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Future Finance

Skills for the Profession

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Future of Finance 2.0

The changing profession

Future finance skills

Resources


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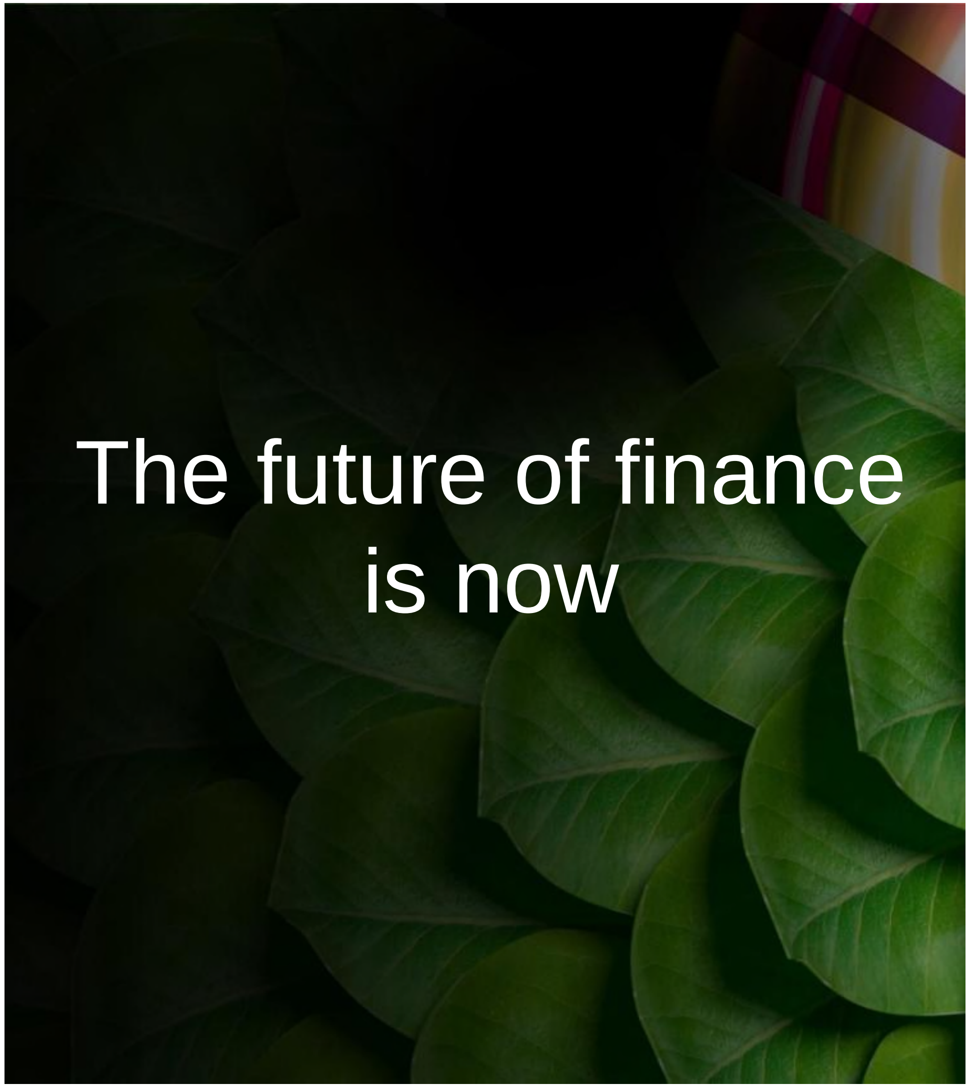
Future of Finance 2.0
Re-defining finance for a sustainable world


The future of finance is now

Future of finance 2.0 – scope of research

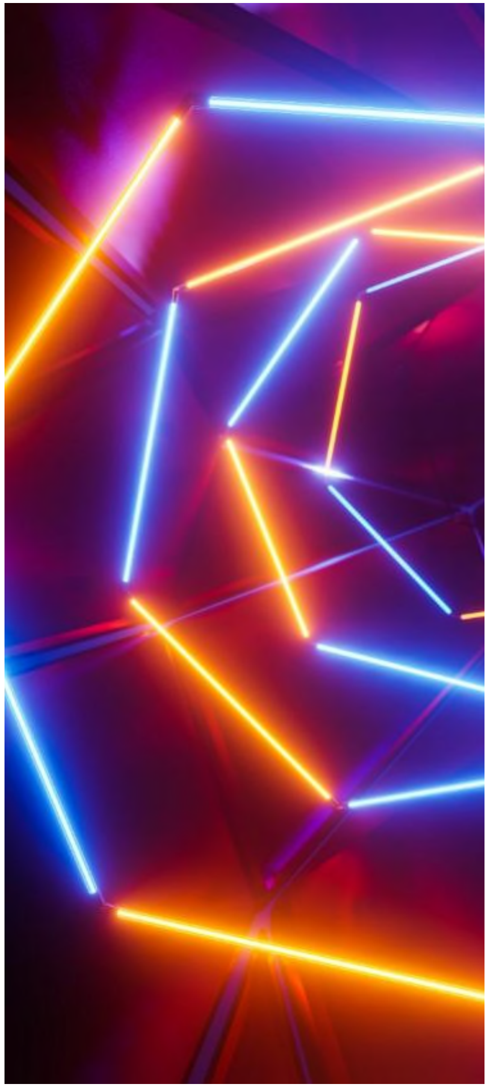
Scope and reach

134 papers consulted for literature review
(48 academic sources/86 industry sources)

96 individuals interviewed, representing
92 organisations and 14 countries

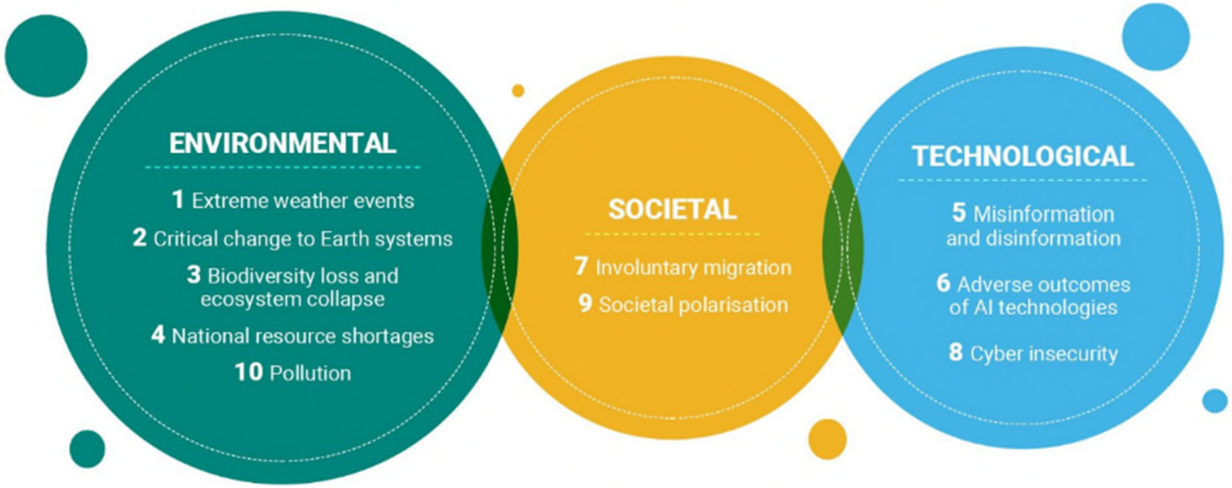
92 roundtable discussions
554 participants representing more than 445 organisations
and 40 countries.

2,252 survey responses from 68 countries



The challenge to business

Figure 2: *WEF Global Risk Report 2024* — Global risks ranked by severity over the long term (10 years)

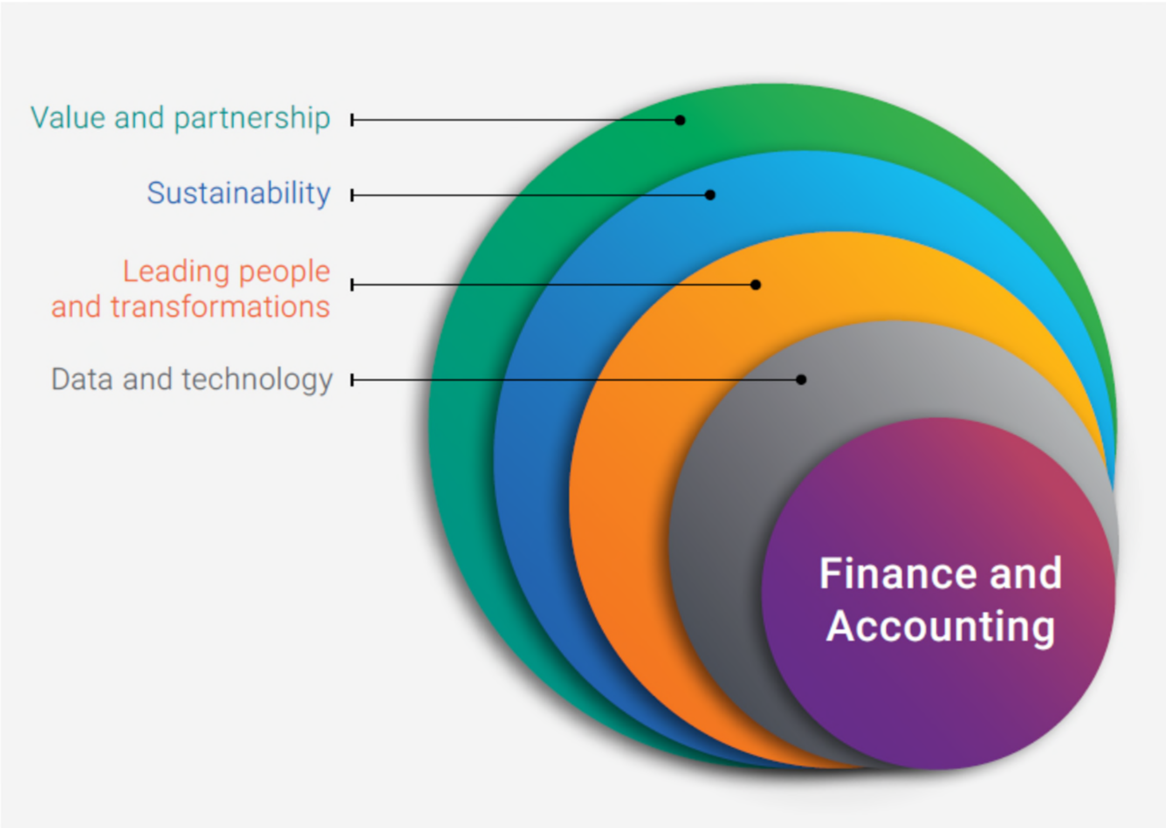


Workforce skills for today and the future

Top 12 workforce skills needed today	Top workforce skills for 2025-30	Change
Analytical thinking	AI and big data	up
Resilience, flexibility and agility	Networks and cybersecurity	new
Leadership and social influence	Technological literacy	up
Creative thinking	Creative thinking	no change
Motivation and self-awareness	Resilience, flexibility and agility	down
Technological literacy	Curiosity and lifelong learning	up
Empathy and active listening	Leadership and social influence	down
Curiosity and lifelong learning	Talent management	up
Talent management	Analytical thinking	down
Service orientation and customer service	Environmental stewardship	new
AI and big data	Systems thinking	up
Systems thinking	Motivation and self-awareness	down

World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Survey 2024

The expanding role and mandate of finance



Changing shape of finance

Hierarchical	Segregated	Diamond	Segregated diamond
All functions in-house. Many roles at lower level. Fewer high-level roles.	Smaller in-house team. Routine transactional processes outsourced to shared service centres (SSCs).	All functions in-house. Process automation creates opportunity for mid-level roles offering higher-value services.	Smaller in-house team. Routine processes automated and outsourced to SSCs, along with some higher-value services.
17%	**12%**	**28%**	**39%**

% of finance functions moving towards this shape

Changing shape of UK finance functions

Hierarchical	Segregated	Diamond	Segregated diamond
All functions in-house. Many roles at lower level. Fewer high-level roles.	Smaller in-house team. Routine transactional processes outsourced to shared service centres (SSCs).	All functions in-house. Process automation creates opportunity for mid-level roles offering higher-value services.	Smaller in-house team. Routine processes automated and outsourced to SSCs, along with some higher-value services.
19%	**10%**	**42%**	**25%**

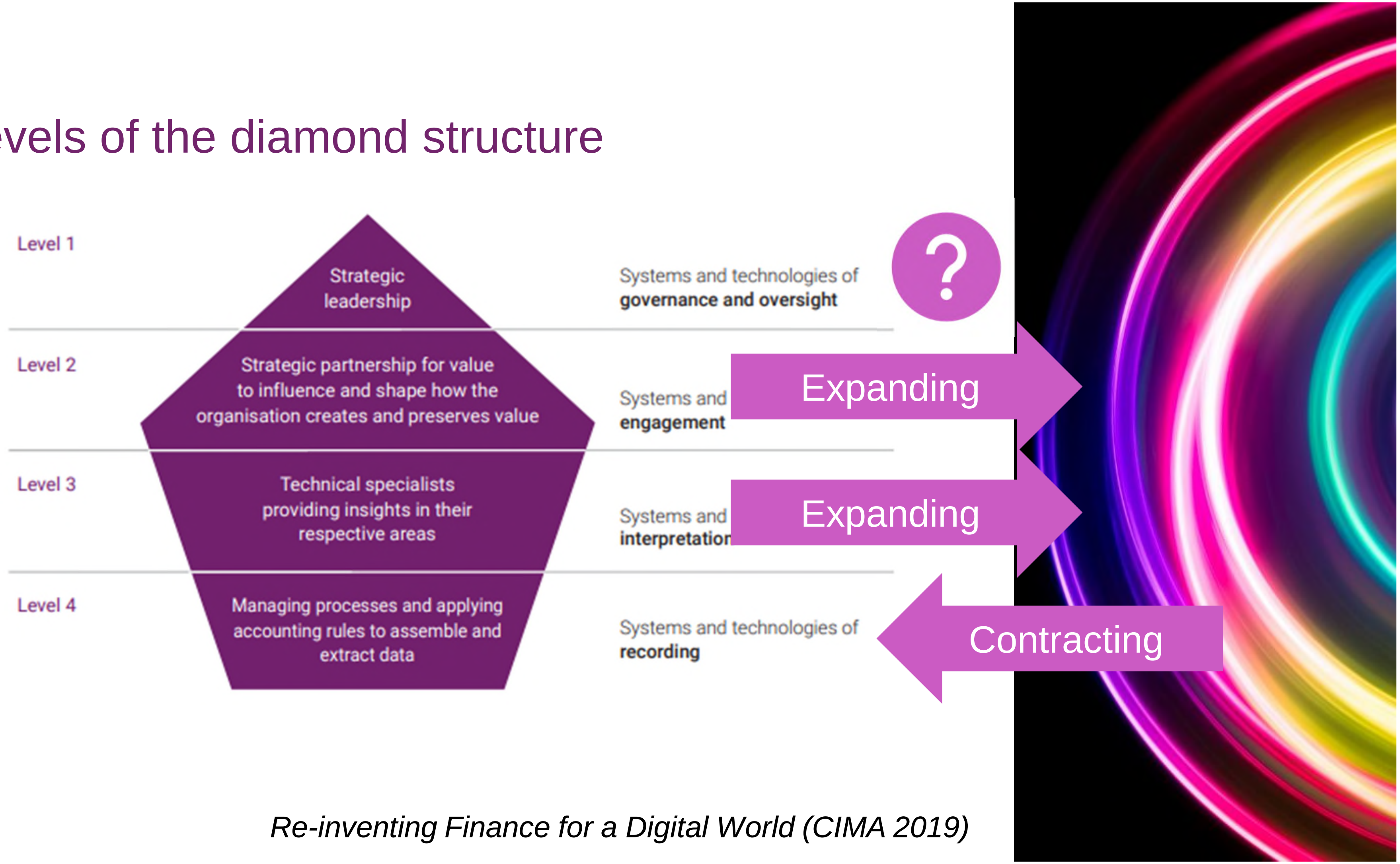
% of finance functions moving towards this shape

Changing shape of UK finance functions

Current	42%	19%	25%	11%
Future	19%	10%	42%	25%

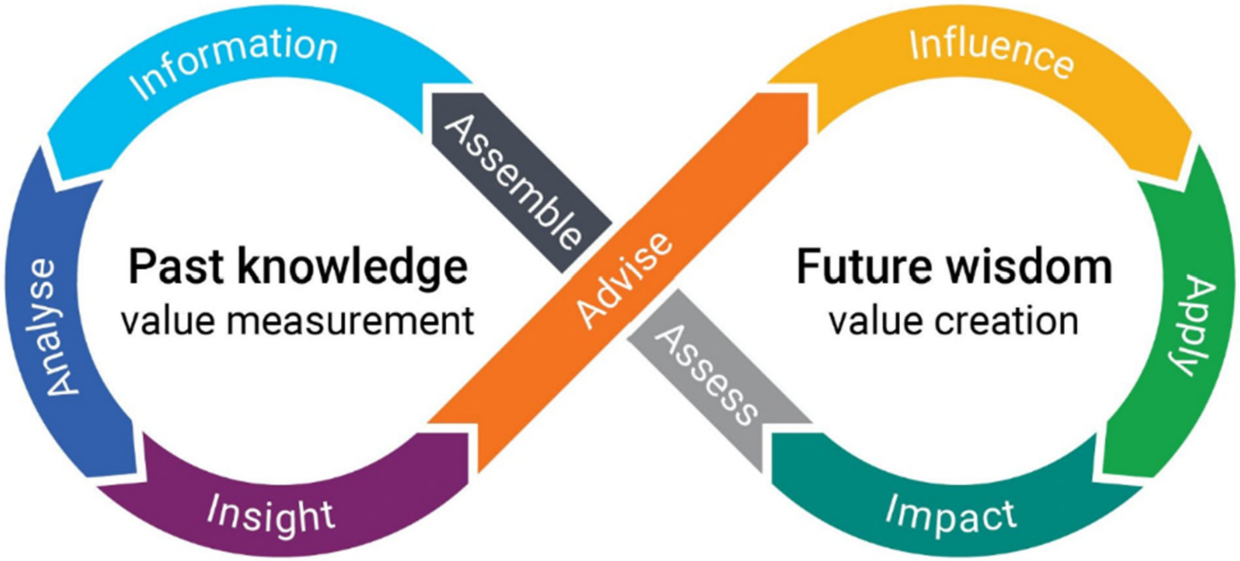
Current	61%	36%
Future	29%	67%

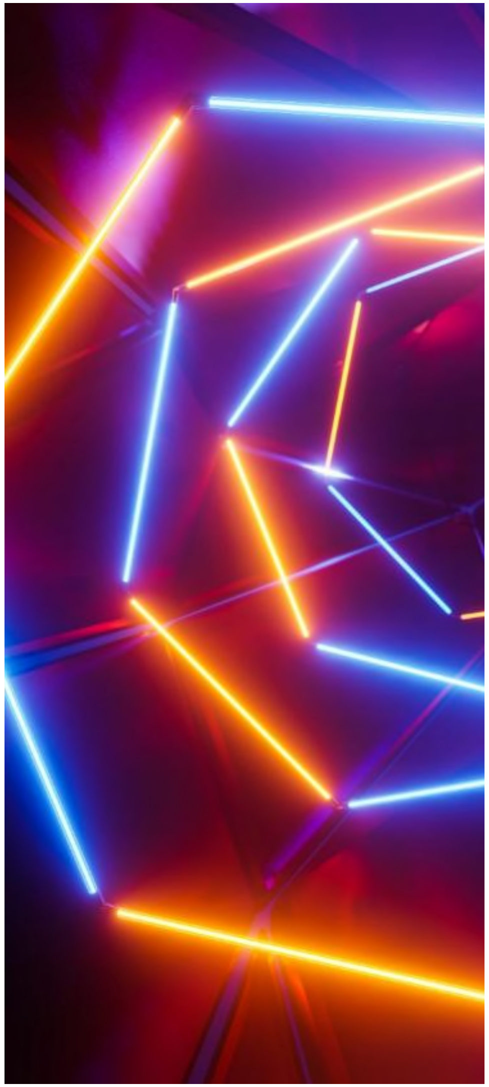
Levels of the diamond structure



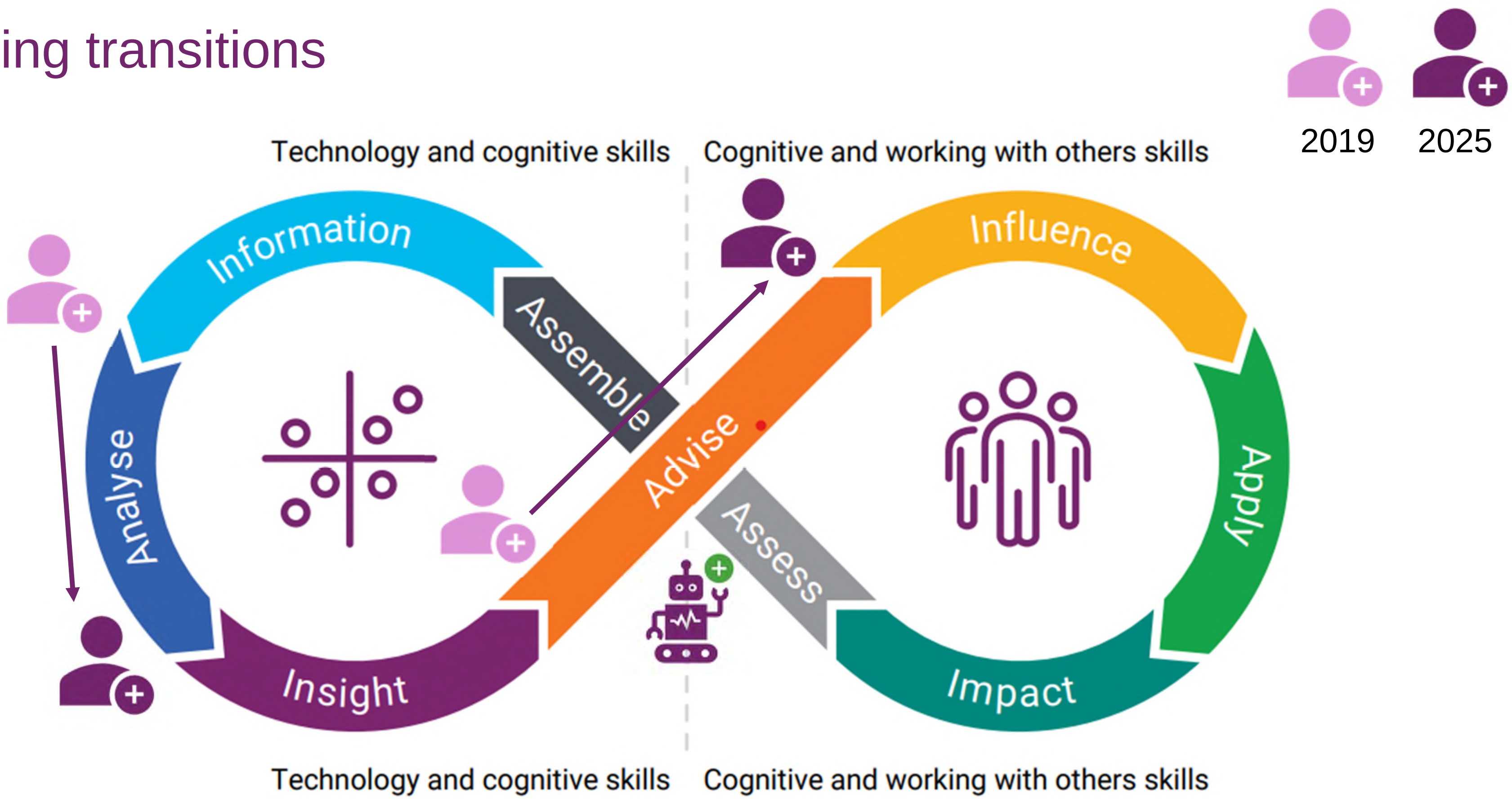
Re-inventing Finance for a Digital World (CIMA 2019)

Information to impact – finance activities



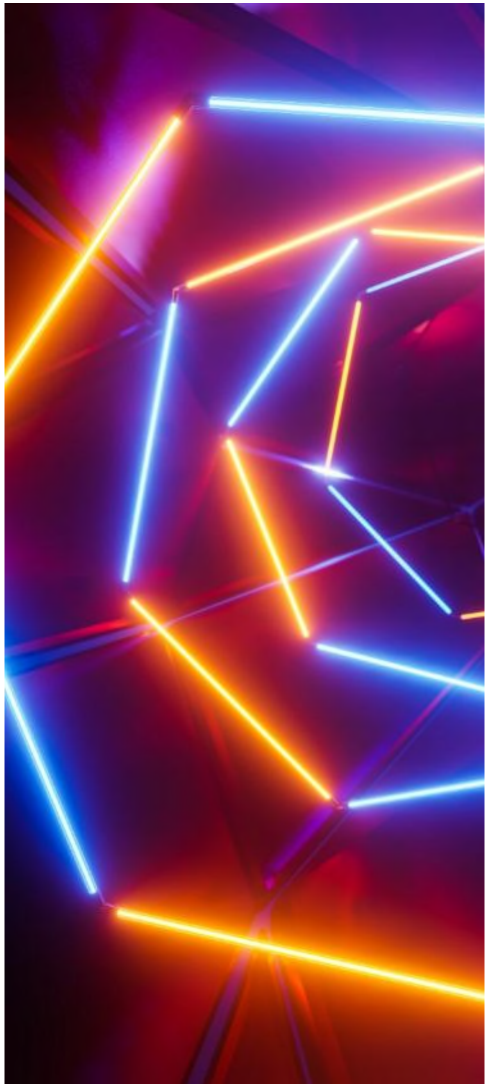


Shifting transitions

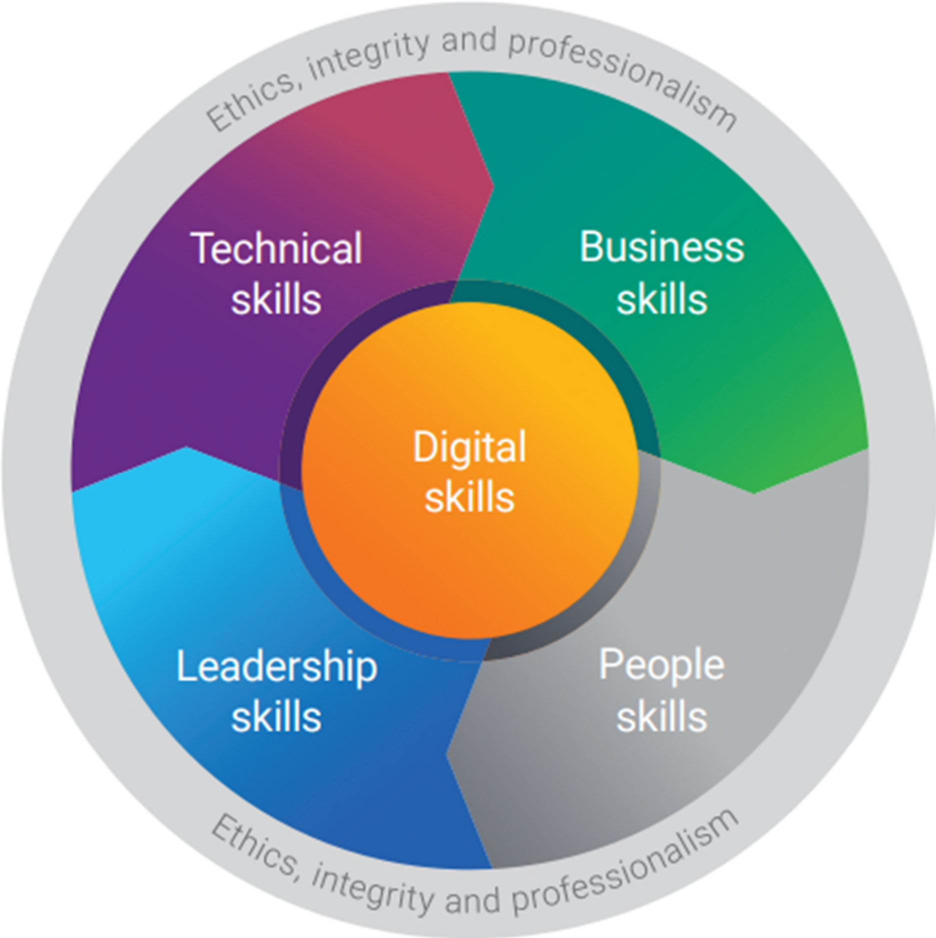


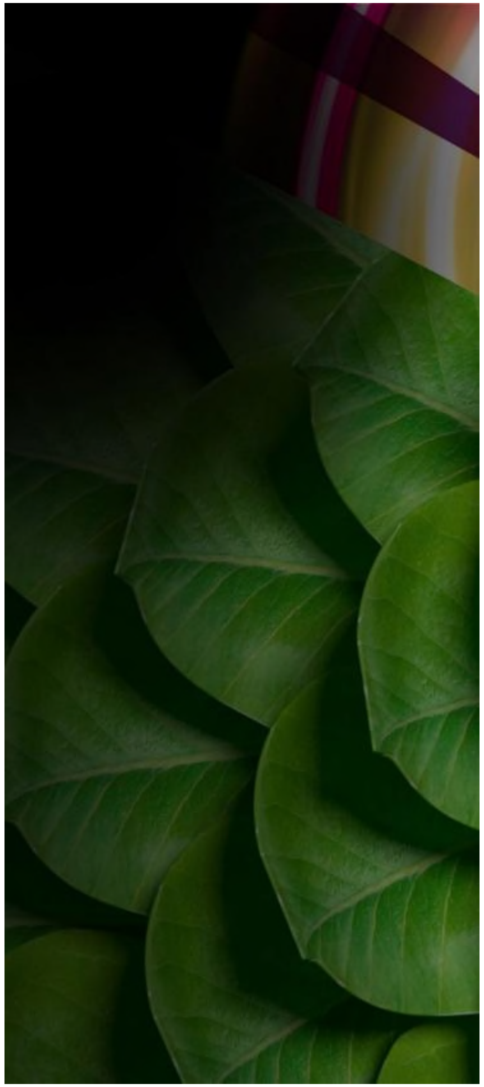
Re-defining our purpose

- **Broadening our scope** - recognising links between sustainability management and financial performance.
- **Retaining our existing skillset** - data integrity, insights, stewardship, and trusted advice are still key.
- **Telling a new value story** – through a sustainability lens.
- **Building bridges** – facilitating relationships between organisations and their multiple external stakeholders.
- **Supporting better decision-making.**



Future finance skills


Ethics, integrity and professionalism
Technical skills
Business skills
Digital skills
Leadership skills
People skills
Ethics, integrity and professionalism



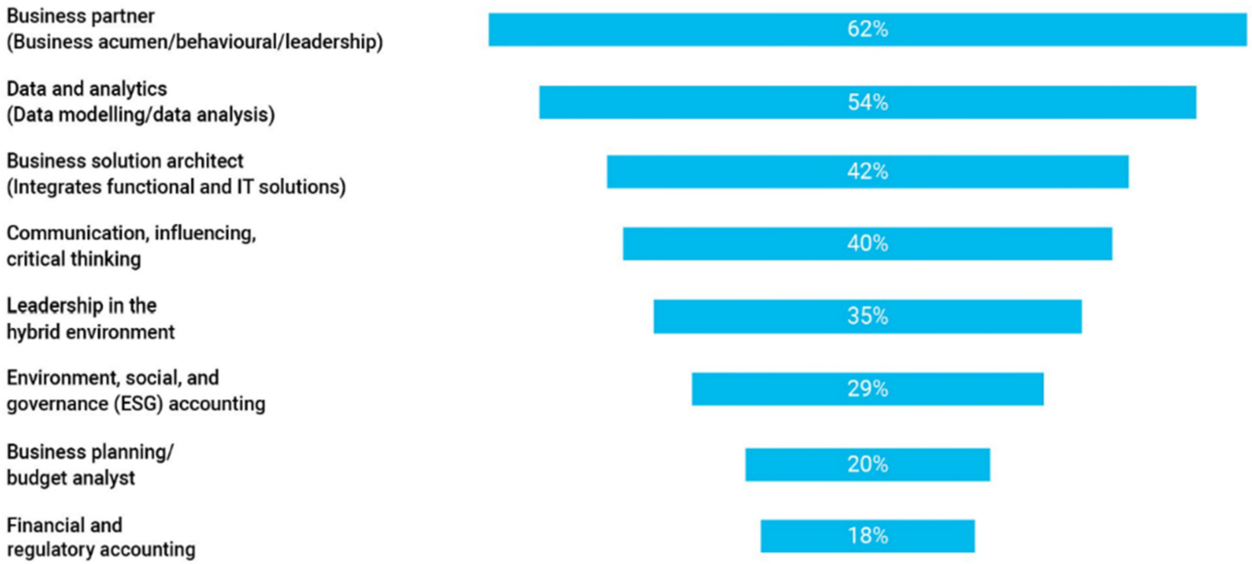
Core skills for key roles

WEF Future of Jobs report 2018 - 2025

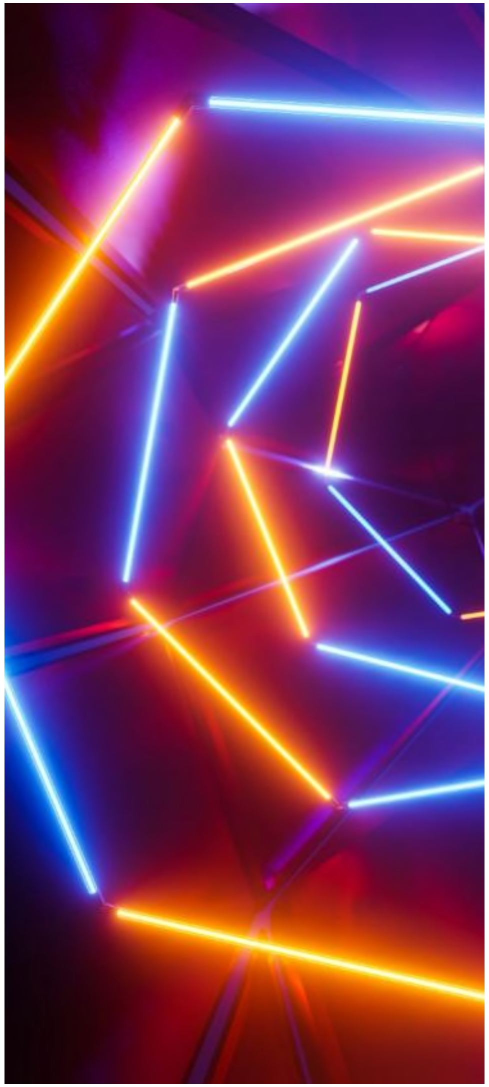
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
2025	**Analytical thinking**	**Resilience, flexibility & agility**	Leadership & social influence	**Creative thinking**	**Motivation & self awareness**
2023	**Creative thinking**	**Analytical thinking**	Technological literacy	**Curiosity and lifelong learning**	**Resilience, flexibility & agility**
2020	**Analytical thinking**	**Active learning**	**Complex problem solving**	**Critical thinking and analysis**	**Creativity and originality**
2018	**Analytical thinking**	**Complex problem solving**	**Critical thinking and analysis**	**Active learning and learning strategies**	**Creativity & originality**

Source: WEF 'Future of Jobs', 2018-2025

Changing skills and mindset



D2: What are the biggest gaps for finance to address in terms of skills and talent? (n=2054)



The finance business partnering mindset

60% of all respondents self-identify as finance business partners. **They are:**

- More likely to consider that competencies such as critical thinking, innovation, communication and relationship management are increasingly important to finance professionals.
(86% of FBPs vs 64% of non-FBPs)

- More likely to recognise the need for finance professionals to demonstrate and create value. **(84% of FBPs vs 44% of non FBPs)**

- Far more optimistic about the future of the profession.
(84% of FBPs vs 15% of non FBPs)

- More confident of their skills with regard to future career opportunities.
(83% of FBPs vs 71% of non FBPs)

- Over twice as likely to consider that colleagues elsewhere in the organisation view and value the finance function as a business partner. **(82% of FBPs vs 40% of non FBPs)**

- Those who do not identify as finance business partners are more concerned about the impact of automation reducing the number of finance roles available. **(67% of FBPs vs 92% of non FBPs)**

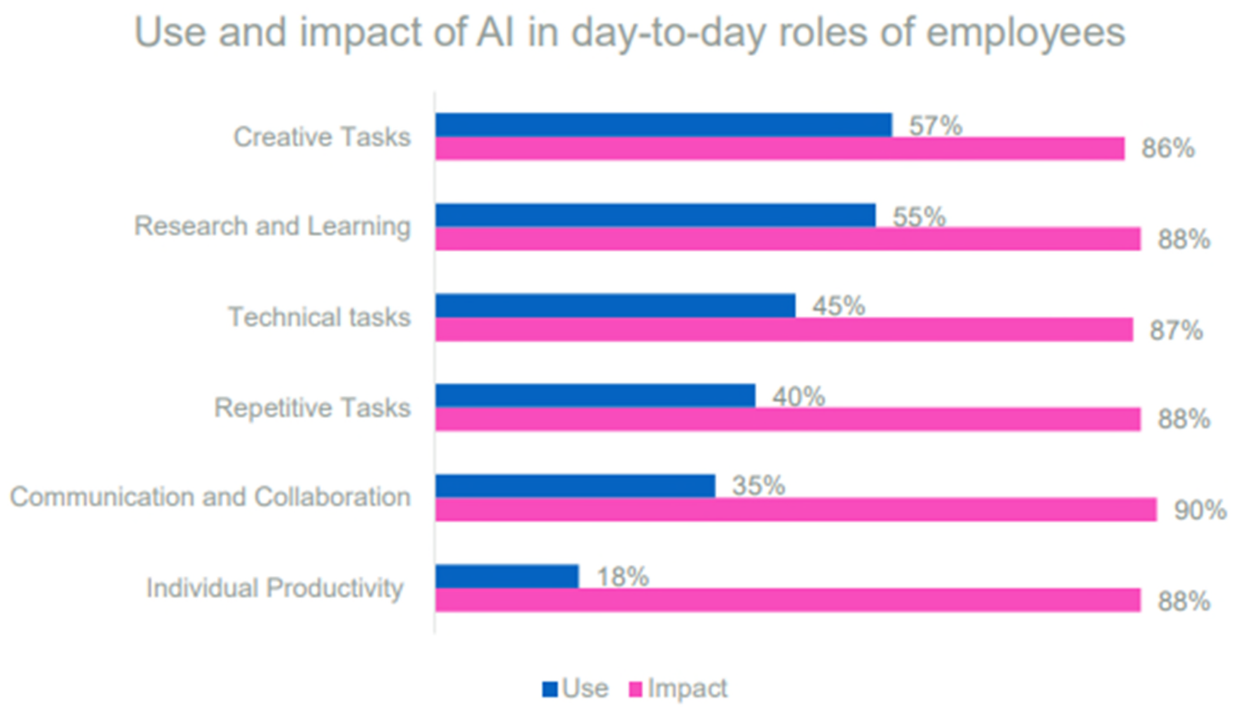
Human skills for a sustainable world

- Empathy, communication and collaboration
- Systems thinking and problem-solving
- Managing intangibles and long-term value creation
- Crisis management
- Understanding the true costs of progress
- Making the numbers count

Impact of Gen AI on the profession

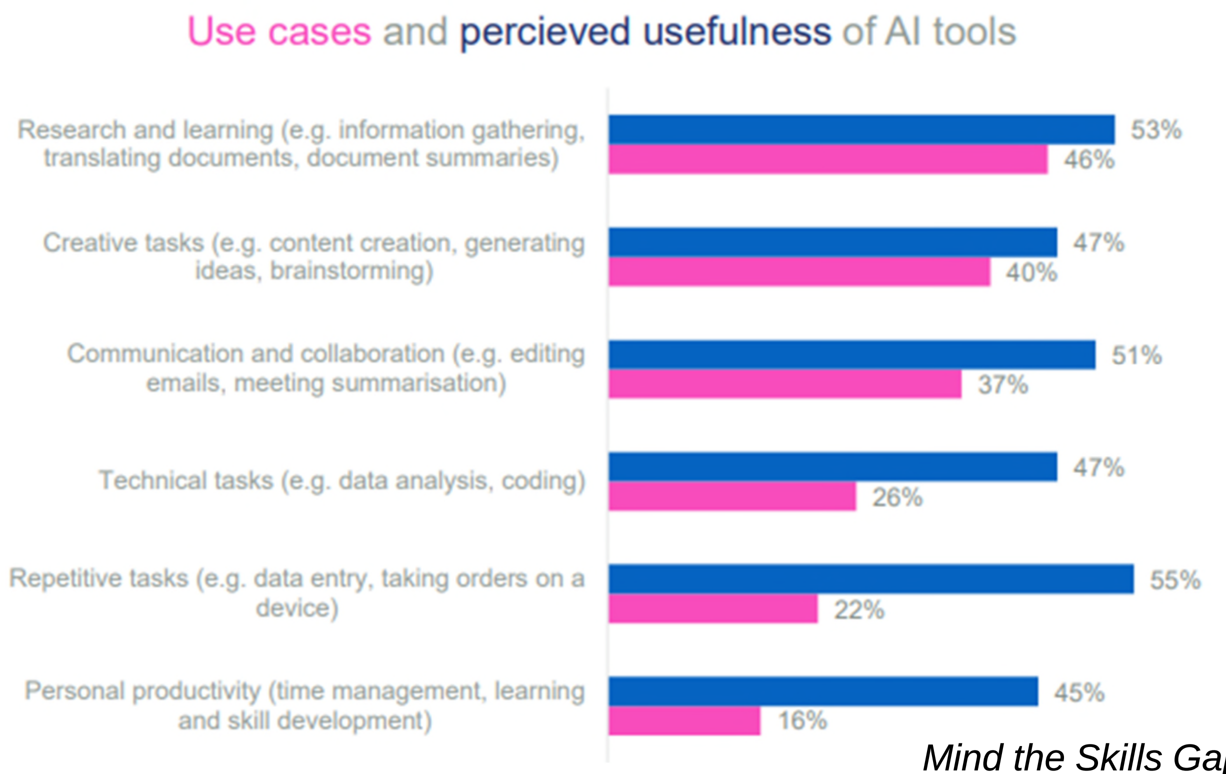
- Enhancing data analysis and interpretation
- Improving forecasting and adaptability
- Strengthening compliance and risk management
- Providing personalised financial advice
- Automating routine tasks

UK employers see high potential impact of AI tools



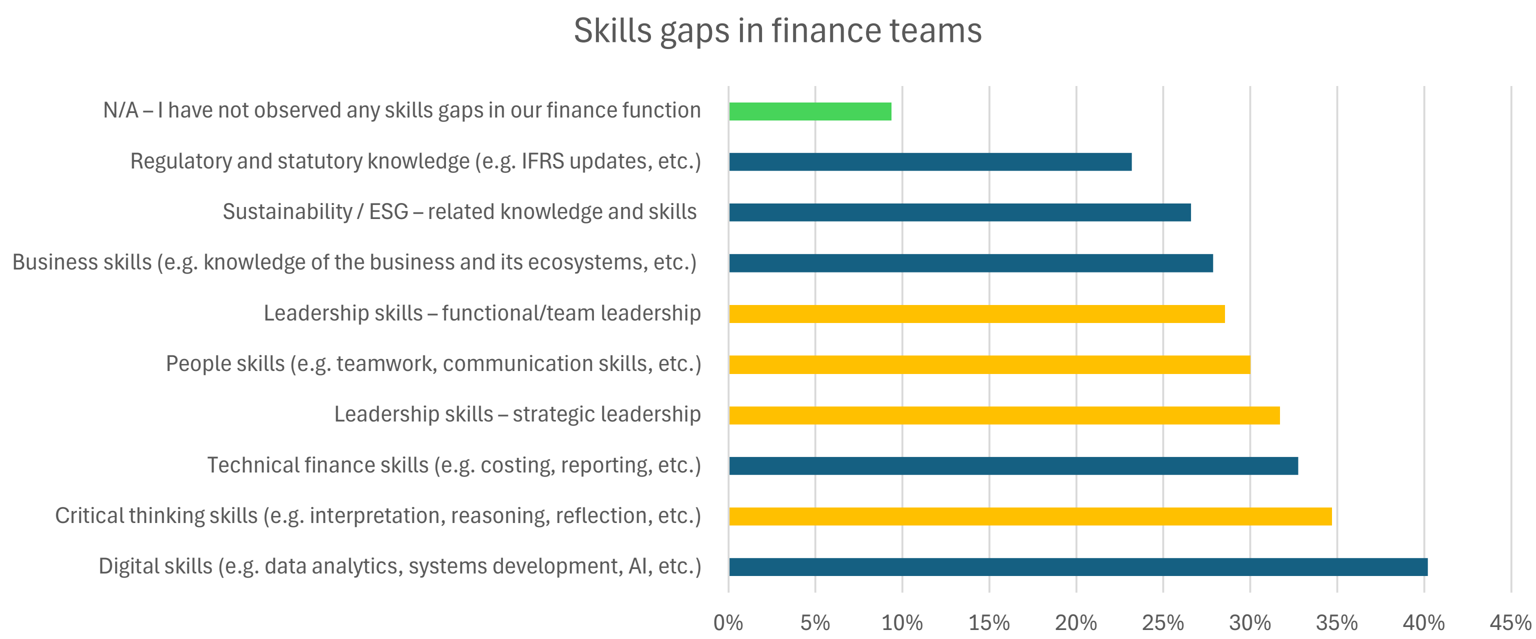
Mind the Skills Gap (CIMA 2025)

Younger workers (18-34) see less usefulness in AI tools



Mind the Skills Gap (CIMA 2025)

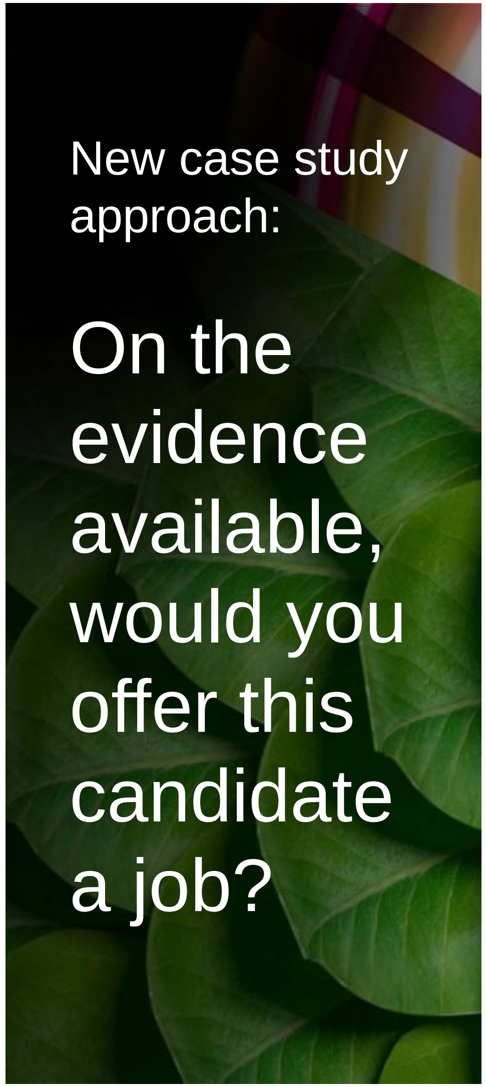
Skills gaps in finance teams (September 2025 data)



Syllabus updates for 2026 exams

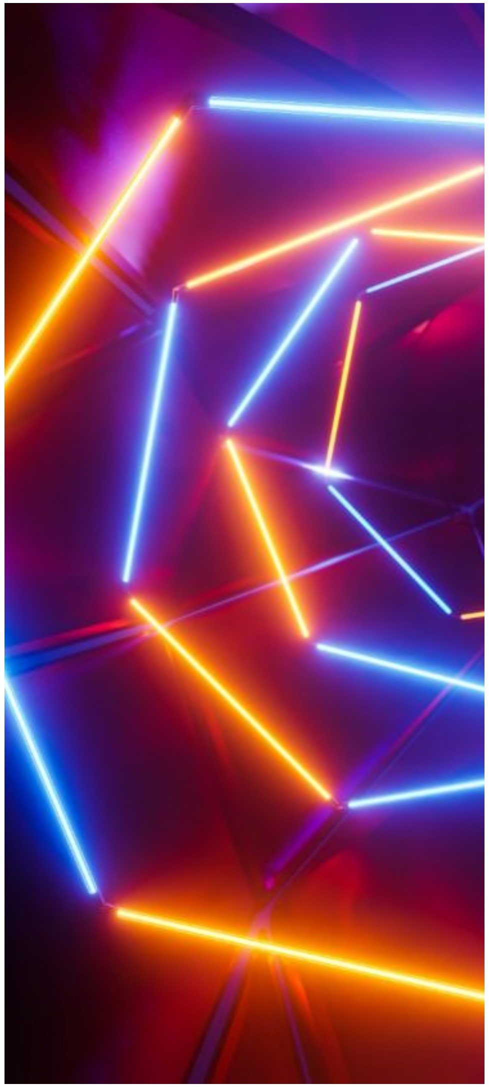
- Competencies and behaviours content:
  - finance business partnering, analytical thinking, strategic planning.
- Knowledge content:
  - sustainability (green finance, environmental costing, IFRS S1/S2 disclosures)
  - financial technologies (GenAI)

[Exam blueprints | Resources | AICPA & CIMA]



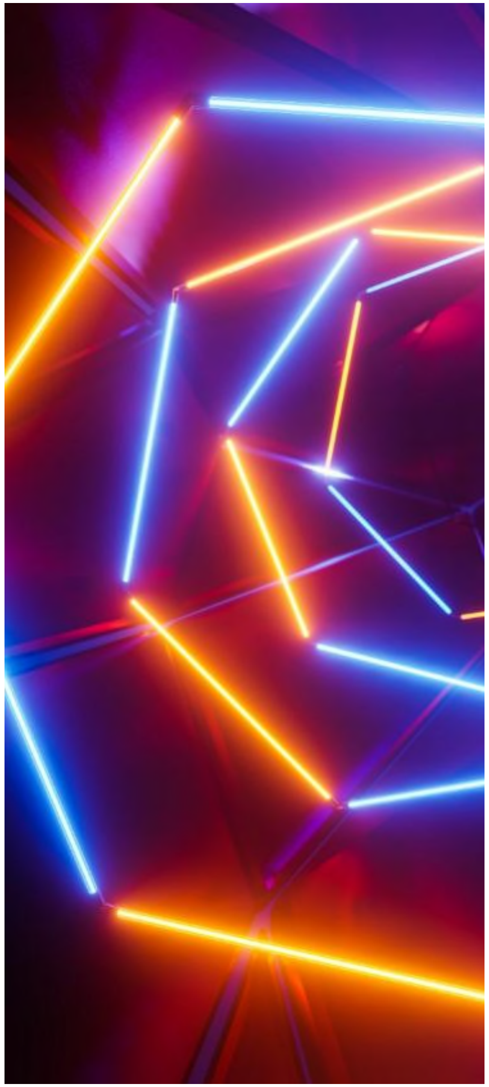
Actions for individuals

- **Upskill continuously** with a focus on digital, analytical, and human skills.
- **Adopt a partnering mindset** and engage with wider issues.
- **Embrace Gen AI** to enhance productivity and insight generation.



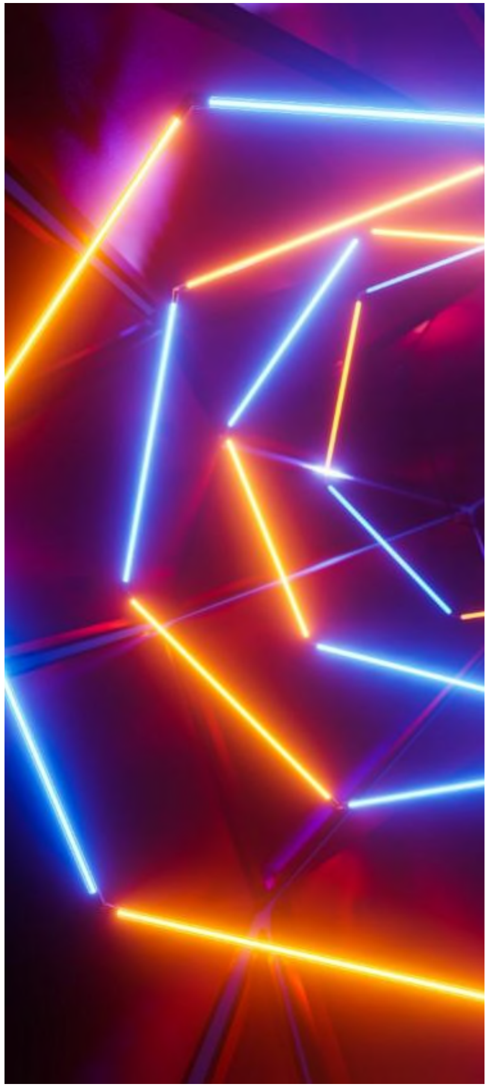
Actions for teams

- **Build multidisciplinary capability** to address complex problems.
- **Foster collaboration** to co-create long-term value.
- Prioritise a **finance business partnering mindset.**

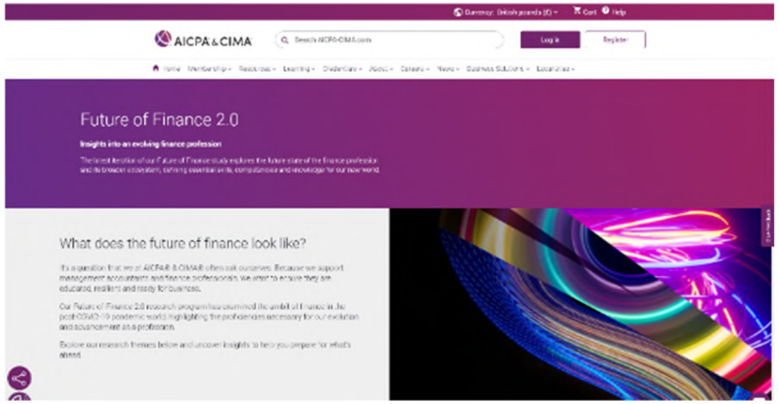


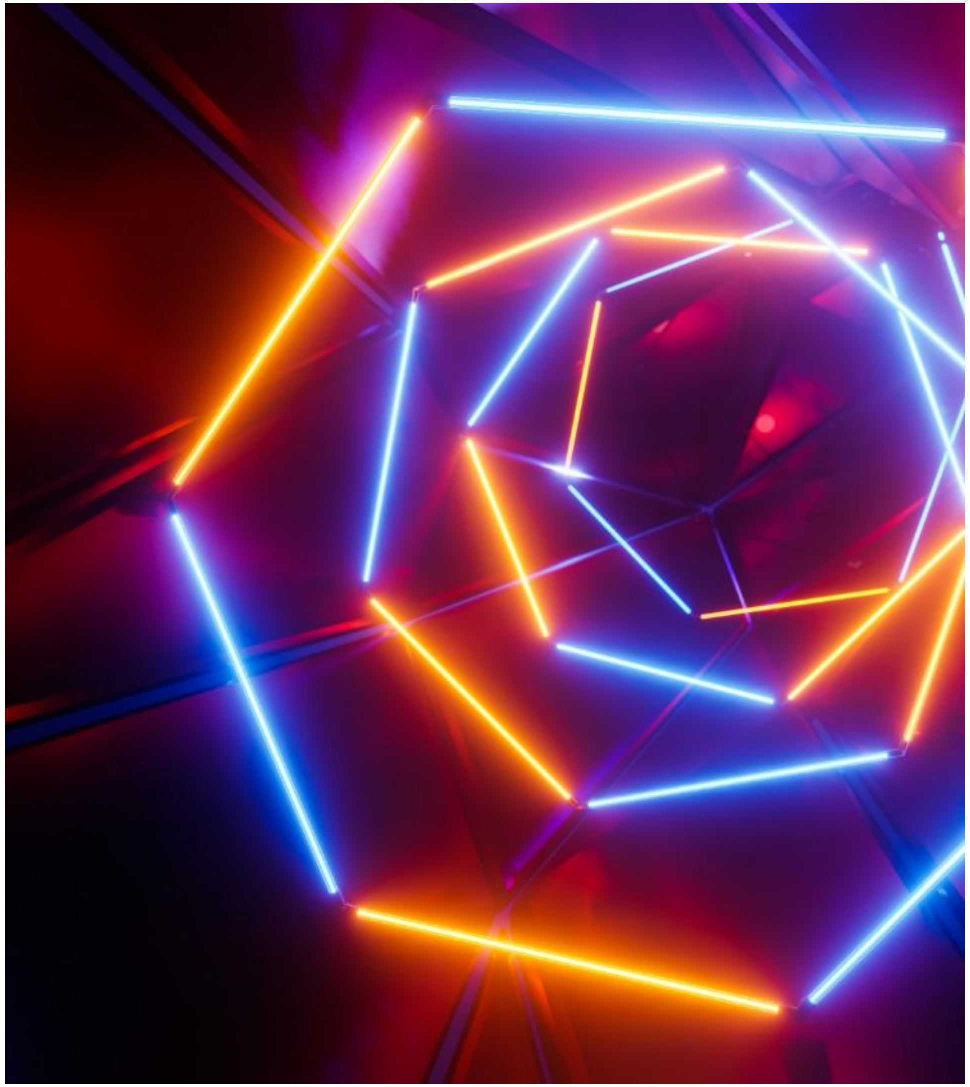
Actions for leaders

- **Redefine finance's purpose** to align with sustainability and long-term value
- **Build bridges** between finance and the wider business ecosystem
- **Invest in future skills** around Gen AI and stakeholder engagement.



Future of Finance 2.0 resources and insights

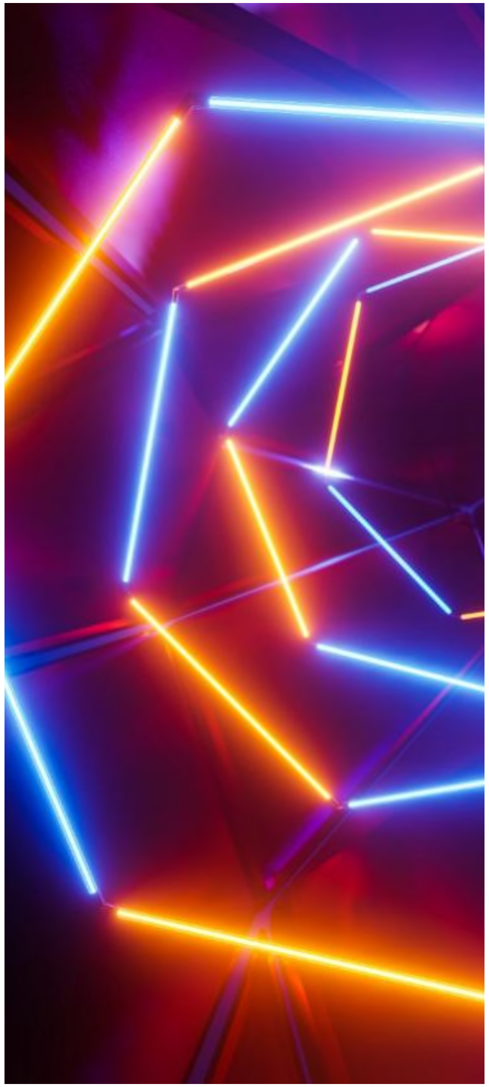




https://www.aicpa-cima.com/future

Useful resources

- aicpa-cima.com ‘Learning’ section
- AI Demystified: AI Terminology
- Exam blueprints | Resources | AICPA & CIMA
- Member Edit email:
    - September – DEI
    - October - Professional development for a changing economy
    - November – Sustainability
    - December – ‘Greatest Hits’

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