


HIRING INTERIMS

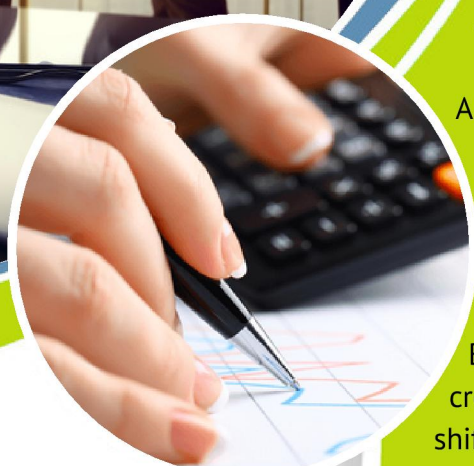


Interim leadership is a vital resource for businesses facing short term challenges. The right talent quickly appointed helps head off emerging issues, bridges short term skills gaps and brings with it new ideas and fresh perspectives. A short-term solution, it is often also a vital building block to longer term prosperity.

These benefits have long been recognised by dynamic, forward-thinking organisations across all sectors.


But recently we have seen signs of a new hesitance creeping into attitudes to interim appointments. This shift in attitudes is, it seems to me, inspired largely by fear. A fear that is not only misplaced, but which actually threatens to stifle creativity, productivity and ultimately success.

This fear manifests itself in two key areas. The first is a reluctance to acknowledge the need for interim resource in the first place. A feeling that this is somehow a poor reflection on the existing leadership team, or that a strong interim leader may expose weaknesses in individuals and the wider team. The second is a reluctance to make quick hiring decisions and use fast-track recruitment processes.



These responses are emotional rather than logical, and they certainly do not make good business sense. Interim talent is critical to virtually any business at some point in its lifecycle. Far from posing any kind of threat to the existing leadership team, interims bring vital specialist skills and experience. These may not be needed in the longer term, but can be critical to addressing an immediate and pressing issue.

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The benefits of a good interim appointment, however, are not only short term. A good interim leader will often leave a valuable legacy in terms of skills, processes and outlook that endures long after their departure. Often this comes in the form of upskilling and empowering the existing team, helping both individuals and organisations to thrive.

The other key advantage of an interim appointment is the speed with which it can be made.

But all too often, instead of realising the benefits of finding and securing essential skills quickly, organisations are now subjecting interim leadership appointments to the same lengthy selection processes as permanent hires. This is self-defeating and totally misunderstands the advantages and flexibility at the heart of interim leadership solutions.

With vision and a clear brief, an excellent interim leader can be recruited within a fortnight, long before a permanent hiring process is even fully underway. So, in a matter of a couple of weeks, an organisation is benefiting from proven interim leadership skills, handpicked to meet the urgent challenges they face head on.

Clarity and decisiveness are key and will always pay dividends. Allowing any recruitment process – interim or permanent – to be inspired by fear rather than possibility does not reflect well on any individual or organisation and seldom secures the right results for anyone. A good, decisive hire on the other hand always reflects well on those making that appointment.

Interim talent is a valuable resource and one that we should embrace. Far from seeing it as a risk or a cost, we believe we should be seeing it as an important investment, bringing both short-term solutions and long term, strategic advantage.