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How C-Suites Can Leverage The New Wave Of Fractional Leaders

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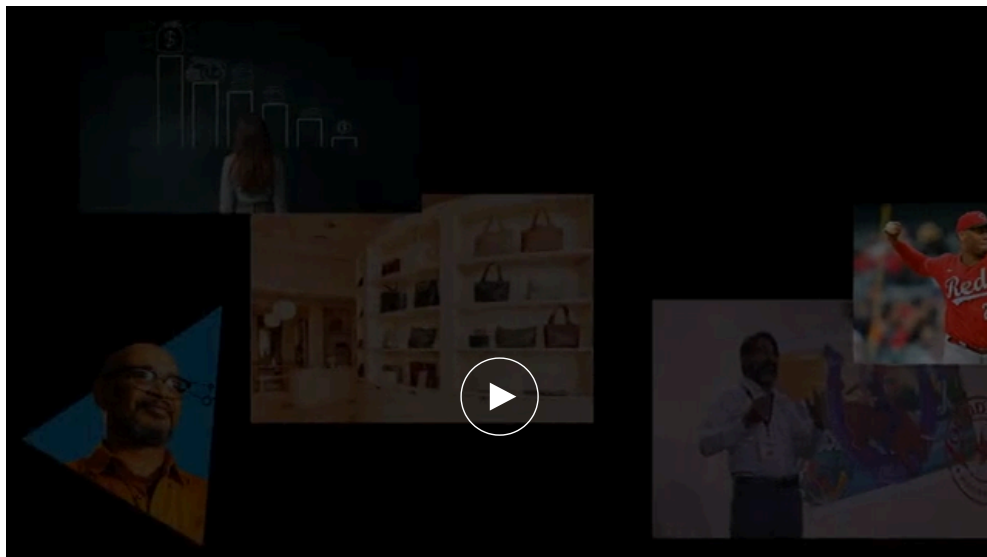
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Not only can a fractional leader fill a gap in a part-time or full-time capacity, but they can also bring value as a company specifically seeks effective ways to scale without committing to a permanent employee. Fractional leaders should possess the new social skills so many companies are looking for, as a recent *Harvard Business Review* article titled "[The C-Suite Skills That Matter Most](#)" (paywall) highlighted.

Bringing in a fractional leader can be a compelling strategic option for many reasons. Take the value of a fractional chief marketing officer (CMO) or chief communications officer (CCO), for example. The article "[Leveraging the leadership skills of a fractional CMO](#)" from *CEOWORLD* illuminates a few tangibles for why fractional leaders can be so effective. In addition, the very best chief marketing or communications officers think like CEOs. As companies assess their options for fractional leaders, they should consider whether candidates will be able to:

- Save a company money.
- Provide support to build and develop an internal marketing team.
- Come in ready to create and execute effective marketing strategies.
- Allow the company more time to find the right fit for a full-time role.
- Help with change management and communication to launch a business change.
- Bring access to an expanded network of talent and resources.

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How Fractional C-Suite Leaders Work

A fractional leader—such as a chief communications or marketing officer—comes in with a contract, which can be part time, and the fractional leader may also have a contract with another company. They help companies in interim scenarios while they're in the process of finding a full-time hire or when they're growing quickly with the instant need to help scale a business and drive outstanding performance. They are turnkey and can jump right in, fit into an existing team and get right to work. Consider whether you need a fully remote or hybrid fractional leader and whether you need someone with the flexibility to travel to the site or meetings as needed.

digging in and getting to work. Change management and strategic communications are often involved, and it's possible to see metrics improvements and other benefits quickly. It's a great shot of dopamine for the fractional leader who likes to see immediate wins and feel they are contributing effectively.

Strategic Approach From Day One

The work is all important. The fractional leader weeds out the time-wasting worry over the small stuff and gets right to work. They come with experience from the outside and don't engage in any of the office politics or old culture that slows down change. They have a neutral perspective and come in with a new and fresh lens. They don't get bogged down in the history of why something can't change and instead get to work on figuring out the "how" to maximize productive impact.

When you hire a fractional leader, make sure you ask them to tackle the most important initiatives on the list. All focus should be strategic because of the simple fact that the fractional leader is focused on strategic outcomes.

The C-Suite Value Add

The new C-suite should take advantage of fractional leaders in the short term. This means utilizing them for a couple of months to a year, or in some cases, up to 18 months. They work best when a company is seeking to gain traction and needs immediate expertise but may not have the budget for a permanent full-time employee yet. They also work well in a leadership transition where there is a change of leadership and the fractional leader steps in to help with the movement and change.

An established company with a more traditional C-suite may not need the fractional leadership model yet; instead, they may opt to leverage advisors when necessary or set up a retainer for this resource.

It can take an extensive amount of time to replace a strong leader permanently; often, it can take a year to replace someone in an executive-level role. The fractional leader is one solution companies can leverage during this time.

To find the right leadership fit, look for a strategic leader with a mindset that focuses on outcomes. Ask if they can jump in for 3 to 6

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Conclusion

A fractional leader should bring a solution-oriented and conscious mindset and be able to demonstrate how they can help out as a company is ready to experience a growth spurt and level up.

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