

## **Being an Awesome Interim Executive**

*By Mike Lorelli*

Succeeding as an Interim CEO or CFO requires a different mindset than permanent leadership. Winning the role and excelling once in place demands focus, adaptability, and preparedness for uncertainty. While the approach is straightforward, it must be deliberate.

Interims are recruited to solve specific problems—filling sudden leadership gaps, stabilizing organizations, or applying targeted expertise such as AI, cybersecurity, or operational transformation. The value lies in speed, judgment, and impact.

Landing an interim role follows five steps: build an “interim-friendly” resume and LinkedIn profile, target the right decision-makers, communicate availability clearly, prepare rigorously for Day One, and make an immediate mark. Execute these steps in order.

Interim roles offer compelling benefits: premium compensation, portfolio career flexibility, and continued relevance for seasoned executives. Your materials should emphasize being a quick study, proven interim results, stress tolerance, customer focus, decisiveness, and quantified outcomes.

Today, many firms specialize exclusively in interim placements, alongside major executive search firms. Be visible to all. Pricing low undermines credibility—interims are hired for results, not savings.

Preparation is critical. Before Day One, brief with sponsors, deal teams, lenders, and consultants. On arrival, engage staff transparently, listen first, and establish priorities. Hold early one-on-ones, walk the organization, and build momentum.

Act as if the role is permanent. Address resistance quickly, set expectations clearly, and deliver early wins. Quick, visible progress confirms the right choice was made—and sets the tone for success.

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