Your finance department: *the roles, the software, and how it all connects.*

A finance department is a set of roles, a set of systems, and a rhythm that ties them together. Print this, and mark the blocks you already have running.

ZONE 1 · THE BUSINESS FEEDS IT

Sales & delivery
`quotes · invoices out`
Office administration

Purchasing & vendors
`bills in · card spend`
Office administration

Team & payroll
`hours · wages · remittances`
Payroll & admin

Owner & leadership
`pricing · hiring · capital`
You

↓ every decision and every dollar arrives as a transaction ↓

ZONE 2 · THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT

LAYER 1
Capture & audit trail
`Dext`
Bookkeeper

Photograph it the day you spend it. The image stays attached to the transaction.

LAYER 2
The core ledger
`Xero · QBO`
Bookkeeper

One file. Live bank feeds, a chart of accounts built for your decisions.

LAYER 3
Money movement
`Dext Pay · Plooto · Loop`
Admin + Controller

A published payment run. Nobody both enters a bill and pays it.

LAYER 4
Treasury & reserves
`IBKR · Wealthsimple`
Controller + CFO

Every pool of cash has a job and a horizon. The tax reserve is untouchable.

LAYER 5
Close & review
`Xero · working papers`
Controller, CPA

Books closed by the 15th. Reviewed before any number is used.

↓ a reviewed set of numbers goes back out ↓

ZONE 3 · IT HANDS BACK

Decisions & planning
`cashflow · KPIs · pricing`
Advisor / CFO, CPA

Tax & compliance
`GST/PST · payroll · T2`
Controller + tax accountant

Lenders, investors & buyers
`banks · diligence`
CFO, CPA

↶ Those decisions change what the business does next — and the loop starts again.

WHERE IT USUALLY BREAKS

Capture monthly. Details go missing and coding gets guessed by the person furthest from the purchase.

Two systems disagree. A spreadsheet on the side is a second set of books — and nobody reconciles it.

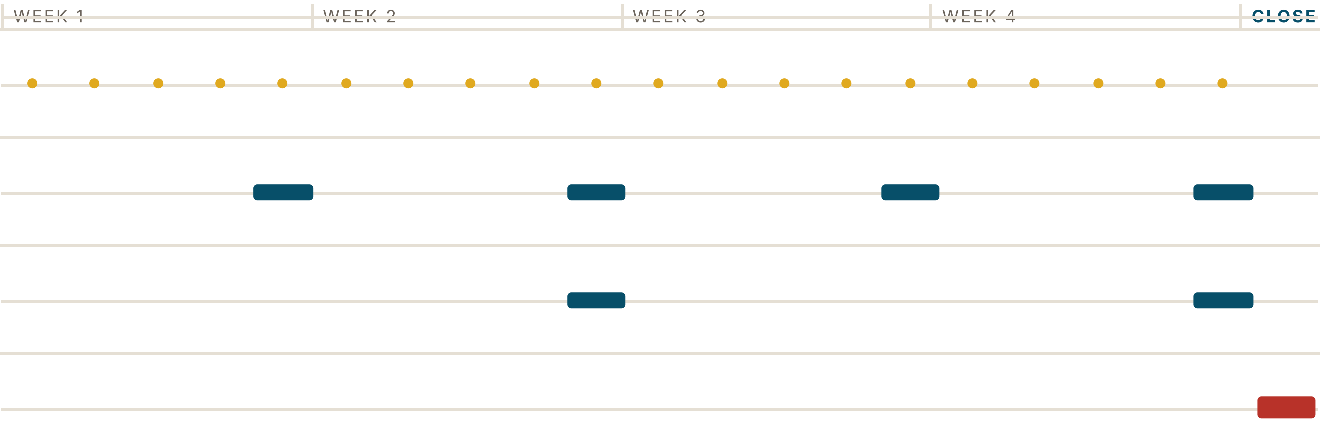
The owner pays bills at 11pm. No approval, no audit trail, no cash forecast.

The tax reserve gets spent. Every CRA payment after that is funded from next month's revenue.

Nobody reviews. A miscoded transaction becomes a decision, then a filing, then an adjustment two years later.

One month of a well-run department.

Software doesn't run a finance function. A cadence does.



Daily	Receipts captured at the till, bills forwarded as they arrive, the bank feed clearing itself into the ledger. *You & the bookkeeper*
Weekly	Everything delivered gets invoiced. Receivables chased. Bills approved and the payment run released on its published day. *Office admin*
Pay period	Payroll processed on the calendar, source deductions remitted against it, the liability cleared — not carried. *Payroll & admin*
The close	Every balance sheet account reconciled, coding reviewed, accruals posted, prior period locked, reporting pack issued. *Bookkeeper → controller*

daily habit · scheduled event · the close

Quarterly: sales tax filed, instalments checked, tax reserve topped up, treasury reviewed.

Annually: year-end and the T2, compensation mix, next year budgeted.

You don't need all of it. You need the next layer.

Tick what you already have.

FIRST

Get the record right

Worth doing properly even if you never add another tool.

- ☐ A business bank account used only for business
- ☐ Xero or QBO, every account on a live feed
- ☐ Dext, submitted daily
- ☐ A chart of accounts designed on purpose

NEXT

Get out of the payment loop

When someone other than you is spending.

- ☐ Dext Payments — approve and pay where the bill was captured
- ☐ A published weekly payment run
- ☐ Plooto for pre-authorised debit and CRA payments
- ☐ Loop, if you buy or sell in another currency

THEN

Add the review layer

When the numbers start driving real decisions.

- ☐ A close calendar with a date on it
- ☐ Controller review before anything is used
- ☐ The same reporting pack every month
- ☐ A funded, untouchable tax reserve

LATER

Put the surplus to work

Once there is genuinely idle cash.

- ☐ Treasury accounts, split by purpose
- ☐ A quarterly CFO cadence
- ☐ KPIs tied to your real drivers
- ☐ Planning that runs past year-end

A conversation starter, not advice. This describes a general operating model; your structure, industry and obligations change what the right answer looks like. Most businesses we meet already own three of the five layers — they just aren't connected, and nobody is reviewing the output. **hello@stevenalexander.cpa** · stevenalexander.cpa