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Fractional CMO Hiring Brief

Why this brief is needed

Hiring a fractional CMO is a different game from hiring a full-time executive.

Demand for fractional leadership keeps climbing as startups look for senior impact without the full-time overhead. Timelines shrink, impact must land fast, and vague briefs burn weeks.

After five years advising startups and matching dozens of F-CMOs, I watched founders wade through round after round of informal chats that led to aimless pilots while operators guessed at success.

This brief fixes that: one outcome, hard metrics, and a clear weekly rhythm.

It distils lessons from 50-plus engagements into a bullet-proof starting line.

Why this brief works

- Gives apples-to-apples comparisons and limits back-and-forth
- Forces proposals to link to business outcomes, not vanity activity
- Matches the rise of fractional leadership so founders can get senior talent without a full salary

Brief Overview

Company snapshot

- Legal name, year founded, headquarters, funding stage
- Core product and target buyer in one short sentence
- Annual recurring revenue and growth trend (year-over-year percentage)

Strategic context

- What must improve in the next twelve months, and why
- 2-3 biggest growth bottlenecks (rank in order)
- Current marketing strength: team size, partner network, budget range, channel mixture, KPIs, and goals

Engagement objective

Write one clear business outcome that will prove success
Example: “Triple qualified pipeline in the United States by quarter two, while keeping effective CAC by $XXX and CAC payback time of X months

First 90-day success metrics

List up to five numbers the FCMO will own

- Revenue influence (new pipeline dollars)
- Activation or retention lift (percentage points)
- Efficiency gain (cost per opportunity, tooling savings)

Requirements Overview

Scope of work (suggested)

Pillar	Key responsibilities	Notes
Strategy	Go to market audit, positioning, story building	Weekly working sessions
Brand marketing	Brand narrative, PR, social presence, community building, category design	Coordinate with design & comms
Demand generation	Campaign framework, funnel tracking, launch review	Execution via internal team
Product marketing	Ideal customer validation, messaging, sales enablement	Align with revenue team
Organisation design and hiring	Interview loop, scorecards, onboarding playbook	Optional

Critical experience and proof points

Must have	Nice to have	Evidence requested
Grew revenue from one to twenty million dollars in your buyer segment	Raised category authority through thought leadership	Before and after KPI scorecard
Built and led a three to five-person marketing pod	Operated across two major regions	Two short reference quotes
Proven results with product-led growth and sales-led growth	Launched AI-driven content engine	Sample dashboard or short teardown video

Operating model

- Weekly rhythm: one strategy call, one recorded review, Slack access during Central European mornings
- Expected focus: eight to twelve hours a week

- Tools in use: Notion, HubSpot, Google Workspace, Asana

Commercial terms

Model	Typical fee	Trigger
Retainer	8,000 to 12,000 USD each month	Paid monthly, 30-day notice
Cash plus equity	4,000 USD each month plus 0.1 percent per quarter	Cliff, after the first quarter
Success bonus	0.25 percent of extra annual recurring revenue above target	Settled at year-end

Submission checklist

- One page showing why you fit the engagement objective
- Two relevant case studies with numbers
- Zoomed out, outlined 90-day roadmap (short slide or 3-4 minutes Loom)
- Two references (one founder, one marketing leader)
- Confirmation of availability and weekly cap

Selection timeline (you may want to keep this section internally)

Step	Date	Owner	Format
Brief issued	DD MM YYYY	Founder	Shared document
Clarifying questions	+ 7 days	Candidates	Shared document
Short list announced	+ 14 days	Founder	Slack
Final interviews	+ 18–21 days	Leadership trio	Zoom
Offer decision	+ 24 days	Founder	E-signature

Send everything to founder@yourstartup.com