



FROM NERVOUS TO NATURAL — MASTERING JOB INTERVIEWS

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01

Do your homework

- Research the company beyond the job ad.
- Understand their challenges, growth plans, and team dynamics.
- Look at news articles, LinkedIn, and tap into your network.

02

Internalise, don't memorise

- Prepare your stories and examples.
- Focus on being familiar with your content rather than word-perfect.
- Trust your knowledge and stay present in the moment.

03

Practice your pitch

- Have a clear, concise career story (think Pixar-style storytelling).
- Identify 2–3 key points you want to convey.
- Rehearse out loud: in the shower, car, or with friends.
- Avoid overloading with too much detail.

04

Think problem-solving, not performance

- Show how you can help the team or organization succeed.
- Highlight achievements that solve real problems (e.g., “Reduced month-end close from 10 days to 3”).
- Be authentic, humble, and confident.

05

Be present & engaged

- Listen actively—avoid tunnel vision.
- Use “peripheral awareness” to stay open and alert.
- Ask thoughtful questions:
 - “What’s your biggest team challenge right now?”
 - “What does success look like in the first 90 days?”

06

Improvise naturally

- Treat the interview as a conversation, not a script.
- Prepare your key points but allow flexibility to adapt.
- Improvisation demonstrates confidence, self-awareness, and engagement.

07

Serve don't sell

- Focus on helping the organisation succeed, not just pitching yourself.
- Approach the interview as contributing value, not proving worth.
- Be authentic, humble, and solution-oriented.

HOW MICROSOFT MADE CULTURE EVERYONE'S BUSINESS, INCLUDING FINANCE



What CFOs and CPOs can learn from Microsoft's transformation, about measuring and driving the ROI of culture

- Collaboration and team effectiveness
- Growth mindset and continuous learning
- Leadership capability and inclusion behaviours

Executives were held accountable not just for outcomes, but for building high-performing, inclusive teams that could sustain innovation and growth.

03

Funding Culture as a Strategic Investment

Rather than viewing people initiatives as a cost, Microsoft treated them as capital investments in capability and resilience. HR led the design of programs such as manager development, learning platforms, and DE&I initiatives. Finance supported these investments by:

- Building ROI models
- Tracking performance outcomes
- Creating board-ready business cases

For example, improvements in manager capability were linked to higher engagement, reduced attrition, and stronger team output—clear indicators of value creation.

The Results

The impact of this collaboration was profound:

- Microsoft's market capitalisation grew from approximately \$300 billion in 2014 to over \$2.5 trillion by 2024
- Employee engagement, inclusion, and leadership scores rose year after year
- Azure, AI, and enterprise software businesses expanded rapidly, driven by empowered and aligned teams
- Investors recognised the culture shift as a source of competitive advantage, not just internal alignment

Culture was no longer anecdotal—it was auditable. And Finance helped make it so.

Lessons for CFOs and CPOs

Microsoft's story shows that culture can be measured, funded, and led—when Finance and HR work together.

For CFOs, the invitation is to see culture not as a cost, but as a controllable variable that drives growth, productivity, and risk management.

For CPOs, the challenge is to bring rigour, data, and commercial storytelling to the table—making it easier for Finance to advocate for people-centric investments.

Together, CFOs and CPOs can turn values into value.

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