

# ON-DEMAND EXECUTIVES

A NEW MODEL FOR THE CHANGING  
WORLD OF WORK

**TechCXO**<sup>®</sup>  
experience > acceleration



# CONTENTS

p. 3

What is an "on-demand executive"?  
- Consultant? Coach? Temp?

p. 5

On-demand model as competitive differentiator  
- Talent  
- Experience  
- Results  
- Economics

p. 8

In-House vs. On-Demand Comparisons  
- CFO & COO  
- CSO & CMO  
- CIO & CTO

p. 10

Getting Started: Best Practices, Scenarios & Further Evaluation

# So, what is an "on-demand executive"?

Whether you prefer *Harvard Business Review's* term "supertemp," the "new intermediaries" or high-level experts in the "gig economy," on-demand executives are senior level executive leaders and professionals who apply their expertise in a project-based, part-time or interim model.

## Qualifications & Experience

On-demand executives frequently hold degrees from top institutions and have successfully led critical functions at multiple companies (often large, publicly-traded organizations) and/or leading startups that have successfully scaled. When you review [our team](#) you'll see frequent references to Ivy League schools, MBAs, doctorates, Big 4-6-8 accounting firms and more. But most importantly, you'll see strategic and implementation success as C-level executives.

Every TechCXO Partner goes through an extensive, 15-step interview and review process, as well as a personality preference diagnostic. Most importantly, our hiring partner and committee confirm the success of prospective partners as C-Level executives in their past jobs.

# Someone very different from a consultant, coach or temp...

TechCXO was founded on the premise that high potential companies can greatly benefit from proven, on-demand, part-time and interim executives who they otherwise may not be able to access due to cost, availability or because they do not necessarily need them full time. Our purpose is to provide the best executive talent available... on-demand.

On-demand executives are "athletic" because they move easily from the conceptual and strategic to nuts-and-bolts implementation. Often they will implement strategies and programs for the client by themselves or with a very small and efficient team.

**Demonstrated expertise inside organizations is an important distinction between on-demand executives and consulting firms,** which may merely hire and train young MBAs with little or no operating or leadership experience. Consultants also tend to inflate the size of teams and focus more on concepts than implementation, as well. On-demand executives operate like entrepreneurs -- fast and lean.

On-demand executives' track records also distinguish them from coaches, who may have only completed a training course and received a certificate rather than led at the highest levels.



# On-Demand as Competitive Differentiator

"Owning" your talent in the form of building an increasingly large workforce was a decades-long business objective for many organizations. High transaction costs incentivized corporations to get larger as it was cheaper to keep resources and talent in-house than to transact for them in the open market.

However, as *Harvard Business Review* stated, "new technologies and a developing spot market for high-end talent are driving transaction costs down and challenging assumptions about which management skills and professional talent belong inside versus outside the organization. "

"Access to" (not "ownership of") talent, experience and the capacity to complete critical tasks and functions is most desired, particularly with the speed of innovation and subsequent technology and platforms that displace incumbents and disrupt markets.

Forward-looking entrepreneurs, owners, investors and executives realize an on-demand model allows them to access the right skills, experience and resources at the optimal time. Because on-demand executives enable businesses to stay lean and flexible without compromising expertise and the ability to innovate, **79% of executive leadership inside companies see the on-demand model as a competitive advantage and more than 9 out of 10 business leaders expect to increase their use of contract professionals.**

The primary reason for accessing high-end on demand executives is equally distributed by talent, skills, speed/agility and cost benefits (see chart at right).

What is the primary benefit of using an on-demand model?

INCREASED AGILITY 27%

REDUCED COST 26%

FULFILLS PROJECT NEEDS 25%

ACCESS SPECIAL SKILLS 21%

Source: Mavenlink, ResearchNow

## Top 8 Needs for Contract Help

IT

Strategy Consultants

Legal

Accounting & Finance

Sales & Marketing

Product Development

HR

Administrative

% of Executives who say they are comfortable handing mission critical work to on-demand professionals



Source: Mavenlink, ResearchNow

*My advice for any high-growth company would be to seek out and find those that have the relevant experience for what you want to accomplish around growth. I will tell you that it will pay off for you ten-fold. For us, it was absolutely the right decision to seek outside help as we went through high-growth and then positioned ourselves for an acquisition. The smartest decision you can make is to support yourself with the right help.*



— Mark Wilson, President & CEO, Ryla

# In House vs. On Demand

There are good reasons for having a dedicated in-house executive team. However, for startup companies with limited resources or a company in transition, leveraging on-demand executives has advantages. Remember: Don't invest in G&A costs until you prove you can: 1) build your product and 2) sell it. An on-demand model gives you access to top experience without the expense and commitment of an executive hire.

## IN-HOUSE



**STRATEGIC & IMPLEMENTATION CAPABILITIES**

*Probably*

*Possibly*

*Possibly*

*Yes*



**C-SUITE EXPERIENCE & PROVEN SUCCESS**

*Probably*

*Possibly*

*Possibly*

*Verified Yes*



**PRIMARY CONCERN: CAREER OR COMPANY?**

*?*

*?*

*?*

*Client Focused*



**RECRUITER FEES, EQUITY, LOADED SALARY**

*Yes*

*Yes*

*Probably*

*Hourly or Fee-Based*

# Three Scenarios where On-Demand Makes Sense

When should you to think about an on-demand executive? There are typically three different scenarios that a company would consider outsourcing executive functions:

(1) High-Growth/High Stress; (2) Specialized Projects; (3) Transition Periods.

1

**High-Growth/High Stress.** The most common catalyst for considering an outsourced option is when a company reaches a certain level that requires more experienced leadership, but does not yet necessitate a full-time resource, i.e. following an early-round capital raise or a large customer win. On-demand executives who will work with a company on a project, days-per-week or days-per month basis are the ideal solution for such companies. Scenarios can include:

- Increasing number of transactions, such as more customers, more employees, more vendors
- Increasing complexity in the business that requires more experienced leadership and better planning to develop policies and procedures
- Inexperienced internal person, e.g. Controller or other finance staff member, who may simply need a mentor
- The company has raised or intends to raise significant (\$1 million or more) funds from outside investors
- A merger or acquisition of a line of business that requires acquisition accounting and reconciliation between multiple systems.

High-growth companies can become victims of their own success. When requirements for people, technology, facilities and capital accelerate, new strains may be put on the organization's structure that require skilled, professional and experienced guidance.



2

Specialized Projects. You may require advanced or specialized skills to address a very particular problem or opportunity. Some common projects that might require on-demand expertise, include:

### Finance & Operations

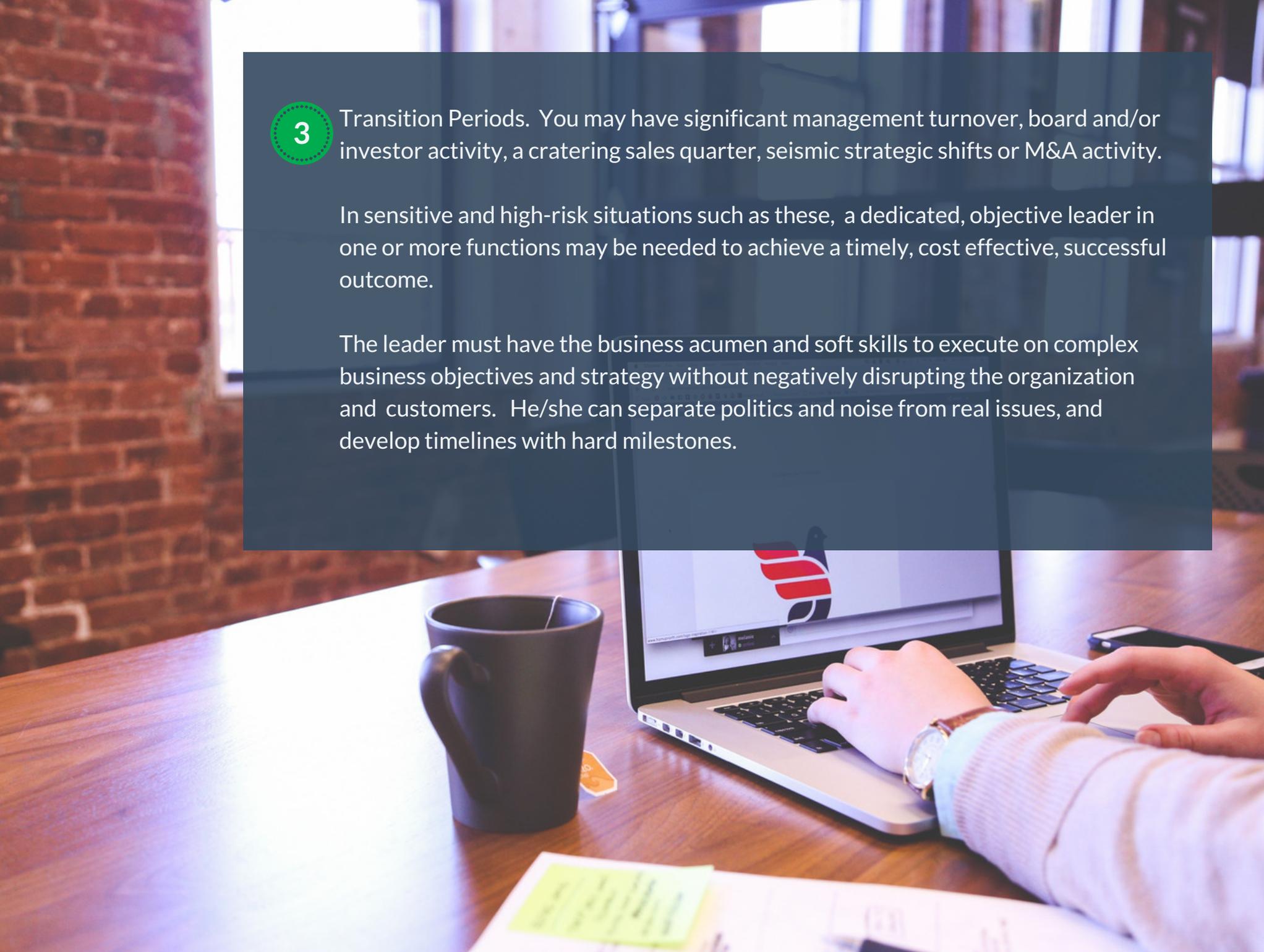
- Financial Models & Budgets
- Equity raises
- Issues with revenue recognition
- Sarbanes-Oxley compliance or pre-SOX preparation
- M&A activity where the company is either the buyer or the seller and needs help either evaluating the target company or properly packaging the company for sale
- Pre-audit cleanup work to get the company's financial statements in shape to actually begin an audit
- International expansion
- Sales tax cleanup and strategy
- Equity issues such as 409a valuations or 123R calculations
- more...

### Strategy, Sales & Marketing

- Competitive analysis & research
- Revenue generation Health Check
- Sales cadence design
- Inbound/Outbound Demand Generation
- Sales & Channel Strategy Development
- Product Needs Analysis & Roadmap
- Strategic Performance / KPIs
- more...

### Product & Technology

- IT Board Advisors
- IT Pre-M&A Due Diligence
- Risk/Cybersecurity issues (Phishing test, Vulnerability Assessments, Penetration Testing, Certification Preparedness, Governance Planning, Remediation)
- Product Portfolio, Strategy & Execution
- more...

A person's hands are shown typing on a silver laptop keyboard. The laptop is on a wooden desk. To the left of the laptop is a dark grey mug with a tea bag. In the foreground, there are some papers with a yellow sticky note. The background is a blurred office setting with a brick wall on the left and windows on the right. A semi-transparent dark blue box with white text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

3

Transition Periods. You may have significant management turnover, board and/or investor activity, a cratering sales quarter, seismic strategic shifts or M&A activity.

In sensitive and high-risk situations such as these, a dedicated, objective leader in one or more functions may be needed to achieve a timely, cost effective, successful outcome.

The leader must have the business acumen and soft skills to execute on complex business objectives and strategy without negatively disrupting the organization and customers. He/she can separate politics and noise from real issues, and develop timelines with hard milestones.

# Best Practices

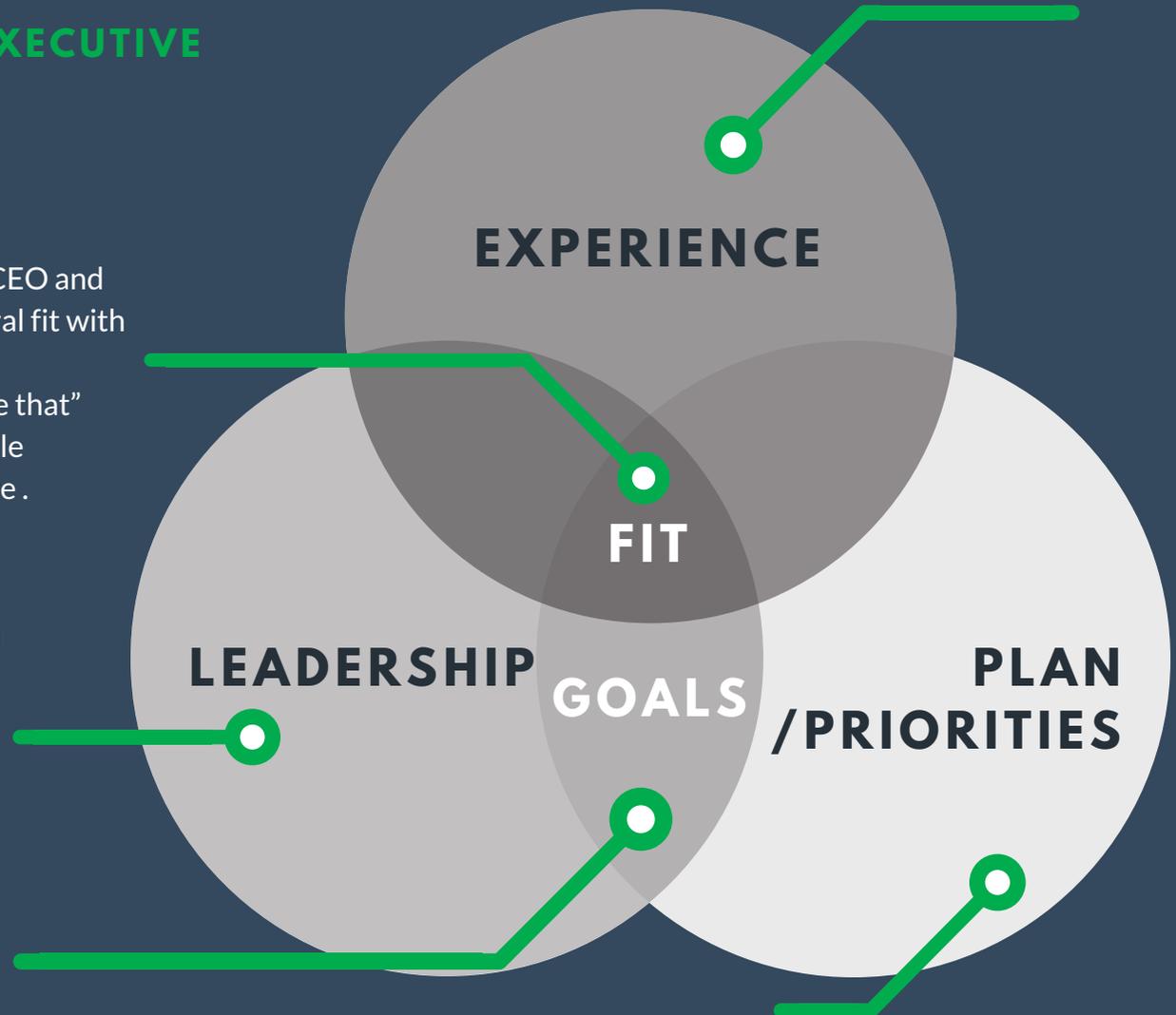
## MAKING THE ON-DEMAND EXECUTIVE MODEL WORK FOR YOU

**Fit.** While developing a rapport with the CEO and management team is a must, a good cultural fit with the rest of the team is important too. The executive should inspire “been there, done that” confidence, but also be creative and flexible enough to adapt to the team and its culture .

**Leadership.** The executive should be a natural leader and have the gravitas to slip into a leadership role, even on a part-time basis.

**Goals.** Drive for results including well-defined project objectives, an engagement overview, primary activities and deliverables, expected duration of the engagement and the KPIs and business outcomes by which success is measured

**Experience.** An exec with years of experience working with similar companies can enhance the management team, provide credibility with your board and investors and generally raise the level of professionalism at the company. Experience with your specific industry is a plus for networks, providers, investors, etc.



**Plan/Priorities.** Be realistic about goals and objectives to achieve given the time constraints or available resources. A few, very strategic, well-defined projects will be easier to manage than multiple, more tactical projects. Focus is key.



# 5 CEO Questions

1. **Do I have time to focus clearly on the business drivers necessary for success?** (Or am I spending too much time “figuring out the books,” helping with sales or fixing the product?)
2. **Do I have the right information to make good decisions?** (Or are we/I managing by instinct, using a few key bits of information to proxy for all the rest.)
3. **Do I have the right people and the right model to scale?** (Or do I need to upgrade strategy, finance, marketing, sales, channels and customer success processes and people?)
4. **Am I adequately funded for what's next?** (Or are we guessing about equity and debt funding needed and the road forward?)
5. **What's the best way to access then talent and expertise to answer 1-4?**

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a silver smartphone. The person is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. The phone is held over a laptop keyboard, which is partially visible. A small blue and white device is on the laptop's surface. The background is a dark, blurred blue.

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