OUR CFO



FOUNDER'S CFO READINESS SERIES

THE FOUNDER'S CFO READINESS CHECKLIST

20 Questions to Tell You if Your Finance Function is Helping or Hurting Your Business

As your business scales from R10m to R100m+, financial complexity grows exponentially. Most founders outgrow their accounting function long before they realise it.

This checklist is designed to help you honestly assess whether your current finance function is a strategic asset driving your growth, or a hidden liability holding you back.

A practical diagnostic for founders scaling with confidence



CASH FLOW LIQUIDITY + MANAGEMENT REPORTING & DECISION MAKING

Founder's CFO Readiness Checklist

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

Answer Yes or No to each question. Be brutally honest.

SECTION 1: CASH FLOW & LIQUIDITY (THE LIFEBLOOD)

Cash flow kills more businesses than a lack of profit. Do you have absolute visibility and control over your cash?

- ☐ Do you maintain a 13-week cash flow forecast that is updated and reviewed every single week?
- ☐ Can you accurately predict cash shortfalls or surplus capital at least 30 to 60 days in advance?
- ☐ Do you have a disciplined, proactive strategy for debtor collections and creditor payments?
- ☐ Do you know your exact break-even point and working capital requirements at any given moment?

SECTION 2: MANAGEMENT REPORTING & DECISION MAKING (THE DASHBOARD)

Traditional accountants record history. A CFO helps you shape the future. Are your reports actually useful?

- ☐ Do you receive accurate monthly management accounts within 10–15 days of month-end?

- [ ] Do your reports include KPI dashboards and variance analysis (actuals vs. budget/forecast), not just a profit and loss statement?
- [ ] Can you easily identify gross margin pressures, profitability by product/service, and operational inefficiencies?
- [ ] Do you hold a structured monthly meeting with your finance team to discuss the numbers and make strategic decisions?



SECTION 3: THE ENGINE ROOM: ACCOUNTING, TAX & PAYROLL (THE FOUNDATION)

Strategic decisions can only be built on a solid, reliable foundation. Is your back-office under control?

- [ ] Are your bank, debtor, creditor, and payroll accounts fully reconciled every month without exception?
- [ ] Are all VAT, PAYE, provisional tax, and CIPC returns submitted on time, with zero penalties or SARS queries?
- [ ] Is your payroll processed accurately and on time, with all statutory compliance (UIF, SDL, EMP501) perfectly up to date?
- [ ] Are your financial records clean, organised, and "audit-ready" at all times, requiring no last-minute scrambling?

SECTION 4: FUNDING & CAPITAL READINESS (THE FUTURE)

When the opportunity to raise capital, sell, or restructure arises, you cannot afford to be unprepared.

- [ ] If a bank or private equity investor asked for your financials today, would your business be genuinely investor-ready?
- [ ] Do you have a robust, integrated financial model and forecast for the next 12–24 months to support your growth plans?
- [ ] Do you understand your true enterprise value and the specific financial levers you can pull to increase it?
- [ ] Are your shareholder agreements, equity structures, and ownership arrangements legally and financially optimised?



SYSTEMS, CONTROLS & TEAM

The Founder's CFO Readiness Checklist

SECTION 5: SYSTEMS, CONTROLS & TEAM (THE OPERATING RHYTHM)

You shouldn't have to do it all yourself. Is your finance function structured to scale with you?

☐ Do you use an integrated digital ecosystem (e.g., Xero, HubSpot, Clockify) to automate workflows, track time, and reduce manual errors?

☐ Does your finance team have clear roles, defined accountabilities, and a strict monthly operating rhythm?

☐ Do you have internal quality controls, checklists, and risk-monitoring protocols to prevent financial errors?

☐ Do you have a senior, objective sounding board (a fractional CFO or advisor) to challenge your assumptions and guide high-stakes decisions?

HOW TO SCORE YOUR RESULTS

FOUNDER'S CFO READINESS CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to assess where you stand - and identify the areas that will have the greatest impact.

80 – 100	**CFO READY** You have a strong financial foundation and the systems to scale with confidence.
50 – 79	**MAKING PROGRESS** You're on the right track - focus on closing the gaps that will drive the biggest impact.
0 – 49	**FOUNDATIONAL WORK NEEDED** Key building blocks are missing - prioritise these areas to strengthen your financial leadership.



TURN INSIGHT INTO ACTION

Your score is a starting point.
The next step is building a plan.

FOCUS. PRIORITIZE. LEAD WITH CONFIDENCE.

HOW TO SCORE YOUR RESULTS

Count your "No" answers in each section:

If you answered "No" to 2 or more in Sections 1, 2, or 5:

You have the data, but you lack the direction. Your finance function is reacting, not driving the business.

👉 **Explore CFO Mentor to get the strategic guidance, cash discipline, and board-level reporting you need to scale.**

If you answered "No" to 2 or more in Section 3:

Your engine room needs attention. You are at risk of compliance issues and making decisions on bad data.

👉 **Explore CFO Concierge to get your accounting, tax, and payroll under strict, predictable control.**

If you answered "No" to 2 or more in Section 4:

You are not ready for a major capital event. If you approach a bank or investor today, you will leave money on the table.

👉 **Explore CFO Capital to ensure you are fundable, transaction-ready, and negotiating from a position of strength.**

NOT SURE WHERE TO START?

You don't have to fix everything overnight. Let's look at your business together.

Book a Free 30-Minute CFO Readiness Diagnostic Review.

We will evaluate your current cash flow, reporting quality, and internal controls, and give you an honest, no-obligation assessment of your immediate priorities.

[BOOK YOUR FREE 30-MINUTE REVIEW]