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## Career Shot: Corporate Finance

Courtesy of Career Leader

Finance professionals in a corporate setting handle many different activities, depending on the level they reach.

For example, at the **Chief Financial Officer (CFO) level**, the work includes:

- helping the company choose an investment bank for a debt or equity offering
- helping the CEO determine whether to take the company public (and when) or whether to buy back the company and take it private
- arranging lines of credit with banks
- determining the value of a company targeted for potential acquisition or the value of an existing business's segment for potential sale
- working with accountants on the company's annual audit
- forecasting profits and losses
- interacting with the investment community
- reviewing budgets
- helping to set the company's overall strategy

Clearly, the CFO of a company is involved in virtually every aspect of the business.

At **lower levels**, finance professionals work in the areas the CFO oversees. For example, they:

- interact with the CPA firm doing the audit
- perform their own audits
- track cash flow
- prepare and review budgets
- work with managers to determine the profitability of certain lines of business
- work with information specialists to help design systems that accurately and fairly allocate costs
- monitor investments in the company's 401(k) retirement plan
- prepare quarterly financial statements
- trade the firm's capital for the most favorable return

For more information, see the other finance-related career profiles.

Some finance professionals in corporate settings remain individual contributors, but most move into management positions, often relatively early in their careers.

Obviously, CFOs of *Fortune 500* corporations and people who handle the financial side of a small business do very different things. Likewise, the specific duties of a finance professional change depending on his or her number of years in the business.

However, regardless of company size or seniority, finance professionals share similar interests, abilities, and values.