



ICAEW research 2016

What are the key skills, behaviours and personal qualities needed for success at the role of FD, CFO or Partner – today and in 5-10 years time

Objectives and methodology

Key questions

- What are the key behaviours, skills and personal qualities that today's FDs, CFOs, Partners and Senior Partners need to have to be successful
- Key challenges facing their role and business in the next 5-10 years
- Key behaviours, skills and personal qualities that the next generation of FDs, CFOs, Partners and Senior Partners will need to have to be successful

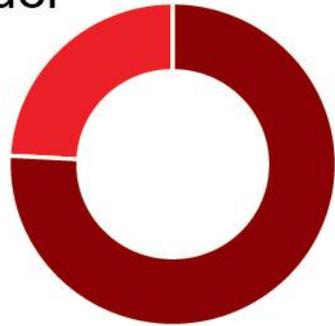
Method

- ICAEW members in FD/CFO or Senior Partner/Partner roles
- Phase 1 – 24 in-depth phone interviews (Nov/Dec 2015)
- Phase 2 – 538 short phone interviews (Jan-April 2016)

Profile of members surveyed

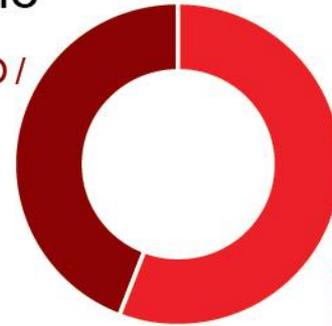


Gender



Role

CFO /
FD



Senior Partner /
Partner

Geographic location



UK



SE Asia

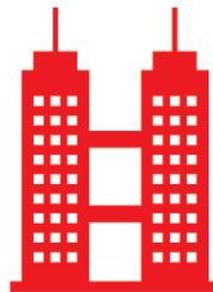


Europe



Middle East

Company size



Large

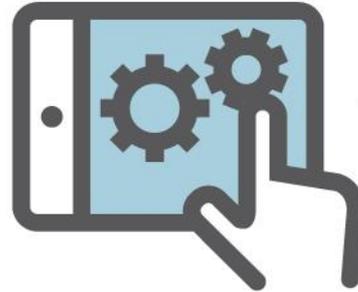


Medium

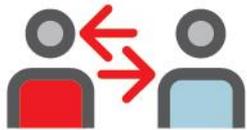


Small

Senior level success today – what's involved?



Technical finance skills



People skills
Interpersonal skills
Emotional intelligence



Leadership skills
Managing
Motivating



Communication skills
Presentation skills



Commercial awareness
Business acumen



Being likeable
A people-person

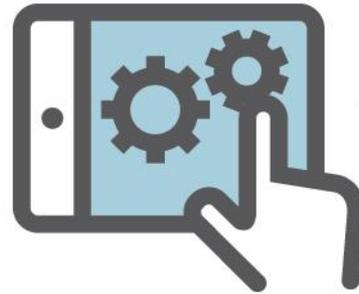


Entrepreneurial mindset
Business development skills

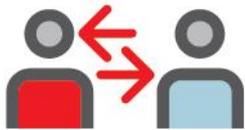
Key behaviours that can aid progress



Current skills for success: top seven



Technical finance skills



People skills
Interpersonal skills
Emotional intelligence



Leadership skills
Managing
Motivating



Communication skills
Presentation skills



Commercial awareness
Business acumen



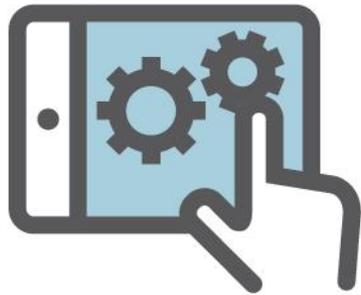
Being likeable
A people-person



Entrepreneurial mindset
Business development skills

Technical finance skills

KEY
SKILL



Technical
finance skills

+



Broad understanding
of commercial finance



Good technical finance skills are seen as the foundation for success.



Senior roles serve as a final quality check on work, and without good technical skills the quality of work may be undermined.



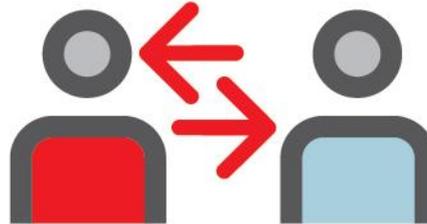
Senior roles don't need to understand every potential aspect of accountancy, but do need a wide breadth of knowledge.



Be aware of when to bring in additional expertise.

People and interpersonal skills

KEY
SKILL

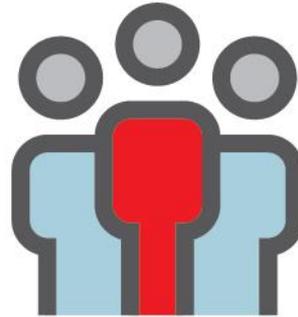


- ✓ Having good interpersonal skills is key to motivating staff and winning business.
- ✓ Important to be likeable and to understand how to get the best out of people.
- ✓ Essential for internal and external networking and maintaining long-term business relationships.
- ✓ Essential to the business development role Partners undertake and to ensure clients and staff are happy.
- ✓ If clients don't like you; they will not choose to work with you.

I think emotional intelligence is key. It's the difference between someone who's good and someone who's excellent.

Partner, UK

Leadership and motivation skills



- ✓ Must be prepared to take ownership of work and responsibilities – to take things on rather than shy away from responsibility.
- ✓ Need to manage and motivate staff effectively.
- ✓ Important to get the best out of people.
- ✓ Lead by example.
- ✓ Understand what motivates others.

Management skills will continue to be a key skill ... no matter how the environment or technology is changing.

CFO, SE Asia

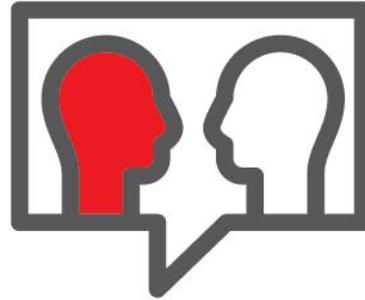
Trustworthiness and ethical behaviour



KEY
BEHAVIOUR

- ✔ Trustworthiness and ethical behaviour are at the heart of business and business decision-making.
- ✔ Senior roles need to provide reliable information on the financial situation of the business, so that internal and external stakeholders trust their judgement.
- ✔ It is important that FDs/CFOs are seen as a dispassionate figure of authority on the company finances.
- ✔ Business relationships can last 20-30 years and Partners need a reputation for integrity to win and retain business.
- ✔ Partners should be prepared to give hard news, which could potentially lose them clients.

Communication and stakeholder management



- ✓ Partners need to be skilled communicators to discuss technical aspects of finance and accounting in a way clients can understand.
- ✓ FDs/CFOs need to be skilled communicators to influence board members.
- ✓ Need to manage client or board expectations with effective communication.
- ✓ Able to explain complicated financial items in an understandable way to ensure the business makes informed decisions.

If you can't communicate then however good you are, you won't progress above a certain level.

FD, SE Asia

You have to put forward your point of view succinctly and in a way people can understand and respect.

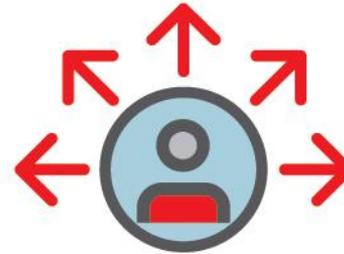
CFO, Europe

Commercial awareness



Business awareness

+



Relational awareness

- ✓ Understanding the wider economy and macro trends impacting on a business and/or industry.
- ✓ In-depth understanding of an industry, the business and its competitive environment.
- ✓ Understanding the impact of decisions on a business.
- ✓ Identifying new commercial opportunities.
- ✓ Keeping up-to-date with the latest industry news.

- ✓ Staying in contact with clients, old colleagues and industry insiders to stay up-to-date.
- ✓ Maintaining and managing business relationships.
- ✓ Seeing matters from the client's perspective.
- ✓ Being prepared to take calculated risks on potential clients, and managing relationships effectively.

You need to understand how it all fits together across the business to have a much better handling on how to advise the business, how to make certain decisions, when and why.

CFO, SE Asia

Business development and entrepreneurialism



A CFO needs to be entrepreneurial. People who come out of [ICAEW training] are a lot more entrepreneurial than people who don't.

CFO, Europe

A Partner has to have business development skills to be able to win new business for the firm.

Partner, Europe

Sales and business development skills are essential for any accountant.

Partner, UK

A CFO needs to have an enquiring mind... a broad outlook and to question and understand all aspects of the business that you're responsible for.

CFO, SE Asia

Behaviours needed to be successful

Trustworthiness

People focused

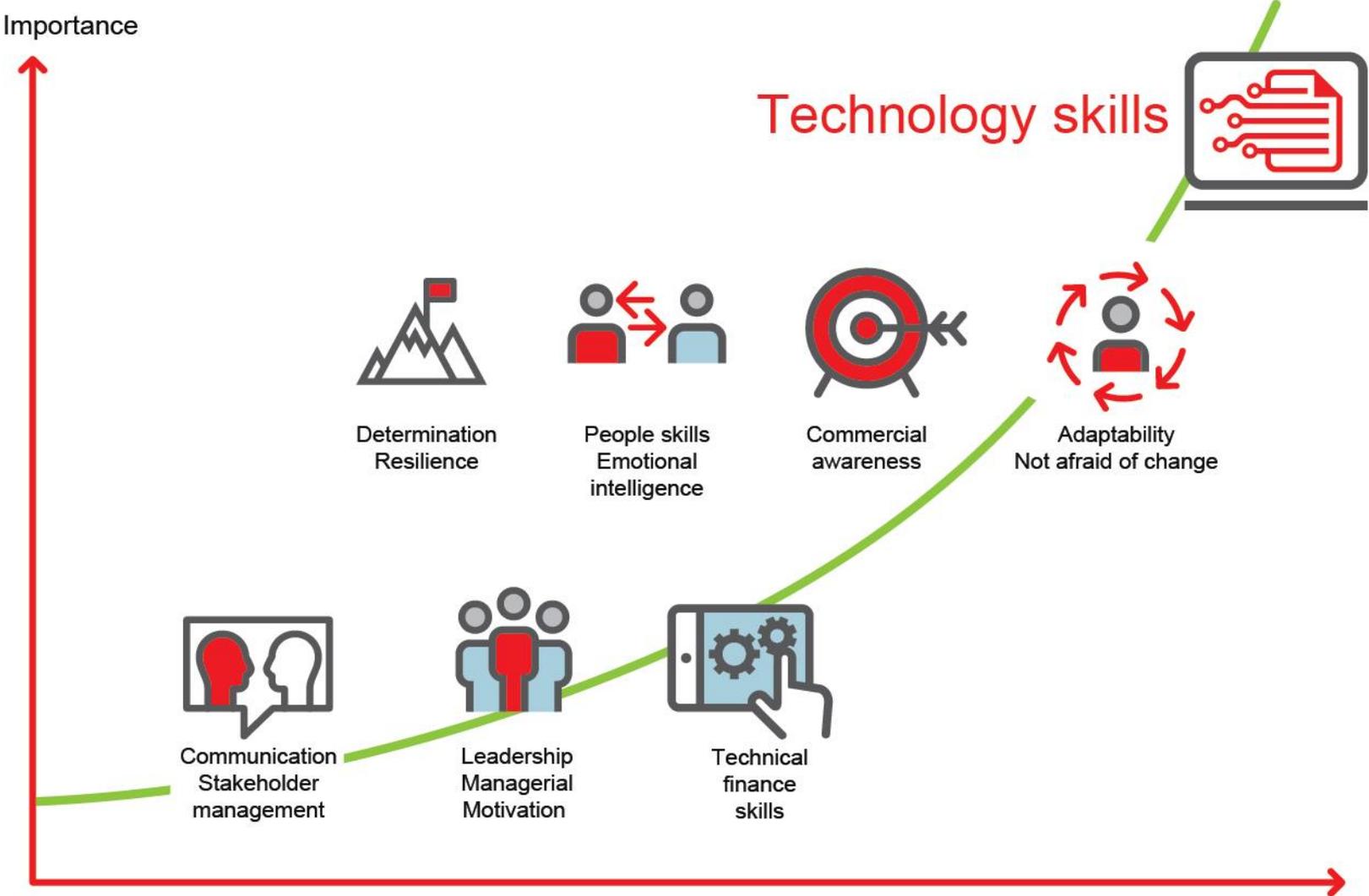
Team focused

Proactive, hard working

Resilience

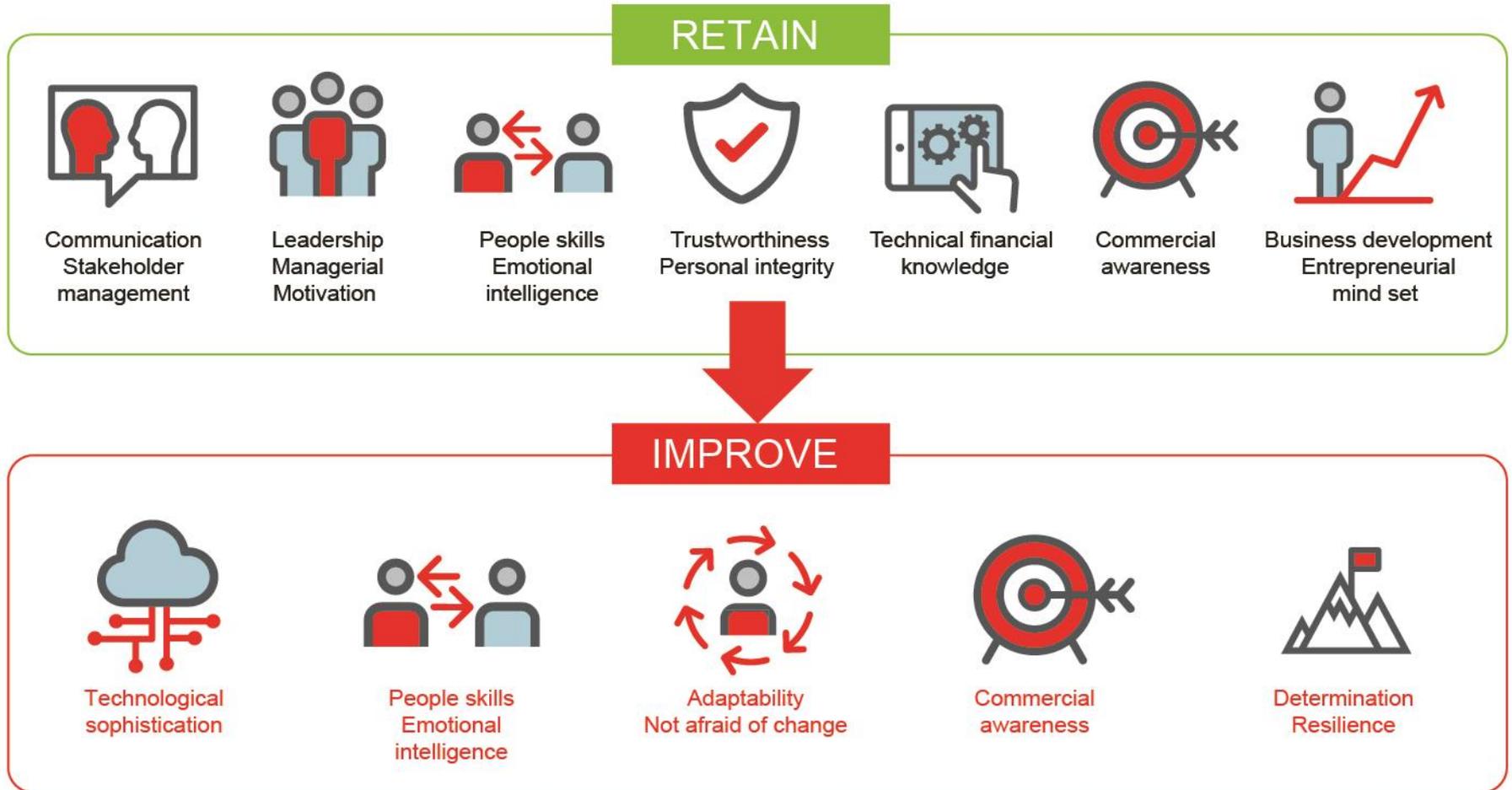
Being a good motivator

Which skills increase in importance



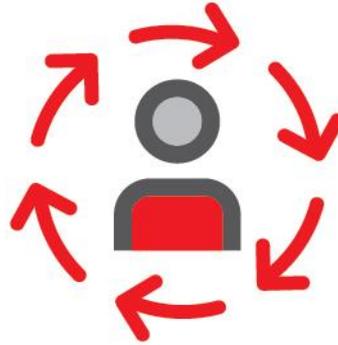
Future skills and behaviours for success

All high performance skills and behaviours needed today will still be needed in future.



* Future leaders will need to be more adaptable, technologically sophisticated and resilient.

Adaptability / not afraid of change



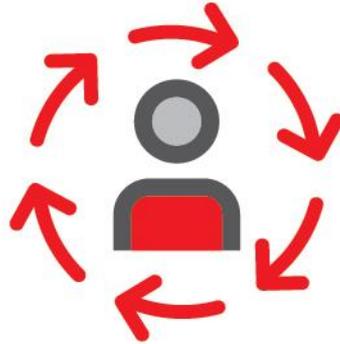
KEY FUTURE
BEHAVIOUR
AND QUALITY

- ✓ Respond positively and willingly to continuous change.
- ✓ Be versatile, open-minded and intellectually curious.
- ✓ Importance of continuous learning.
- ✓ Ability to remain productive and positive even when things are difficult.

We live in an increasingly changing environment and global environment. So adaptability is an important skill.

CFO, SE Asia

Adaptability / not afraid of change



KEY FUTURE
BEHAVIOUR
AND QUALITY

Open-mindedness to technology, people having a faster learning ... you'll need a lot of open-mindedness in everything.

FD, SE Asia

We live in an increasingly changing environment and global environment. So adaptability is an important skill.

CFO, SE Asia

The key difference is now we need to be a lot more versatile, a lot of creative thinking about how do we do things better and more effectively.

FD, SE Asia

Adaptability is a key... you have to have a very open mind and be very willing to adapt to different circumstances and take the time to understand.

CFO, SE Asia

Resilience and determination



KEY FUTURE
BEHAVIOUR
AND QUALITY

- ✓ Ability to remain productive and positive even when things are difficult.
- ✓ Ability to deal effectively and positively with multiple requests, constantly changing priorities and/or a heavy workload.
- ✓ Being enthusiastic and positive with drive and ambition.

Trustworthiness, resilience, commitment to making the right decision, positivity, trying to improve ways of doing things, persistence – all of these are going to become even more important.

FD, UK

I think having the right mindset, being open-minded, being able to accept criticism when it comes and take it constructively.

CFO, SE Asia

Persistence, resilience, enthusiasm and commitment to making the right decision even if it was tough. You must have these.

CFO, Europe

Top 10 behaviours for future success



1

People-focused



6

Resilience
Determination



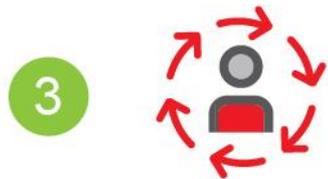
2

Trustworthiness
Personal integrity



7

Positivity
Enthusiasm
Ambition



3

Not afraid of change
Adaptability



8

Being a good
communicator



4

Team-focused
Getting the best out of people



9

Being a good leader
and motivator



5

Proactive
Hard working
Industriousness



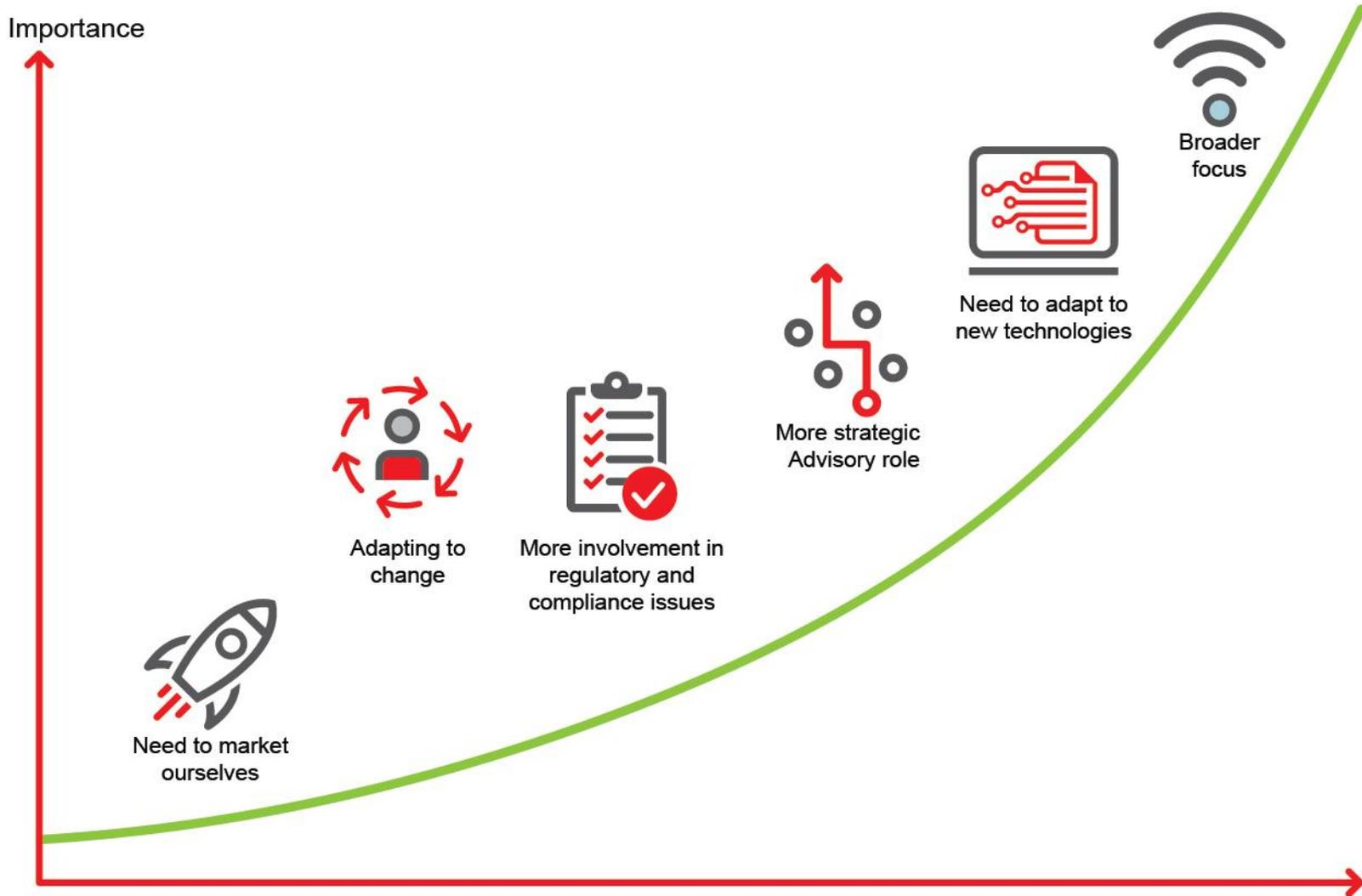
10

Patience



Future leaders must remain people-focused and ethical, but become more adaptable.

Future challenges to senior roles (5-10 years)



Future challenges to Partner role (5-10 years)

Importance



Attract/retain clients



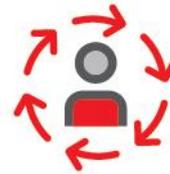
More involvement in regulatory and compliance issues



Need to market ourselves



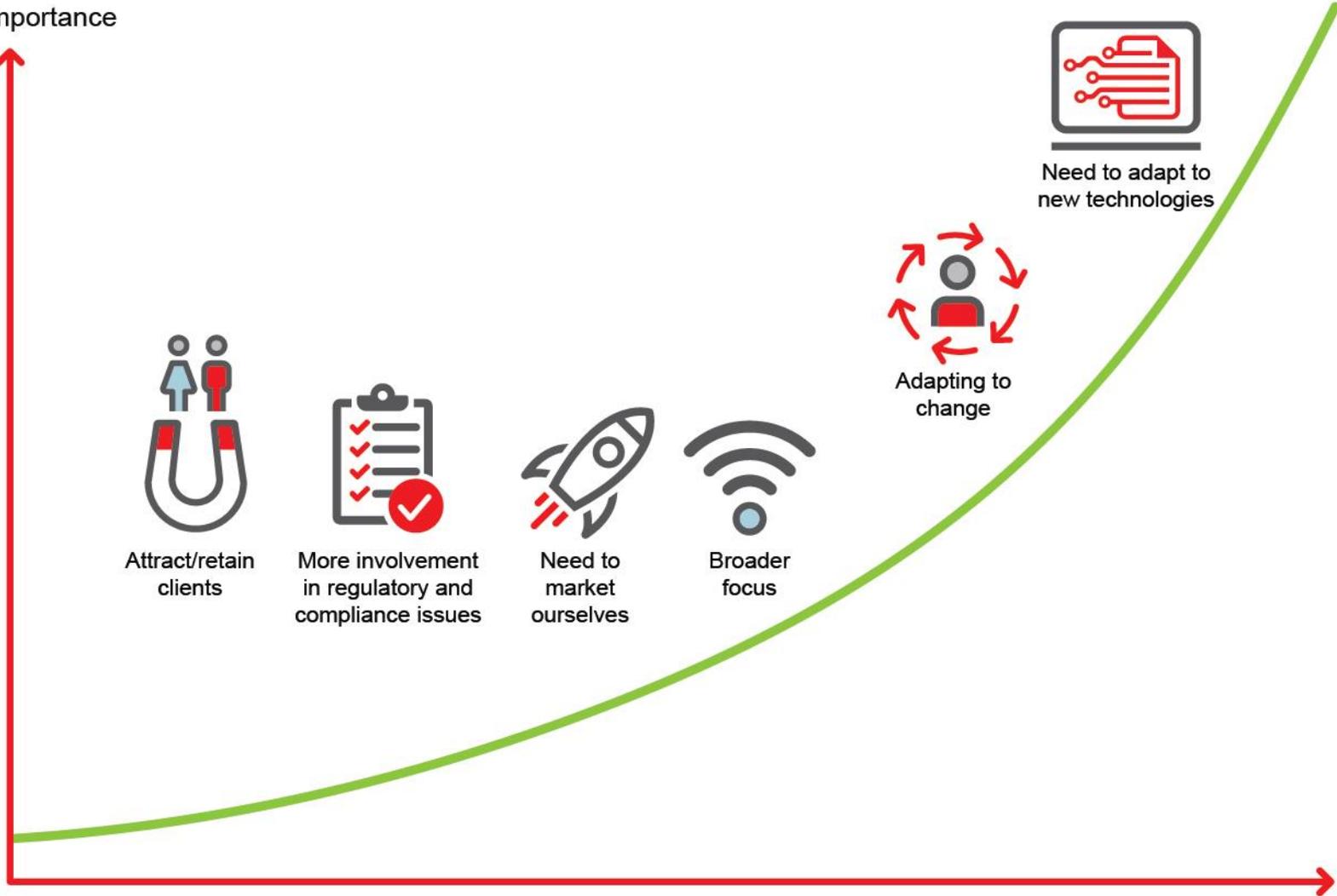
Broader focus



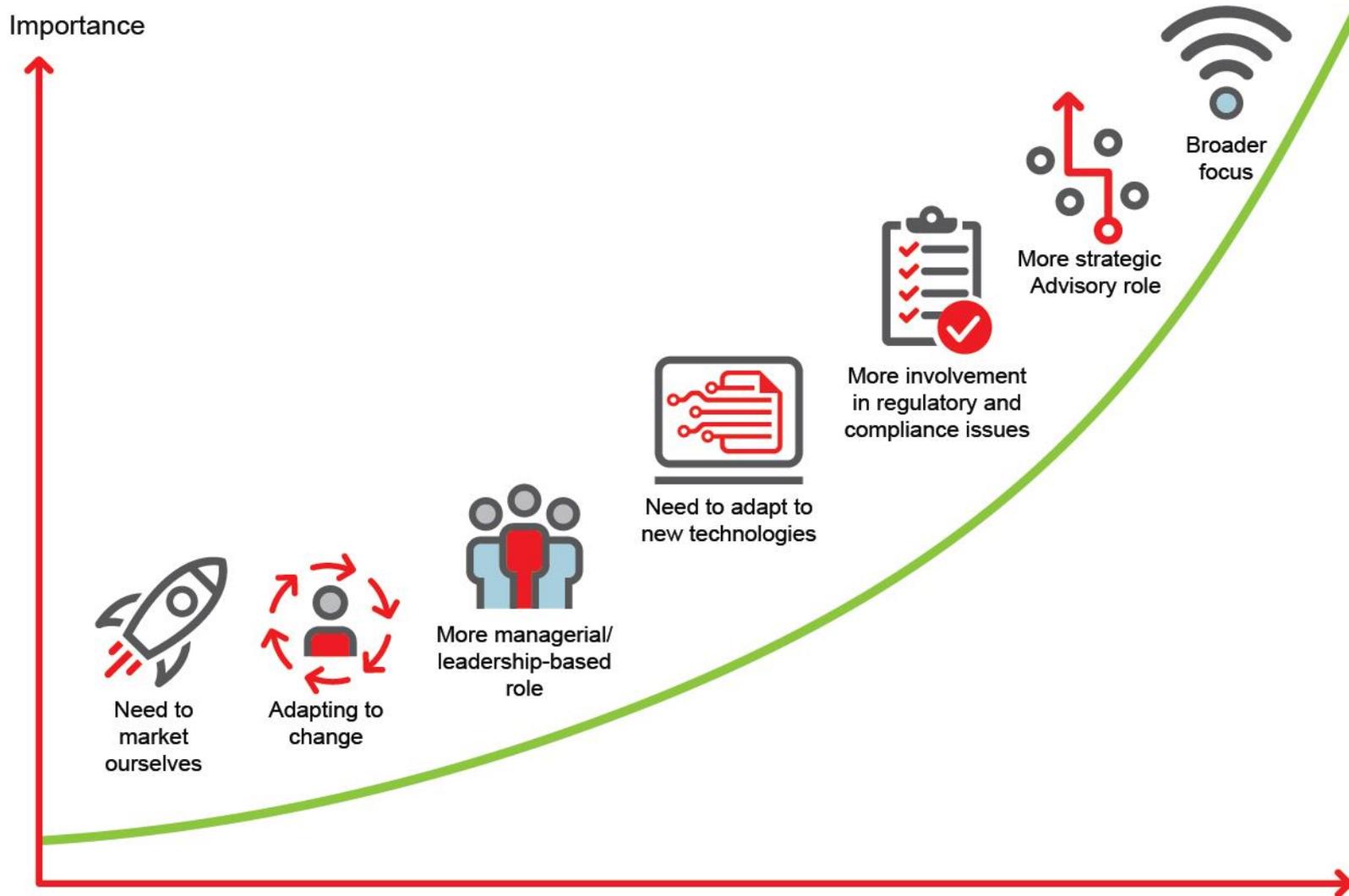
Adapting to change



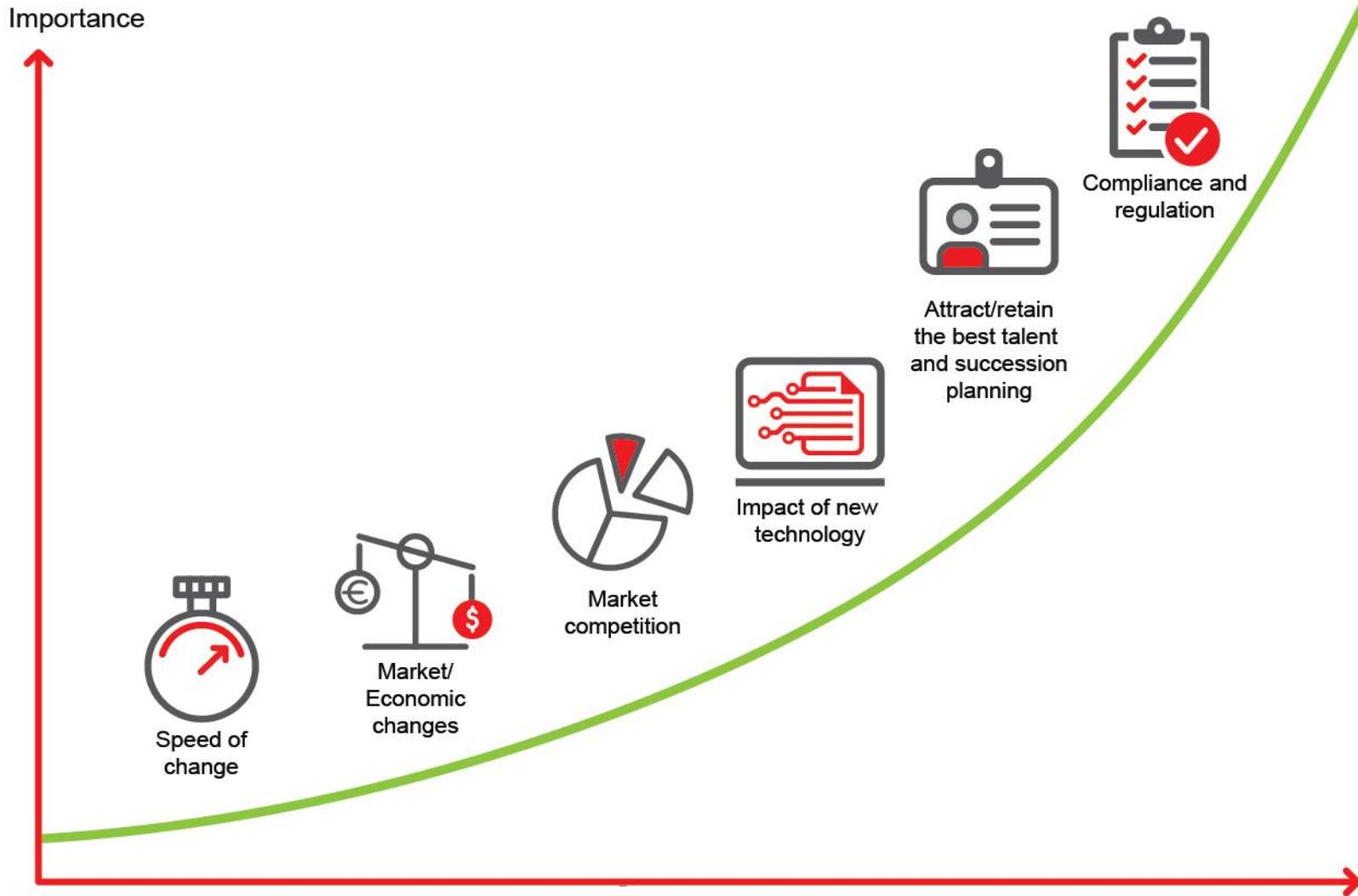
Need to adapt to new technologies



Future challenges to FD/CFO role (5-10 years)



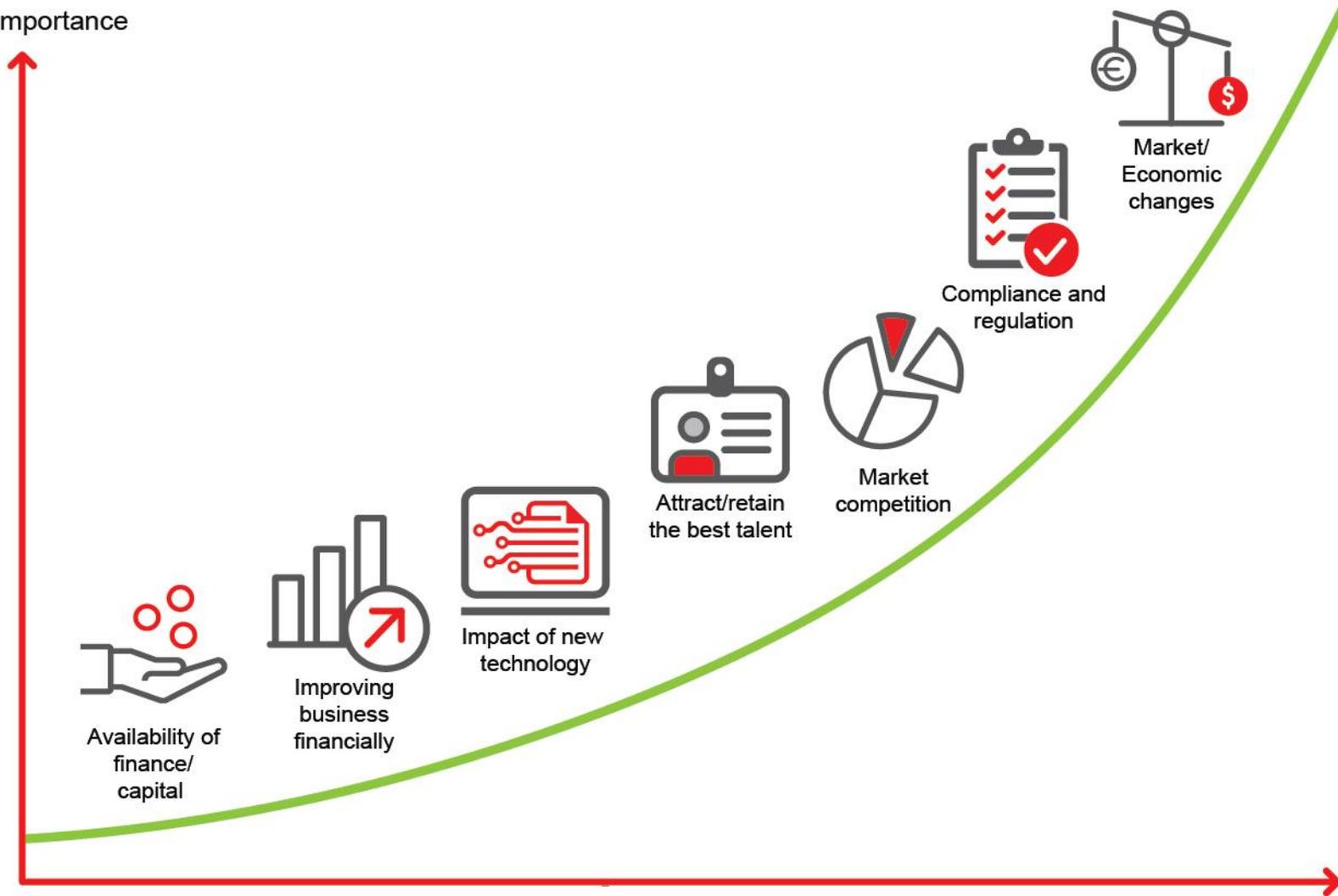
Future business challenges (Partners)



* Changing regulations and technology are key challenges for Partners, and attracting and retaining talent is an issue for the Big Four, especially outside the UK.

Future business challenges (FD/CFO role)

Importance





A world leader
of the accountancy
and finance profession