of its business and information models, in order to implement them into the January 2012 business plan.
The function leader of the transformation was the finance-management function, which was in charge of coordinating all the functions of the group (R & D, purchasing, marketing, sales, production) in each organisational control perimeter: Group, Region and Business Unit. One of the points of attention of teams was to establish a balance between the objective of homogenisation and the “business spirit” of sectors, which have thus far been the strength of the group.

For the BIOLO group, its project of optimising reporting became an opportunity to use finance to align the organisation in the double dimensions of rational and emotional. Leadership was the motto needed to align the business and information models.

Via the implementation of a risk management project

In 2009, following the financial crisis of 2008, the BK1 Bank Group decided to launch a project of managing activity by risks. The group’s ambition was to overhaul risk management as well as analyse and adapt the control mechanism of the organisation and realign both the rational and emotional dimensions of the business and information models. The BK1 Group wished to overhaul its management processes and diffuse new managerial practices and a new management culture in the company.
Conclusion

Integrating financial culture with business culture necessitates cooperation between finance and operations. The central focus resides in management talks/dialogues, which is the responsibility of controllers.

This ‘dialogue of management’ is most effective when the objectives are shared, their meaning is understood and the objectives and goals of finance and operations are aligned.

In this sense, a transformation program is integral to any business setup and is impactful when it is initiated by the financial director. He/she has the advantage of participating as a leader in the development of the overall strategy of the company, while maintaining the leadership position of the finance-management function. Therefore, he/she has to face the management ‘dialogue’ daily and work with other members of the executive committee on financial and business topics.

There are many ways to anchor management dialogue over time:

- In recent years, recruitment of controllers has been preferred in the financial side of the profession. However, it is more appropriate to develop a body of controllers that come from an operations background. This would be a first step in management of dialogue between the two functions;

- When existing, the boundary between corporate controllers and local controllers is clearly marked. However, in order to strengthen the sense of belonging to a community, mobility or developing areas of exchange and listening should be encouraged. It would act as a means of sustaining the management of dialogue within the function of controlling;

- Management is often seen as highly technical and disciplined with a particular vocabulary and confined to a restricted community. However, establishing a common dictionary with shared language and community references can help in changed perceptions.

It is also due to measures related to the corporate culture (language) and values (exchange, mobility) that this transformation becomes sustainable. This rationale leaves room for emotional involvement which can strengthen commitment and align various objectives, leading towards a common goal.
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