NWP FRACTIONAL CFO SERVICES

4 Tips for Hiring a Senior Part-Time CFO

A practical guide for small and mid-size business owners weighing the leap from bookkeeper to strategic financial leadership.

If your business is approaching a turning point—a capital raise, a sale, an acquisition, or simply growth that's outpacing your visibility into the numbers—you may be at the stage where a senior part-time CFO changes the trajectory of the business. A part-time CFO brings the kind of "big picture" financial leadership that goes well beyond what a bookkeeper or staff accountant typically provides: real strategy, built from experience, aimed at sustainable growth.

At NWP Fractional CFO Services, we work with small and mid-size business owners every day who are weighing exactly this decision. Here are four things worth thinking through before you bring someone on.

1 Know what problem you're actually solving

It's tempting to search for the title "CFO" and assume anyone who's held it elsewhere is the right fit. A better starting point is your own situation. Are margins tighter than they should be? Are you preparing the business for sale and want it positioned to command the strongest possible price? Is your reporting too disorganized to plan around with confidence? The clearer you are about the outcome you're after, the easier it is for a firm like ours to pair you with the right person—someone who's actually solved that exact problem before, not just held a similar-sounding job somewhere else.

2 Match the experience to where your business is today

A senior part-time CFO brings perspective built across multiple businesses—often larger or more complex than yours—translated into something practical for where you stand right now. That's core to how we approach things at NWP: using experience earned in bigger organizations to help small and mid-size businesses grow without losing what made them worth building in the first place.

This matters most around transactions. Buying a business, selling one, or bringing on outside capital all demand a level of financial scrutiny most internal teams aren't built to handle—which is exactly where a part-time CFO's broader experience pays off.

3 Be ready to open the books early

No part-time CFO can build a meaningful plan from a single conversation. To give you real recommendations, they'll need access to your financial records, your accounting systems, and an honest look at how the business runs day to day. Be ready to share recent statements or grant read-only access early on—the more transparent the starting point, the faster you get to a plan built on your actual numbers instead of assumptions.

This is also a useful test of fit. How someone asks questions, what they choose to look at first, and how clearly they explain what they're seeing will tell you a lot about how the relationship will work once it's underway. Trust is the starting point of every engagement we take on at NWP—it has to be earned in those first conversations, not assumed.

4 Treat the cost as an investment, not a fee

A senior part-time CFO isn't the cheapest option on the market, and that's by design—you're paying for judgment built over years, not for someone learning at your expense. The right engagement should pay for itself many times over, through stronger margins, a cleaner capital raise, a higher sale price, or simply the confidence to make decisions instead of guessing. Part of what we focus on at NWP is making sure the scope of work actually matches what your business needs right now, rather than selling you more than you can use.

> *"We aim to help small and mid-size business owners increase profitability, improve quality of life, and better understand their numbers."*

Hiring a senior part-time CFO is one of the highest-leverage decisions a growing business can make—but only with clarity going in about what you need, and a clear-eyed way to evaluate who can actually deliver it. That's the idea NWP was built around: solutions-driven financial leadership for owners who want their numbers to mean something, not just add up.

THE PRINCIPLES BEHIND EVERY ENGAGEMENT AT NWP

Trust

Clients hand us sensitive financial information, and we don't take that lightly.

Honesty

Every engagement runs on integrity, loyalty, and discretion.

Growth

We bring big-business experience to help smaller companies grow smarter.

Solutions-Driven

Where others see a problem, we look for the opportunity underneath it.

Relationships

We care about results, but just as much about how your business connects to your bigger why.

Not sure if you're ready?

If you're weighing whether your business needs this kind of financial leadership—or what it would look like for your specific situation—we're happy to talk it through.

Get in touch with NWP